

parent tips

Be Active and Have Fun

Be active with your family each day. Here are some tips to fit physical activity into a busy week—and make it fun!



Find the best times to be active.

First, I will:

- Keep track of how my family spends our time for one week.
- Find two 30-minute time slots when my family could fit in physical activity.
 - Choose times when my family is usually together to try an activity.
 - Choose times when we usually have a lot of energy.

Start small.

Which of these activities will work for your family?

- Taking a walk or play tag with the children.
- Walking to work, school, or a friend's house.
- Using chores to move more; I can burn calories while I vacuum, rake leaves, or scrub floors.
- Asking my family to start (add your own ideas here!):

Start with what you know.

What will you start to do?

- Do things I know how to do—riding a bike or dancing.
- Pick activities that don't need any costly sports gear—like jogging, doing pushups, or tossing a ball.
- Get active at home, in my neighborhood, or in the park.
 - I don't need to go to a gym.
 - I can try active video games, where my kids and I dance or run in place.

Make a pledge to:

Be active together.

I plan to:

- Play with my kids or let them join me for an exercise video or fitness game.
- Set up a birthday party or other social event that gets people moving, like dancing or having a jump rope contest.
- Exercise with friends.

Try new things.

I haven't done this before, so I will:

- Ask a friend to teach me a sport or active game.
- Take a dance or sports class. Sign my kids up for a class too.

If your family does not want to be active:

- Tell them physical activity will help make their bodies strong and healthy.
- Lead by example. When they see you having fun, they will want to join in.
- Tell them being active will give them more energy. Ask them to try it for two or three weeks and see how they feel.
- Have children choose fun ways to get moving.

Get support.

When I need support, I will:

- Find free or low-cost programs to help me and my family move more, such as:
 - Parks and recreation or YMCA programs
 - After school programs
 - Exercise classes at work
- Tell friends and family that I am trying to move more. Ask them to support my efforts.

We Can! is a program from the National Institutes of Health that offers resources for parents, caregivers and communities to help children 8-13 years old stay at a healthy weight through eating right, increasing physical activity, and reducing screen time.

To learn more, go to <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov> or call 1-866-35-WE CAN.

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