

Parent Handout #3: Physical Activity Recommendations

What are the benefits of exercise?

- Stronger bones and joints
- Greater muscle strength
- Lower body fat
- Better flexibility
- A healthier heart
- Lower chance of getting diabetes
- More energy
- A greater ability to handle stress
- Better self-confidence and self-esteem
- Greater social acceptance by physically active peers
- Opportunities to make new friends
- Better concentration
- Help in keeping a healthy weight

How do we keep a healthy weight? → Energy Balance: "Calories In" = "Calories Out"

- All the foods we eat contain energy called calories. Our body knows exactly how many calories it needs everyday to do the things in daily life. If we eat too many calories our body will store the extra calories as fat to use at a later time. If we don't eat enough calories our bodies will break down this stored fat to get energy for our bodies to run. The problem with the American diet today is that we are eating way too many calories!
- Calories "In" must equal calories "Out" to keep a healthy body weight. This is a balancing act that we must think about everyday. To keep a healthy weight, we need to eat well and only as much as we can spend by exercising. If you had a little more to eat, then you should exercise a little more as well.

How much exercise should we be getting?

- Children should be getting 60 minutes of activity on most, if not all, days of the week.
- Adults should be getting at least 30 minutes of activity (in addition to your usual activity) most days of the week to keep your health or 60 minutes a day to help you lose weight.

How can I get my children to exercise?

- It is very important for children not to feel apart or different from everyone else. So, this is a great time to get everyone in the family eating healthier and exercising. The benefits will last a lifetime.
- The Surgeon General's report on Physical Activity and health says that more than 60% of adults aren't physically active on a regular basis, and 25 percent aren't active at all.
- Children learn from example, and most will follow in their parents' footsteps. You have a very important role in helping your child become and stay active for life. Be active yourself and display a positive attitude that being active is fun!
- Here are just a few ways to increase FAMILY EXERCISE:
 1. Head out for a family walk or bike ride.
 2. Spend a weekend afternoon playing outside games, roller-skating or in-line skating.
 3. Participate on a family team in a fun run or walk.
 4. Buy a family membership to the local YMCA or local gym.
 5. Team up to do housework or yard work.

NOW, GET YOUR FAMILY MOVING!

REMEMBER: Your Follow-up Visit next month. See you then!