

Suggested Activities For Your Preschool Children and Family

- Play hopscotch
- Play frisbee or catch
- Jump rope
- Swim at the pool, lake, or beach
- Play tag
- Dance
- Take a family walk after-dinner
- Play hide and seek
- Walk the dog together
- Involve the neighborhood kids and families



Facts about Physical Activity

- The percentage of overweight children has more than doubled since the early 1970s.
- Physical inactivity and poor diet account for an estimated 300,000 deaths per year.
- People who are overweight or obese increase their risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, arthritis-related disabilities, and some cancers.
- Children spend an average of 17 hours a week watching TV.
- Not getting an adequate amount of exercise is associated with needing more medication, visiting a physician more often, and being hospitalized more often.
- Inactive children are more likely to become inactive adults.
- The cost of overweight and obesity to the U.S. economy is \$117 billion annually in direct and indirect medical costs.

Sources:
http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/bb_nutrition/index.htm

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=771>

Starting Healthy[®] Tips for Parents

Physical Activity



Sources:

American Council on Exercise
www.acefitness.org

American Academy of Pediatrics
www.aap.org

American Heart Association
www.americanheart.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov

KidsHealth
http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_fit/index.html

National Institute of Diabetes & Digestive & Kidney Diseases

<http://www.niddk.nih.gov/health/nutrit/pubs/helpchld.htm>

President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports

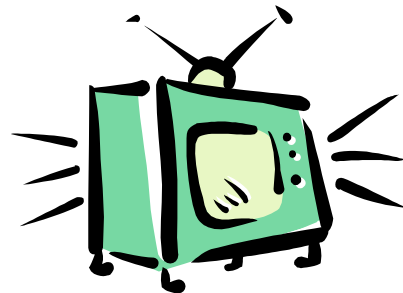
Why Is Physical Activity Important?

Children can substantially improve their health and quality of life by making physical activity a part of their daily lives. Being physically active early in life has many physical, social, and emotional benefits that can reduce the burden of chronic diseases, in adulthood. Physical activity reduces the risk of premature mortality, coronary heart disease, hypertension, colon cancer, and diabetes mellitus. Regular physical activity in childhood improves strength and endurance, helps build healthy bones and muscles, helps control weight, reduces anxiety and stress, increases self-esteem, and may improve blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Positive experiences with physical activity at a young age help lay the basis for being regularly active throughout life.



What Can I Do To Help My Children?

As a parent, it is important to set limits to guide your children. Monitor sedentary activities, such as TV watching. Set a limit of less than two hours a day of TV. Use the extra time for different types of physical activity or family exercise.



Be a Good Fitness Role Model

It is well known that you, as parents, have a huge influence on the exercise behaviors of your children. Your child is likely to adopt your exercise habits, so if you increase your activity level, your children will too.



Involve the Entire Family

You can introduce more physical activity into your children's lives by involving the entire family. Make it fun! Talk to your children and family about the benefits of physical activity. Family involvement helps to teach everyone healthy habits.