

Boosting family physical activity

Almost all of us were naturally active and playful as kids. As we grew up, we lost many opportunities for play and movement. Now is the time to regain that playfulness as a family and enjoy spending time together.

- Make time** – It can be a challenge, but parents who prioritise time for family activity take the most important step toward encouraging healthy habits in children.
- Get the right gear** – Have you got a generous supply of balls, bats, racquets, Frisbees, water pistols and other outdoor gear?
- Give active gifts** – If you don't have the right gear, start collecting it by giving your children these gifts for birthdays or Christmas. And make sure relatives know to give active gifts too – just not all the same item!
- Choose active outings** – On weekends, go to the park, zoo, museum, beach, kids play centre and places that require you to keep moving.
- Walk together** – Go for family walks. Walk the dog, get the papers or explore a park.
- Make time for playtime** – Time with children doesn't need to be structured, but you do need to structure time for play.
- Help with chores** – Involve children in chores that get them moving. Involve them in cleaning up their room, tidying the house or gardening.
- Try sports** – Sports like soccer, athletics and cricket help children build coordination and confidence. Introduce the kids to different sports to help them find one they enjoy – one that promotes participation, rather than competitiveness.
- Active parties** – Include activity in birthday parties or family get togethers. Try mini-golf, ice-skating or simply a game of backyard cricket.

