

PLAYING Your Way to Fitness

Kids need regular physical activity (60 minutes a day) to maintain a healthy weight, while growing normally. School classes and athletics count and so do sports like Little League. Active play with friends and family is another FUN way to get moving.

1. **PLAY inside**

There are plenty of ways to enjoy FUN indoor family play, without destroying the house. Turn off the TV and the computer - and play an old-fashioned game of hide-and-seek. Clear a space for wiggling, dancing and playing with soft-foam balls and squishy toys.

2. **PLAY outside**

The options for outdoor FUN are unlimited: bikes, trikes, scooters, balls, kites, Frisbees, jump ropes, squirt guns and hula-hoops. There's also a long list of childhood games that the whole family can play together - like more hide-and-seek, tag and hopscotch.

3. **PLAY in the yard**

Whatever the size of your yard, you can turn it into a neighborhood FUN zone - with a few basic toys: a basketball hoop, a rope swing or a sandbox depending on the age of your children. Keep it simple - and let kids use their innate creativity to stay active.

4. **PLAY at the park**

Many communities have FUN park facilities. Often they are close enough so that you can leave the car at home - and walk or ride a bike. Make it a regular family outing - when the weather is nice, you can even take a picnic and play before and after dinner.

5. **PLAY at the gym**

Indoor gyms offer safety, warmth and FUN programs for kids and parents. Check your area for schools, colleges, community centers, fitness facilities, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA/YWCAs and other agencies that are open evenings, weekends and vacations.

6. **PLAY on the field**

Almost every community in the USA offers sports programs for children - baseball, football, basketball, soccer, tennis and swimming. There are programs for all ages and all levels of skill - and most emphasize FUN and the opportunity for parents to get involved.

