

SHARING SESSION NO. 2

Active Living: How to Get Families Moving

About the Activity

To start, use magazine pictures to introduce different kinds of daily activities – some active, some inactive. With the Move It! poster, show how to move more and sit less, include things to do less, enough, more, and plenty. Introduce the guideline for moderate activity: children (at least 60 minutes on most days) and adults (at least 30 minutes on most days). Pass out the Active Living for Families newsletter (No. 36). Sum up by restating the guidelines for moving more.

Getting Ready

Read: The outline to get comfortable with the messages, questions and activities

Get: Magazine pictures of people involved in different activities – some active, and some inactive

Copy: Newsletter No. 36: *Active Living for Families*
Make enough copies of the newsletters for all participants.

Display: *Move It!* poster



Do You Know?

Why encourage your family to keep moving? Active living promotes physical, social, and emotional health. These are some main benefits of regular physical activity.

- Helps improve body weight.
- Increases physical fitness.
- Lowers the risk of diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and some cancers.
- Builds muscle strength and stamina.
- Builds and maintains healthy bones, muscles, and joints.
- Promotes fun with family and friends.
- Improves relations within your family.
- Reduces feelings of stress.
- Helps you sleep better.
- Makes the most of physical appearance.
- Helps you feel good about yourself.

Another reason: If you keep moving, you won't need to worry as much about how much you eat.

Refer to newsletter No. 37 *Child's Play* for more about the benefits of active play for children.

How much physical activity is enough for you?

Try to fit at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days. A moderate activity is equal to walking 2 miles in 30 minutes. Three 10-minute chunks of active time are okay, too. If you've been out of action for a while, start slowly. Being active with your family counts!

What's enough active play for young children? Most young children move a lot. Your child needs at least 60 minutes of moving on most days. How do you know if your body is getting a good workout?

Use the talk-sing test:

If you can talk while doing a physical activity, you're probably moving at a pace that's right for you.

If you're too breathless to talk, slow down. If you can sing, you may not be working hard enough – so get moving!

How can your family fit action in their lives – and have fun?

Getting the whole family to sit less and move more is an appropriate goal. No one needs to do a sport to be active. Just spend less time sitting in front of the TV or computer, and more time in active daily activities, such as walking, using stairs, and cutting grass. Developing habits for everyday activity is easier to fit into your day for a lifetime, than trying to get your physical activity from a sport.

How could you encourage kids to move more?

Be active yourself. Children mimic what their parents and older siblings do. Four newsletters (Nos. 36 - 39) have ideas for active living and active fun for children and families.



Why don't you move more?

"No time"



"Don't like to exercise!"

"Easier to sit around"



"No place to do it"

"Don't know what to do"



"Family and friends aren't"

"I'm embarrassed"



"Can't stay looking good"

What would you suggest ?

"Make it part of your daily routine: for example, walk as you talk on the phone, use stairs, do something while you watch TV, walk with a friend, play actively with your child."

"Give it a chance. Try it for a while. Make an effort to enjoy it. Find an activity you like to do – perhaps with your family."

"Consider this: Sitting around can result in weight gain, among other things. And that may lead to health problems down the line."

"No place to do it. All you need are everyday things: for example, grassy field or park, a backyard, sidewalk, running track."

"Let's come up with some easy ways you can fit active living in – in a way that's fun and matches your schedule."

"Be a role model for your family. Your child will do what you do. Get a family member or a friend to be your exercise buddy."

"You probably aren't alone. Others may be thinking more about what they're doing than looking at you."

"Many everyday activities won't make you sweat, mess up your hair, or break a nail. Even if they did, what's more important: how you look for just a little while...or your health for life?"

Does My Child Have a Weight Problem?

Your child may be normal, not fat.

If you are concerned about your child's weight, remember this:

- Your child may gain weight before a growth spurt. They're normal! It may be still concerned with the school.
- Make kids play more (outside whenever a child's weight is their top priority. That may be a clue to your child's future weight and health.

If you suspect a weight problem:

Get help. Talk to your child's health care provider for help. There's usually a reason for a weight problem. The longer you wait, the greater the risk for weight problems in the long and adult years.

Specialty diets from regular meals help your health care professional see if your child's weight and height are within healthy ranges. Your child counts on you to get advice from experts.

If your child is overweight:

Weight loss during isn't a healthy approach. Instead, help your overweight child grow into his or her correct weight.

Withholding food isn't right for kids.

- **Offering to eat for most children is often offering to eat for most children without**
- Your child might not get enough food energy and nutrients to grow properly, learn, and play.
- Your child may learn to think food when you're not working.
- Kids feel bad about themselves when they're treated differently. That feeling may turn to anger, stress, or resentment.
- Your child won't learn to control how much he or she eats if you decide what's enough – or if you push your child to eat less.



