

Strengthening Families

Parent Newsletter July 2011



"Lack of activity destroys the good condition of every human being, while movement and methodical physical exercise save it and preserve it."
--Plato

Everyday Parenting Ideas: Tips for Motivating Couch Potato Kids



As summer break approaches, kids can be easily tempted into increasing their sedentary activities---surfing the Internet, texting friends, watching TV shows and movies, and playing video games. It's important, however, to find a balance so that kids are doing both and getting the physical health benefits of regular exercise. Today, the Center for Disease Control says that 65.3% of kids are not meeting recommended levels of physical activity. Encourage your child to get active with these ideas:

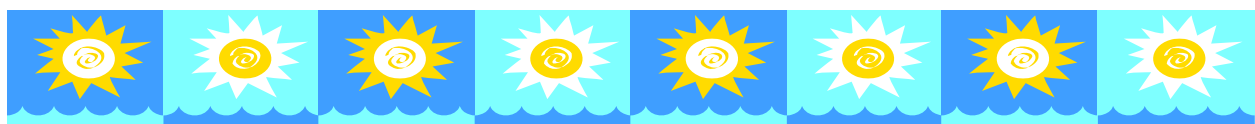
Tips for all parents:

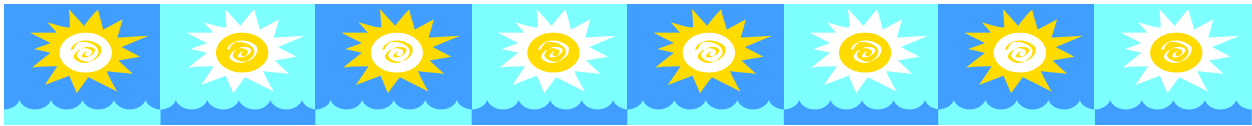
- **Talk to your kids about why exercise is important.** Kids are more likely to do something if they understand why it's good for them.
 - **Set a good example.** Exercise with your kids. Model what you value by getting involved in some type of physical activity. Stick with it and talk about it.
- Encourage your kids to get creative with physical activity.** Exercise doesn't have to be a chore. Keep trying different types of exercise until your child finds something that interests her.

Tips for parents with children ages birth to 5:

- **Incorporate movement into your daily routine.** Play chase with your kids to get them running. Dance to music.
- Plan active outings.** Go to the playground together. Follow your child through the playground equipment. If you don't fit in the equipment, walk around so that you get some get exercise while your child plays.

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Tips parents with children ages 6 to 9:

- **Encourage kids to try different sports to see what interests them.** If they become bored or discouraged with traditional sports like basketball or gymnastics, encourage them to try something different, like archery or fencing.

Help your kids master a new, active skill---riding a two-wheeled bicycle, swimming, Tae-Kwon-Do.

Tips for parents with children ages 10 to 15:

- **At this age, some kids gravitate toward being sedentary.** Make time to take walks with them, or encourage them to take an exercise class with a friend or family member. Some kids at this age begin to master a physical activity, especially if they've played it for a number of years.

Encourage them to go deeper into the sport.

Tips for parents with children ages 16 to 18:

- **Talk about how it's never too late to start exercising.** Sometimes an older teenager who has lost interest in physical activity will find a new interest in exercise. Encourage your child to deepen her interest. For kids who tell you that they're "not athletes" and "can't compete" with classmates, make the case that everyone benefits from exercise.

Help teenagers find individual activities (such as jogging or walking on a treadmill) that keep them physically active without competition.

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Strengthening Families Information

**If you are interested in learning more about our program, upcoming groups,
and our year round family activities...**

Contact Natalie @973-383-4787

