



WIC Healthy Family Newsletter

Winter 2005

Getting Active

Being overweight can lead to serious health problems for both children and adults. Are you ready to help your family keep a healthy weight? Physical activity for about 30 minutes most days of the week improves health, can be fun time with your children, and helps with weight loss and maintenance. These ideas can get you started.

- ① Find fun ways to be active in your house. Put masking tape on the floor in a straight line and pretend to walk the “tight rope” with your child. Jump up and down with your child on a soft, skid-proof rug. Invite your child to sit with you on a bare floor, pull your knees up and both of you use your hands to spin in circles on your bottoms.
- ② Use music at your house to dance with your children or teach them to dance with their dolls or stuffed animals. You can use music to make doing chores with your children a fun activity.
- ③ Find toys that encourage your children to play actively. At most neighborhood shops and department stores you can find inexpensive balls, Frisbees, jump ropes, Hula Hoops, and chalk to make a hopscotch board. They bring children hours of fun and active play.
- ④ Look for a program to teach your children to swim. This great activity will help you and your children beat the heat in Texas while staying active.
- ⑤ Go on a family picnic. Play tag, ball, or other games before you eat.
- ⑥ Take a brisk walk after dinner. Find a friend and try your neighborhood, a school track, a park, or wherever you feel safe and comfortable. In bad weather, walk inside a shopping mall.
- ⑦ Encourage your children to walk to school. Until they can go alone, walk with them and bring your younger children.
- ⑧ Garden together as a family. Planting and weeding are great activities. Plus, growing your own vegetables is a good way to interest your children in eating them.
- ⑨ Turn off the TV. Children who watch too much TV tend to eat more and exercise less. The ads for sweets, sodas, and high fat foods attract them to foods that cause weight gain. Talk, read, or play with your children; everyone will benefit.

Parenting Tip:

Dress your children in clothes that make physical activity easy and comfortable. Tennis shoes make running easy. Girls can wear shorts or pants to climb, play games, and turn cartwheels. Find clothes that wear well during hard playing.