

# Getting kids to exercise

**Show works better than tell with children.**

This summer, get your kids involved in some fun outdoor activities. It not only keeps them active but also eliminates boredom. Here are some suggestions for parents on how they can motivate their children to be active.

Don't just tell your children that exercise is fun – show them! Go biking, hiking or in-line skating together. Join younger children on the jungle gym, which is a great piece of equipment for building strength and coordination.

Include children in vigorous household tasks, such as gardening or washing the car, by making them fun activities rather than chores.

Plan outings and activities that involve walking, such as trips to the zoo, a theme park or even the mall.

Check if a local gym or fitness centre offers special exercise programs for children.

Create a reward system to motivate children on the move. Recognize good fitness habits with new equipment, such as a soccer ball, jump rope or even a bike.

Emphasize the positive aspects of participation in organized sports, such as improved health, teamwork and self-esteem. Avoid



focusing on competition and failure.

When trying to motivate teenagers to exercise, appeal to their need for entertainment and social interaction. Whenever possible, include their friends in your fitness activities.

Exercise and nutrition are equally important to good health. Be a good role model with your own eating habits, and don't battle with children about food. Make changes in eating habits gradually, and continue to include some food items they enjoy. 🍌

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■ For information on exercise equipment, contact Fitness Source at 905-660-4888.

*This article was written by the American Council on Exercise.*