

Keeping Kids Active: Ideas for Parents

Each year, more and more kids choose to watch TV and play video games instead of riding their bike or playing ball. Regular exercise is needed to build strong bones and muscles. Exercise also helps you sleep at night and stay alert during the day. Active kids are more likely to become active adults.

You have the power to give your kids a lifelong appreciation for activities that strengthen their bodies.

- **Set a Good Example** – Parents are the most influential people in their kid’s life. If you want an active child, be active yourself. Find fun activities that the whole family can do together.
- **Limit Screen Time** – One way to increase your kid’s activity level is to limit the number of hours they're allowed to watch TV each day. Also, limit other sedentary activities such as playing video and computer games or talking on the phone.
- **Promote Activity, Not Exercise** – Kids don't have to be in sports or take dance classes to be active. There are many noncompetitive activities available for kids who aren't interested in organized athletics. The key is to find things your kid likes to do.

Family Time Activities

- Play games your elementary school child loves...Tag; Cops & Robbers; Simon Says; and Red Light, Green Light.
- Let your toddlers and preschoolers see how much fun you can have while being active. Don't just run with them...run like a gorilla, walk like a spider, hop like a bunny, and stretch like a cat.
- Plan your family vacations around physical activities — hiking, biking, skiing, snorkeling, swimming, or camping. Take along a ball or Frisbee to sneak in some activity at rest stops.
- Make chores a family affair. Who can pull the most weeds out of the garden? Who can collect the most litter in the neighborhood? Have your kids help shovel snow off the driveway and use it to build a snow fort.
- Vary the activities. Let each child take a turn choosing the activity of the day or week. What matters is that you're doing something active as a family.



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