#7: We Are Active

What Is Physical Activity?

Physical activity needs for families can mostly be met by just **"letting kids be kids."** Playing soccer or kickball, bike riding or hiking on your favorite trail—even active chores like helping wash the car—all count!

HEALTHY CONVERSATION STARTERS

Do you think your heart beats faster when you are walking or running?

Can you think of two games you can play outside that would make your heart beat faster?

Do you know your heart is a muscle? What is another muscle?

Think Together

- Children need **at least 60 minutes a day** of physical activity and adults need at least 2½ hours per week.
- Talk with your family about why it is important to **lead an active lifestyle**. Think about the different ways your family is active (e.g., chores, sports, gym class, etc.).
- The best way to get active is to **choose activities your family enjoys**. Think about the activities you like to do and pick some new activities to try together.

Eat Together

- Playing hard and being active leads to better sleep, **increased appetite** and **healthier eating**.
- Active bodies need **strong muscles and bones, and lots of energy**.
  - **Protein** foods help your body build and repair muscle. Choose lean or low-fat cuts of beef or pork and skinless chicken or turkey. Choose seafood twice a week.
  - **Calcium** found in dairy items helps your body build and maintain strong bones. Choose fat-free or low-fat milk, cheese and yogurt.
  - **Grains** give your body the energy needed to be active. Choose bread, pasta, oatmeal, cereals and tortillas. Remember to make half of your grain food choices whole-grains.

Move Together

- **Lead by example.** Let your child see you being active and having fun while doing so.
- The recommendation of 60 minutes a day of physical activity is the minimum. Together, your family can surpass the 60 minutes—**the more moving, the better!**

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Why Be Active?

- Feel better.
- Sleep well at night.
- Move around more easily.
- Have stronger muscles and bones.
- Stay at or get to a healthy weight.
- Enjoy your family and have fun together.
- Boost your immune system.

It's All About 'Bouts'

Encourage children to mix moderate and vigorous activities into their day. Try to accumulate at least 60 minutes of physical activity with smaller bouts. A bout is a time period or section of time.

Sample 60 minutes of activity for an elementary-aged child:

- 20-minute basketball game at recess (vigorous)
- 5-minute walk home from school (moderate)
- 10 minutes to help carry in the groceries (moderate)
- 15-minute walk with your family in the evening (moderate)
- 10 minutes of jumping on a trampoline or jumping rope in your backyard or at the park (vigorous)

Read Together

- ***From Head to Toe*** by Eric Carle (fiction)
- ***The Busy Body Book: A Kid's Guide to Fitness*** by Lizzy Rockwell (non-fiction)