

Getting your kids to trade screen time for physical activity may be the most challenging — and the most important — item on your to-do list. Walking is a great start, but there are other ways to get your whole family moving together.

Be a good role model. You don't have to be perfect all the time, but if your kids see you getting physically active and trying to eat right, they'll notice your efforts.

Get the whole family moving. Don't just send your kids out to play. Plan times for everyone to get moving together. Take walks, ride bikes, go swimming, garden or just play hide-and-seek. Everyone will benefit from the exercise and the time together.

Break it up. The American Heart Association recommends 150 minutes a week of exercise, but if that sounds overwhelming, try three 10-minute workout sessions a day.

Don't make exercise a punishment. Forcing your child to go out and play may increase resentment and resistance. Try using physical activity to counter something your child doesn't want to do. For example, let your kids ride bikes for 30 minutes before starting homework after school. Your child will beg for 20 more minutes outside just to put off the homework!

Build confidence and find an activity they love. Some kids are embarrassed to participate in sports because they don't think they're good enough. Find time to practice together and boost their confidence. Try swimming, dancing, cycling, skateboarding, yoga, walking or jumping rope. Encourage your child to explore multiple activities to find one they really enjoy.

Get your kids active while doing housework. Put a sticky note on all the items that need cleaning or tidying (like the kitchen table, the sofa, the bed). Ask your child to collect each sticky note after they clean the item. Make it a friendly competition to see who collects the most stickies. You could even offer a prize (like a Frisbee or jump rope from the dollar store) for the winner. Your kids will be physically active, helping with household chores and having fun!

Be realistic. Setting realistic goals and limits are key to adopting any new behavior. Small steps and gradual changes can make a big difference in your health over time, so start small and build up.

The more active your family gets, the more inspired you may feel to tackle other areas. Need tips for dealing with a [picky eater](#)? We've got 'em. Want to learn how to make [fast food healthier](#) when you're on the go? We can help. On a budget and need quick ideas for [healthy foods that are under \\$1](#)? Check out this list.

And remember: Something is always better than nothing! Physical activity is anything that makes you move your body and burns calories, even raking leaves, walking the dog or climbing stairs.

