

Regular exercise boosts your child's health and academics

Physical fitness provides many benefits for children. Studies show that regular physical activity is linked to higher self-esteem and attentiveness in school. It also lowers the chance of health problems such as type 2 diabetes.

Here are some ways to increase your child's activity level:

- Plan family outings. Pick activities your family enjoys and create some new healthy traditions. You might go for a walk after dinner or head to a park every Sunday afternoon.
- Make suggestions. When your child has a friend over, suggest they play games that involve movement, such as tag, soccer and jumping rope. Indoors, try games such as Simon Says and Red Light, Green Light.
- Add movement to screen time. Encourage your child to take breaks that involve activity when she watches TV or plays video games.
- Be creative. You can find lots of ways to sneak in exercise. During chore time, play music or race to finish a job. While doing errands, park a few blocks away from a store and walk. Or, make a quick stop at a playground on the way home.
- Set an example. If your child sees you staying fit (stretching, biking, walking with a friend, etc.), she is more likely to be active herself.

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