



A Few Tips to Get Your Children Moving!

Introduction

Adding daily physical activity to a child's daily routine is not only recommended but can have a positive impact on their health and self-esteem. Listed below are a few tips to help parents support and encourage children to become physically active on a daily basis.

As you begin, it is important to note that children and adolescents need to get 60 or more minutes of physical activity each day. This should include a combination of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, such as brisk walking, and vigorous-intensity activity, such as running. Activities that increase the heart rate and breathing, making conversations difficult while moving, are considered to be moderate to vigorous physical activities. Be sure to include vigorous-intensity aerobic activity on at least three days per week.

Another way for you to determine if you are getting the U.S. Surgeon General's recommendation for daily physical activity is to strive for at least 10,000 steps a day!

For more information on physical activity recommendations please visit www.CDC.gov.

TIPS

- Provide a safe play environment and facilitate physical activity.
- As a parent, serve as a good role model by showing your children that you strive to be physically active as well. They will learn how you adjust your schedule to include physical activity as well as other healthy habits. Your children will see that you value physical activity which will encourage them to also value it.
- Sign your children up for a local sports league and/or summer camp to meet new friends, participate in group activities, and develop new skills. This is a great way for children to be exposed to new physical activities. Children will begin to learn the skills and rules of the game. You never know when you will introduce an activity that they will love and want to participate in for a lifetime.
- Expose your children to other physical activities by taking them to watch a sporting event such as basketball, baseball, soccer, football, track, golf, etc. or take them to watch a ballet or production that is centered around physical activity. Discuss the event as you watch it by pointing out skills, rules, and



TIPS CONTINUED

proper etiquette, If your child shows interest, enroll them in lessons, camp, or play it with them to see if they enjoy participating in the activity.

- Provide your child with a pedometer and help them log their steps daily and reward them for meeting specific achievements or goals! About 10,000 steps a day will help you determine if you are getting the recommended physical activity requirements! If you don't have a pedometer, you can have them log their total minutes of physical activity per day and reward them when they achieve their goal.
- Promote physical activity. Children will stay more interested in staying physically fit if the activities are fun and engaging.
- Develop a weekly routine that includes daily physical activity and set aside time to be physically active together.
- Limit screen time (i.e. television watching, computer, texting) by encouraging your child to play active games and sports.
- Participate in physical activities with your child or as a family.
- Work with your child to develop his/her physical skills so they can feel confident in trying new physical activities.
- Support your child in their sport activities by asking your child if they had fun and enjoyed participating so that they are not only focusing on the outcome of the game.
- When the option permits, take the stairs and/or park a little bit further away from your entrance. This can help you add a few extra steps a day!
- Provide your children with books/videos/etc. that show characters that are practicing healthy lifestyle behaviors.
- Plan weekend physical activities in which the whole family can participate and be active together.
- Give children chores to do in and around the house. Housework is a good way to add some physical activity to your daily routine; have your child help you vacuum, sweep, or wash the dishes. Are the seasons changing? Have your child help you rake the leaves, shovel the snow, or water the lawn. Remember your 60 minutes of physical activity per day does not need to happen all at once; it can be broken down into 10 minute segments.



TIPS CONTINUED

- Find activities that are fun and educational in which you are also moving on your feet. Examples include visiting zoos, museums, and amusement parks.
- Make a family afternoon bike ride a regular occurrence.
- Instead of watching television as a family after dinner, take a walk together.
- Find an active class or community event to enroll your entire family such as a dance class or a 5K event.

