

How to Get Your Kids Moving!

Hannah Guenther (hannah.guenther@unl.edu), Extension Educator

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommends that children ages 6-17 should be getting at least 60 minutes or 1 hour of physical activity each day. This hour should include aerobic, muscle strengthening, and bone strengthening activities. Dedicating only 5% of their day to staying physically active may sound like a small feat, but with the appeal of movies, air conditioning, video games, and social media, it is becoming more and more challenging to get our children excited about physical activity. Here are tips and tricks to get your children away from a screen and moving.



Make Movement Fun

It is hard to compete with an interactive video game, so it is especially important to market physical activities in such a way that kids look forward to participating in them. These are ways to make movement fun, exciting, and a part of their daily routine.

1. **CHECK LIST** – create a checklist for your kids that includes 20 minutes of physical activity before any sort of electronics. Kids will love the feeling of accomplishment of checking it off their list, but also may just come back for more when they see the fun they have with physical activities.
2. **ACTIVITY JAR** – many times it is challenging to think of an activity. “Walk around the yard” does not sound very enticing. With the help of the kids, write down a long list of fun activities including tag, basketball, relay race, soccer, yoga, etc. and put them into a jar. When it comes time to get moving, have them draw out an activity
3. **FIT DICE** – find a pair of dice and write down an exercise that corresponds with each number. Roll the dice and complete the exercise with the other dice providing the number of repetitions that must be completed.

More Family Fun on the Run information: <http://go.unl.edu/familyfun>

Sources:

1. What Counts for Children and Teens? Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://go.unl.edu/what-counts-cdc>
2. Physical Activity for Children: An Overview, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://go.unl.edu/activity-children-cdc>

Think Variety

It is important that kids are not only moving but that they are gaining endurance, building muscle, and strengthening their bones. Here is a list of activities that your child could do. The most important thing is that activities are age appropriate and monitored by an adult if necessary.

AEROBIC: Nature walks, I Spy Outside, relay race, duck-duck-goose, swim lesson, sports camp, online dance lesson, choreograph dance, exercise video, bike ride, scooter ride

MUSCLE-STRENGTHENING: Yoga, tug of war, modified pushups, sit ups, rope/tree climbing, playground play, monkey bars, gymnastics, water bottle weights

BONE-STRENGTHENING: Hopscotch on the sidewalk, running, jump rope, basketball, volleyball, tennis