Illustration by: NIBBLES FOR HEALTH 26 Nutrition Newsletter for Parents of Young Children, USDA, Food and Nutrition Service

Let's Move... Cold Weather Fun!

Cold weather offers great ways to have family fun. Take time to play together – and move more. You'll all feel good! As an adult, you need to move for at least 30 minutes on most days. Your child needs at least 60 minutes of moving on most days.



Get Moving INDOORS

- **Put out a map.** Read a book together, then go to get it done. If it's a book about food, make it to the kitchen together later.
- **Green an obstacle course.** Both have to make one without, crawl through open boxes and jump into fabric bins.
- **Turn up the music and dance.** Sing your arms like a compass. Or dance to the music like a cat, bird, horse, elephant, or frog. You do it, too!
- **Make bread, soft pretzels, or pizza.** Bread, dough, and soft dough. It's good for your muscles. The kneading is good to keep it soft for you!
- **Start planning your garden.** Pick a library book about soil and gardening. Look it up and color. Plan for spring.
- **Your family's ideas.**



Get Moving OUTSIDE

- **Enjoy nature lessons.** Ride bikes in a park. Enjoy the pleasure of jumping in it!
- **Bundle up for snow play.** Create angels. Make a "snow bunny" with a pot for shaking the snow.
- **Take a nature hike.** Look for animal tracks in the snow and leaves and look to start writing an outdoor log book.
- **Walk to the store.** Use the snow to help with your winter shoes. Talk about how they fit on the snow. Look for animal tracks in the park.
- **Take a neighborhood walk.** How does it look different in cold weather?
- **Decorate an outdoor tree for the kids.** Hang winter ornaments and a snow globe, or picture strings.
- **Your family's ideas.**



Illustration by: NIBBLES FOR HEALTH 26 Nutrition Newsletter for Parents of Young Children, USDA, Food and Nutrition Service

Child's Play!

Your child is designed to move! Most kids like to climb, crawl, run, jump, swing, tumble, twist, stretch, and peddle. In fact, active play is the "work" of a childhood. By moving more and sitting less, your child also learns to live in a healthy way.

Active play can promote:

Confidence and creativity in your child's actions.

Confidence and independence in your child's actions.

Learning to your child's body and brain develop a better ability to learn.

Active play can develop body skills:

Strength, flexibility, and endurance to perform and respond to the world's tasks.

Coordination of small and large muscles, which helps with overall learning.

Body awareness in your child's body and how it changes body use.

Active play promotes:

Stress relief and good sleep in your child's life. Active play and exercise is a healthy way to get rid of stress (good for you, too!).

Healthy weight when moving more and sitting less helps from the effects of overeating.

Living health – Keeping your child active can help protect your child from getting diabetes at a young age. Moving more helps lower the chances of diabetes and heart disease later in your child's life. There, too!

Active play is fun for your child and you!

When you move more, your child will, too.



Illustration by: NIBBLES FOR HEALTH 27 Nutrition Newsletter for Parents of Young Children, USDA, Food and Nutrition Service

Let's Move... Warm Weather Fun!

When the weather is warm, play outside together! You don't need to spend money to fit active fun into your family life.

Try to move for at least 30 minutes on most days. Your child needs to move for at least 60 minutes on most days. You'll both feel great!

Check if you active ways your family might have fun. Set dates.

Get Moving OUTDOORS

- **Create sidewalk art.** Use colored chalk or "paint" with water and brushes.
- **Chase shadows** in the summer sun on the light of a full moon.
- **Play hopscotch.** Draw a hopscotch game on the sidewalk. Young children can jump from square to square. Older kids – and you – can hop, skip, and jump!
- **Choose a parade!** Dress up with ability and creativity. Parade through the neighborhood.
- **Visit a farmer's market.** Walk and talk about the food. See something to prepare and eat at home.
- **Run through the garden sprinkler!**
- **Go fruit picking!** Pick your own apples, blueberries, raspberries, and other garden fruits. Where you grow them, too!
- **Splish in a pond, lake, or stream.** Other streams.
- **Fly a kite. Blow bubbles.** Make bubbles whenever they get!
- **Walk to the store or library.** How far? How long? Talk about what you see along the way.
- **Visit a petting farm.**
- **Celebrate an outdoor festival.** Look for activities planned for young children.
- **Enjoy a playground.** If it's closed for young children.
- **Play games that move.** "Tag around the Block," "Simon Says," others.
- **Plan a "week day" wagon.** Invite outdoor time – and the family pet!
- **Go on a nature hike.** Look for wild flowers, insects, birds, rocks, shells, butterflies, and other natural things.
- **Work in a garden.** Make one now.
- **Your family's ideas.**



Illustration by: NIBBLES FOR HEALTH 27 Nutrition Newsletter for Parents of Young Children, USDA, Food and Nutrition Service

Try This for a Sharing Session!

