



Lowell Joint School District

Making Fitness a Family Affair

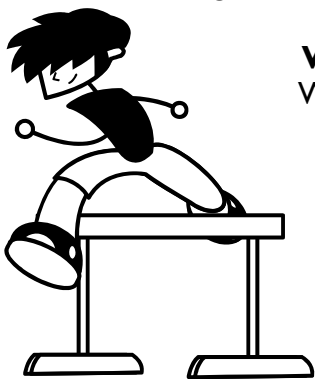
Children learn from the example that parents provide: If you read, they'll read; if you eat healthy food, they'll eat healthy food; and if you exercise regularly, so will they. Or better yet, why not get everybody to engage in physical fitness activities together? The key to successful family fitness is to keep it simple and fun for everyone. Make your activities a family tradition that everyone will look forward to.

Before you start on your renewed commitment to fitness, be sure that everyone in your family has the go-ahead from your family doctor. Always increase your physical activity gradually to avoid straining muscles and injury. Be sure to stretch and drink plenty of water, too.



Simple Activities for Getting Fit

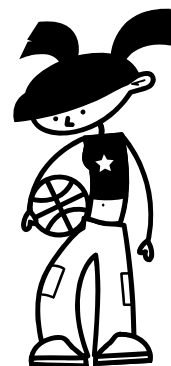
You don't have to join a gym or spend a lot of money to stay fit. All you need are a good pair of athletic shoes, and if you must, some inexpensive equipment — a ball, a rope, a stick — and off you go! Get the whole family involved in these simple and fun physical fitness activities in the great outdoors.



When possible take the stairs instead of the escalator or elevator. Walk instead of drive, especially for short distances.

Don't park too close to your destination. When you go to the mall or the grocery store, park far away from the store in the parking lot. This will force everyone to walk a little more.

Do chores together. Wash the car, rake some leaves, or work in the garden.



Take the family on a walk. Make a habit of taking a family walk in the neighborhood, in or around a park, or to a destination.

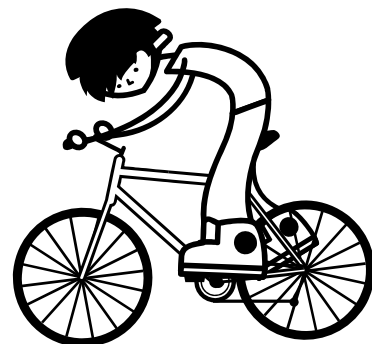
Go on a treasure hunt in your neighborhood. Compile a list of "simple treasures" to hunt for on your walk: a leaf with beautiful colors, a shiny penny, a can to be recycled. Or make a list of things to notice as you walk: Find a house with a red door. Look for a specific kind of car parked in a driveway. What else might you hunt for? Have everyone in your family contribute "treasures" to hunt for on your list.



Get on your bikes and go. Biking is a great family activity. You can start out on short neighborhood rides and build up to rides on local bike trails. Be sure everyone wears a helmet for safety.

Keep a family fitness journal. Have one of the children in the family be appointed to keep a log or chart of your family fitness activities. It can include what games you played each week, what your heart rate was before and after, whether you improved your time or number of spins with the hula hoop, for example. The log becomes one more way to get your family to commit to fitness activities.

Schedule regular times for activity throughout the week. Keep it simple and make it fun – that is the key to making fitness a family affair.



LOWELL JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT
"A Tradition of Excellence"
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