



Keeping Your Child Active

TAKE A HOLISTIC APPROACH: Well-being must focus on the whole person. Provide activities that support your child's physical, emotional, social and nutritional health to ensure their overall wellness. Activities can be structured or simply be playtime that is fun and engaging. Ask your child about ways you can support their well-being.

KNOW YOUR LIMITS: Determine what type of activities your child enjoys, and the right time length that is appropriate for your child's age and stage. Recognize the physical restrictions of your youth and of your specific environment - some activities will fit better than others. Put some screen-time limits in place or, as a compromise, find ways to use technology to incorporate activity through apps, games, music, and exercise instruction for all types and age ranges.

MAKE IT FUN: You are much more likely to continue in an activity that you enjoy. Encourage your child to be adventurous and try lots of different activities to help discover what is most fun for them. Being active does not mean it has to be structured or a recognized sport - spark creativity and make up your own games and activities depending on the situation. Offer fun incentives to encourage your child and involve them in the planning and implementation of these activities.

MAKE IT PART OF THE ROUTINE: Similar to a regular school day, structure plays an important role in keeping kids active by making sure it is a priority. Scheduling activity does not have to be as rigid as it sounds - adapt a schedule that makes sense for your family whether that means several small breaks during the day to be active, or planning 1-2 major chunks of the day that are focused on movement.

FIND MOTIVATION: What activities motivate your child? Do they enjoy nature and the outdoors? Do they have a competitive side, or prefer individual/small group activities? Help them understand the wonderful health benefits and importance of taking care of your physical, mental, and nutritional health needs. Include your child in as many wellness decisions as possible, such as meal planning or a family fitness night.

INCORPORATE & LAYER: Using a holistic approach to wellness means you often can find activities that include several aspects of their well-being at the same time. For example, a walk & talk to debrief your day or cooking dinner together and doing exercise during the wait for the kitchen timer! Remember that everything is connected: physical activity helps sharpen the mind, while similarly a strong mental focus helps fuel your kinetic energy. And don't forget to layer good nutrition in to your day as a key component to helping youth stay on top of all their activities.