

Be Active and Healthy at Home

You don't need a gym membership or expensive fitness equipment to get moving at home. Looking for ideas on how to get started? Review these helpful tips to start your family on a more active and healthier lifestyle at home.

1. Encourage physical activity versus media use using some of the activities below.
 - Set limits to media use. Children who have time limits when using various media devices consume nearly 3 hours less a day than those who don't have rules.¹
 - If your child has a difficult time breaking away from screen-time activities, reward them when they are physically active for at least 30 minutes with an extra 5-10 minutes on their favorite media. Allow your child to "cash" in their minutes on prior agreed upon media activities. This helps kids learn to balance physical activity and sedentary behaviors. Pretty soon your kids will have so much fun earning their extra minutes that physical activity will become part of their daily routine.
 - Remove televisions from bedrooms. Televisions in bedrooms has been associated with increased time watching television and increased prevalence of obesity.²
 - Identify activities to help get your family moving during times you would usually sit and watch television and/or play on the computer.
 - Come up with some creative ways to encourage activity during the commercials of your favorite shows.
2. Provide your children with games and toys that encourage them to be physically active. Try playing your favorite childhood games with your kids - charades, Simon says, jump rope, tag, and hide and seek are no-cost fun ways to be active. Prefer sports activities? Find a ball and play catch, shoot baskets, or kick goals in your backyard. If you are looking for an active game to purchase think about games such as Twister or game-consoles that encourage movement.
3. Identify local parks and recreation centers in your neighborhood to visit and/or join.
4. Walk your dog as a family. If you don't have a dog, go on a walk as a family.
5. Try new healthy snacks and meals; introduce your family to new vegetables and fruits. Encourage your children to pick a new vegetable or fruit for your family to explore and prepare.
6. Provide transportation to children's physical activities. If the activities are not too far, walk or bike to the activity with your children.
7. Encourage your children to try new physical activities. Enroll them in a summer camp or parks and recreation course, so they can learn new activities and games.
8. Participate in physical activities or sports with your children.
9. Model healthy choices and behaviors for children. Daily physical activity should become a healthy habit just like brushing your teeth daily.
10. Learn new fun physical activities. Make a list of activities that your family would like to try. Remember to incorporate a variety of aerobic, muscular strength, endurance and flexibility activities. Once you try one, cross it off your list and move to your next activity.
11. Ensure safe participation in activities – enroll in a swim class, CPR class, bike safely class, etc.

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I plan to encourage physical activity and healthy eating at home by:	Start Date	Completion Date
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Remember: Children and adolescents need 60 minutes or more of physical activity – a combination of moderate-intensity aerobic activity (brisk walking) and vigorous-intensity activity (running) – each day. Activities that increase the heart rate making conversations difficult while moving are considered to be moderate to vigorous physical activities. Incorporate vigorous-intensity activity at least three days per week. Adults should accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic activity weekly and include muscular strength and endurance activities at least two days a week.

For more information regarding physical activity guidelines visit www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/index.html.

¹ Kaiser Family Foundation (2010). Daily Media Use Among Children and Teens Up Dramatically From Five Years Ago. Retrieved from <http://www.kff.org/entmedia/entmedia012010nr.cfm> on August 2, 2011.

² Department of Health and Human Services & Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2011). Children's Food Environment State Indicator Report, 2011. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/downloads/ChildrensFoodEnvironment.pdf> on August 2, 2011.