

Activate Your Family!

Physical activity. It helps you right away, no matter what kind you choose. Moving muscles and making your heart beat faster can help you feel better and reduce stress. It can give you more energy and improve your sleep and focus. Staying active over time helps your family members keep healthy weights. It also protects them from heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, and osteoporosis (weak bones). And, there's more! Kids who are active often do better in school. **Establishing an active lifestyle can help your family live longer, healthier lives.**



How much activity do kids need?

Kids should get **1 hour or more** of physical activity every day. This can be spread out in periods of 10-15 minutes. Physical activity can be moderate or vigorous. Below are some examples of each kind. Kids should do vigorous activity on at least 3 days each week. (Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans)

What is moderate activity?		What is vigorous activity?	
Games and sports that are similar to fast walking:		Games and sports that are more intense than fast walking. They make you sweat:	
hopscotch	kickball	swimming	basketball
playground play	4 square	jumping rope	running
bike riding	frisbee	soccer	aerobic dancing

Parents are important role models!

Don't forget that grown ups need to stay active too! Adults should do 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate activity or 1 hour and 15 minutes of vigorous activity each week. Kids with active families are more likely to stay active as adults. You don't need to join a gym! Try these ways to enjoy physical activity together as a family:



- Play a game of tag or soccer after school.
- Plan at least 1 fun physical activity together on weekends.
- Involve kids in active chores, like putting away groceries or sweeping.
- Take the stairs when you're at your favorite museum or library.
- Turn off the TV and take a walk or dance around the house after dinner.

Your local community centers can help

Many community centers, such as the YMCA and the Boys and Girls Club, offer kids and families fun physical activities.

For more information:

Check out www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/exercise.html or the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans at <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/factsheetprof.aspx>

