

PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN



Pinellas County Health Department

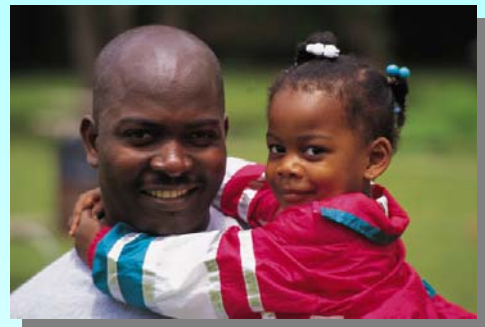
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For health's sake, get your children moving!

Having healthy children means more than just eating a healthy diet and not smoking. They need to be physically active! If you think it's hard to help your child become more active, think again. All you have to do is make it fun! If your child is very resistant, try a bargaining system. For example, for every 2 hours of "play" time, allow your child one hour of "screen" time (TV, computer, videogames). Remember that it's important to establish a healthy daily routine early on in life. Let them pick an activity that they LIKE to do. **The goal is to have fun while being active each day.**

Try these great ideas:

- ☺ Ride your bike
- ☺ Play hopscotch, tag or hide and seek
 - ☺ Rollerblade or skateboard
 - ☺ Start a scavenger hunt
- ☺ Join a school sports team or club
 - ☺ Go swimming
- ☺ Play at the park with friends
- ☺ Build castles with old sheets and towels
- ☺ Play dress-up with some friends
- ☺ Turn on some music and dance
 - ☺ Make an obstacle course
 - ☺ Start a game of kickball



Why is exercising so important?

Don't forget that children have a heart and vessels like an adult so they are also at risk for diseases such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and obesity. Physical activity also helps with:

- ♥ Gaining more self-esteem
- ♥ Increased muscle and bone strength
- ♥ Improved mood and attention
- ♥ Stress reduction

The American Heart Association recommends that children and adolescents participate in at least 60 MINUTES of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day.

THE ACTIVITY PYRAMID

EACH WEEK, TRY TO INCREASE YOUR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY USING THIS GUIDE. HERE'S HOW TO START...

IF YOU ARE INACTIVE

Increase daily activities at the base of the Activity Pyramid by

- taking the stairs instead of the elevator
- hiding the TV remote control
- making extra trips around the house or yard
- stretching while standing in line
- walking whenever you can



IF YOU ARE SPORADIC

Become consistent with activity by increasing activity in the middle of the pyramid by

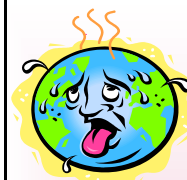
- finding activities you enjoy
- planning activities in your day
- setting realistic goals

IF YOU ARE CONSISTENT

Choose activities from the whole pyramid by

- changing your routine if you start to get bored
- exploring new activities

ABOVE ALL... HAVE FUN AND GOOD LUCK!



It's Too Hot!

Find a swimming pool to cool you off or simply run through the sprinklers. Try some indoor activities when it is too hot outside or the weather is bad. Also, just playing inside is better than watching TV or playing video games.

Parents, help your child make a "creation-station." Fill a box with old clothes (to play dress up), building blocks, board games, jump ropes, etc. Ask your child to help think of items to put into their "creation-station."

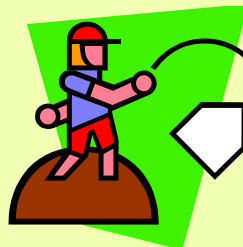
ASK A HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

My child has tried several different sports but never sticks with one. How do I get him to stay with an activity?

Children do best with an activity that fits their abilities and personality. They like to try different fun activities to see what they like. Does your child like to play with other children, or alone? Is he/she coordinated? Take a quiz at www.bam.gov to help find an activity that is FUN and one they'll want to stick with.



Remember, physical activity is a "must" for a healthy child. Walking, dancing, or biking are great ways to be physically active if they are not into organized sports.



QUICK FACT-

American children watch an average of 4 hours of television per day!

Do you have a question for a health professional?

Write to:

**Pinellas County Health Dept.
Office of Chronic Disease Prevention
205 Dr. Martin Luther King St. N.
St. Petersburg, FL 33701**

For more information about child physical activity, please visit the following websites:

www.fitness.gov

www.bam.gov

www.pinellaswellness.com

www.tvturnoff.org

www.verbnnow.com



For more information regarding this newsletter call: (727) 820-4113



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