

FitFacts®



Kids in Motion

BY THE TIME THEY REACH HIGH SCHOOL, 64% OF CHILDREN ARE NO LONGER PHYSICALLY ACTIVE. IF YOUR KIDS FALL WITHIN THIS GROUP, BE A ROLE MODEL AND INTRODUCE THEM TO FUN EXERCISE. ONCE YOU GET KIDS MOVING IN THE DIRECTION OF FITNESS, CHANCES ARE THEY'LL KEEP GOING FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES.

START 'EM YOUNG

Becoming a healthy adult starts with being a [healthy child](#). Many chronic diseases of adulthood have their beginnings in childhood, like osteoporosis. There are also childhood diseases that can be prevented by proper diet and physical activity, like diabetes, obesity, high cholesterol and high blood pressure.

An hour of physical activity per day is recommended for children, and screen time should be limited to two hours per day. Fit children not only avoid health problems, they also do better in physical-performance tests, have more self-confidence, and less anxiety.

MOM AND DAD ARE THE BEST MOTIVATORS

As a parent, your [children look to you](#) for examples on how to talk, dress, act and lead a physically active—or inactive—life. Set a good example for your kids. Instead of watching tv, get on a bike, treadmill or trampoline.

Help your kids build strength and endurance with push-ups and pull-ups. Jungle gyms are great because kids utilize their own body weight – and they're fun!

Make sure kids have proper protective gear, such as helmets and kneepads. Also make sure any athletic equipment they're using is the appropriate size for them.

Kids' muscles may be tight and vulnerable to injury during the growth spurts that occur during the elementary years, so be sure to include stretching as a part of your fitness activities.

Focus on fun and positivity - avoid competition, discipline and embarrassment. Praise your children for trying. Encourage their interest in sports and other activities, which will help them take ownership of their fitness.

IT'S REALLY UP TO YOU

It's not enough to tell kids that being active is fun - you have to show them. Take your kids hiking, biking, dancing, sledding, swimming and in-line skating. Skip rope or shoot baskets with them. Plan outings that involve walking, like a trip to the zoo, a nature trail or even a mall. Remember, if you want your kids to be healthy, happy teens and adults, you can do something about it!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[American Council on Exercise](#)

[Let's Move](#)

[PBS](#)