Show the magazine pictures of people doing active and inactive things.

ASK

- Which pictures show how you spend a typical day?
- Where do the pictured activities fit on the Activity Pyramid?
- What might that mean for keeping healthy?

Use the *Move It!* poster to talk about moving more and sitting less:

- Point out the LESS section at the top of the Activity Pyramid, DO LESS of these activities.
 - What kinds of things should you do less of? (*Limit sitting around: watching TV, using the computer, or other inactive play or free time. Too much time sitting is linked to overweight and certain diseases.*)
- Point out the ENOUGH section of the Activity Pyramid, DO ENOUGH of these activities.
 - What things could your child do to get stronger? What could you do to keep your muscles and bones strong? (*Do enough strengthening activities to keep your muscles firm and your bones strong.*)
- Point out the MORE section of the Activity Pyramid, DO MORE of these activities.
 - What things could your child do to get his or her heart beating? What could you do? (*Do more intense activities that warm you up and make your heart beat. Your heart needs exercise to stay healthy.*)
- Point out the PLENTY section of the Activity Pyramid, DO PLENTY of these activities.
 - What every day things could your child do to move more?
 - What can you do? (*Walk, climb the stairs, carry groceries, just keep moving whenever you can. Fit active living into the everyday things your family does.*)

POINT OUT

- Move more to stay healthy, keep your healthy weight, and have fun.
- To keep healthy:
 - Try to get at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most days.
 - Your child needs at least 60 minutes of active play on most days.
- Set a good example. Join in and arrange activities so everyone takes part.

Ask parents to come up with fun ways for kids and parents to move more and meet the activity guideline (at least 30 minutes for adult, at 60 minutes for kids on most days):

ENOUGH activities for getting stronger
MORE activities too make your heart beat
PLENTY of activities to move whenever you can.

SUM UP

- Repeat the activity guideline: 60 minutes or more of active play a day for children on most days; at least 30 minutes of moderate activity on most days for adults.
- Pass out the *Active Living for Families* newsletter, as a reminder at home.
- Reinforce: Use the activity pyramid to help you, your child, and your family move more and sit less.

Extend the Sharing Session Now or Later

Plan regular opportunities – perhaps weekly or monthly – for parents and children to have active fun together. This may help parents relax, have fun, and relearn the joy of “child play.”

- Go for a neighborhood walk together.
- Play circle games (indoors or out) where children and parents move.
- Take 15 minutes or more to work together in the center garden.
- Have a child-parent “dance” party.
- Act out favorite storybooks together.

Gather a group of parents and children. Teach them the “talk-sing test.” Put on music that parents and kids enjoy. Let them all move to the music. If they can still talk, they’re probably moving at the right pace. If they can sing, they need to move at a harder pace. And if they’re too breathless to talk, have them slow down.

Once parents know about active living, explore other issues related to moving more and sitting less presented in the *Nibbles for Health* newsletters, for example:

- No. 29 *Does My Child Have a Weight Problem?*
- No. 37 *Child’s Play!*
- No. 38 *Let’s Move... Cold Weather Fun!*
- No. 39 *Let’s Move... Warm Weather Fun!*



READ IT before you EAT IT!

How many servings are you eating?

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2
Amount Per Serving
Calories 250 Calories from Fat 100

Total Fat 10g
Saturated Fat 5g
Cholesterol 5mg
Sodium 100mg

Get What You Need!

Healthful Eating ... Food Labels Help!

Supermarkets sell thousands of foods. How do you make healthful choices for everyone in your family? Sometimes it seems overwhelming! The food label can help you. It's easy to use, even when your shopping trip is hectic.

Nutrition Facts on food labels tell you the calories (or food energy) and nutrients in one serving of food inside the package. Look for the nutrition information on the front, near fresh fruits, vegetables, meat, poultry, or fish, too.

- Be so smart -- and see the best foods for your family.
- See how calories (food energy) and nutrients change with bigger or smaller servings.
- Compare the % Daily Value in similar foods.

READ IT before you EAT IT!

How many servings are you eating?

Calories in one serving
For best strength, double the calories. For attention to choose foods for a healthy weight.

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2
Amount Per Serving
Calories 250 Calories from Fat 100

Total Fat 10g
Saturated Fat 5g
Cholesterol 5mg
Sodium 100mg

% Daily Value (DV)
is the amount of a nutrient in one serving compared to dietary recommendations.

5% LESS
10% or less is low
20% or more is high

Move It! Choose your FUN!

Your body wants you to be active to help strengthen your bones and heart, and build muscles.

Activity

Choose your FUN!

Do...
LESS
Spend less time sitting around watching TV or using the computer.

ENOUGH
Spend enough strengthening time to keep your muscles firm.

MORE