

I support healthy choices for kids in all capacities and I believe healthy kids' meals at restaurants is a good way to begin to get our youngest Vermonters on the road to eating healthy early.

Twiggs American Gastropub had an amazing opportunity to participate in the American Heart Association's healthy kids' meals campaign to make our restaurant healthier for kids. We created kids' menu items that met specific heart healthy standards and showcased them at a Twigg's event in September 2016. I jumped at this opportunity because it ties into the mission of my anti-bullying group, Sweethearts & Heroes: to keep kids healthy, strong and alive — physically and mentally. Obesity has such an impact on kids in many ways. As you've heard, it can be caused by and cause adverse childhood experiences. I believe it's our responsibility to protect our kids and raise the next generation to be healthier.

We came up with two kids' meals for our menu with the support of the American Heart Association and the guidance of Sysco, our food supplier. We made a "Little" Chicken Burrito and whole wheat Veggie Flatbread.

Not only did adding low fat cheese, veggies and whole grains help make our kids' meals super healthy, but we also focused on portion control. I think one of the most important things when it comes to any one of the items we put on our menu is portion control. We over-serve especially in the restaurant industry, so this was an opportunity for us to right-size what kids are eating while still providing delicious options.

Creating healthier choices for growing kids is a no brainer. It's our responsibility to provide guidance and to make the healthy choice the easy choice. Restaurants get on the train and serve our kids better.. It's easy to make a simple change that can make a world of difference for our kids.

Tom Murphy
Owner, Twiggs American Gastropub
Founder, Sweethearts & Heroes