

Lifestyle Tips



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Attitude is everything

As Winston Churchill put it, “attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference.” And, when it comes to raising children, parents’ attitudes make a particularly big difference in the lives of their kids. The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree—and research tells us that this remains true when it comes to physical activity. Parental attitudes towards physical activity influence both their children’s attitudes and levels of participation.

Parents may think that taking their children to the park or soccer practice is ample to keep them active, but that alone is not enough. Parents have to walk the walk and talk the talk. If mom is excited to go to her own weekly hockey game, and dad’s first choice to run errands is to walk instead of taking the car, the kids will pick up on this. Attitudes towards physical activity in the home are the social norms your children will grow up with and accept as their own. Kids in an active home will be more likely to grow into adults who look forward to their own weekly sports league or daily wheel home from work.

Remember—an active lifestyle is not the same as an exercise program.



There are plenty of small choices that you make, every day, that add up to a healthy, active lifestyle. So, keep taking the kids to soccer practice, and find ways to help them develop positive attitudes towards physical activity:

- Be an active role model. Inspire your child to be active by living an active lifestyle yourself.
- Want to reward your child? Use physical activity! Let them spend an

extra 15 minute playing outside for a job well done. And if you need to discipline your child, don’t take physical activity time away—this could be a time when physical activity could do them some good.

- Choose books that tell positive stories about physical activity. You can also encourage your child to act out parts of the story.
- Volunteer to coach or help out with your child’s sport team or club.



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- Encourage your child to wear clothing that is easy to move around in—and be ok with it if he or she gets dirty.
- Vacations are special family time. Show the importance of physical activity by holidaying in an active destination with skiing, hiking or a

- pool nearby.
- Show your approval when your child is active. Your encouragement is very important. Take a picture of your child being active and hang it on the fridge.

Family Guide to physical activity for youth (10-14 years of age)
http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/child_youth/pdf/yth_family_guide_e.pdf



If you are looking for more information on family physical activity, check out the two Public Health Agency of Canada's Family Guides to physical activity. One is for family with children 6 to 9 years of age and the other is for families with children 10 to 14 years of age. The family-friendly resource guides are filled with tips, information and ideas to help parents, caregivers and guardians help their children learn about the importance of physical activity and increase their activity levels. The guides include a 'call to action' that outlines the new guidelines for boosting active time and reducing more sedentary time.

To learn more, see:
Family Guide to physical activity for children (6-9 years of age)
http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/child_youth/pdf/kids_family_guide_e.pdf

