

October 10, 2014



Share the Wellness Tip

Families That Play Together Stay Fit Together

Parents and caregivers can set a great example for the whole family by creating a healthy environment at home. The first question to ask is, "Are your kids getting the physical activity they need to stay healthy?" Youth ages 6 to 17 need 60 minutes of activity daily according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

An Hour a Day

An hour can seem like a lot of time for today's busy kids who often juggle homework and extra-curricular activities. But homework shouldn't be an excuse for inactivity. Fitter kids tend to have higher grade point averages, says a new study. Other research shows that regular physical activity may be linked with better classroom behavior and improved thinking skills.

It's well worth making time for fitness. Physical activity can help kids develop healthy muscles and bones. It also reduces their risk of developing diseases, such as diabetes and heart disease. Active kids have lower blood pressure and healthier cholesterol levels.

Parents play a key role in helping kids stay active. Kids are more likely to be active if they have the support of their families. Try the strategies below to keep your kids moving this fall.

Up and At 'Em

Make moving more a goal for your entire family. Your views toward physical activity influence what your kids think of exercise. So set a good example by joining in yourself. Here are some fun ideas you can all do together:

- ✂ Schedule an active family fun day over the weekend. Go for a bike ride or hike together, and look at the fall colors. Have a pickup football game in the backyard.
- ✂ When one of your children has a sports game, bike to the game as a family and cheer for your athlete.
- ✂ Go for a family walk together after dinner instead of watching TV.
- ✂ Start a family competition. See who can be the first person in your family to meet a certain physical activity goal, such as exercising five days in a week.
- ✂ Sign up for a charity walk or run as a family. Train together for the event.

Sources: *Letsmove.gov; Journal of Pediatrics*

