Dear Families,

Jump rope, play tag, ride a bike, or just run—how important is it for your child to get up and get moving? For starters, physical activity helps control weight, reduces blood pressure, raises “good” cholesterol, and reduces the risk of diabetes and some kinds of cancer. It also improves self-confidence and self-esteem, can improve moods, and can help improve sleep. That’s all good news! The American Heart Association recommends that all children ages two and older participate in at least 60 minutes of enjoyable, moderate-to-vigorous-intensity physical activity every day (that means vigorous activities that are appropriate to their age and stage of physical and emotional development). The benefits go beyond good health: physical activity can bring a family together, it doesn’t have to cost any money, and it’s fun!

Remember, your child doesn’t have to do 60-minute workouts. Shorter periods of physical activity throughout the day will benefit your child too.

Sincerely,

Teacher

Research shows that active parents raise active children.

Join your child with these tips to work activity into your daily routine:

- Get outdoors! Hike a local nature trail or ride bicycles along a bike path.
- Schedule a family playtime. Take a walk or play a family game of tag. Play catch or kick a ball around the yard.
- Select toys that encourage movement, such as balls, kites, skates, sleds, and jump ropes.
- Limit screen time to no more than two hours a day. Don’t put a television in your child’s bedroom, and limit computer and tablet use to school projects.
- Plant a garden. Caring for plants provides a reason to get outside, teaches kids where their food comes from, and lets your child sample fresh grown foods to encourage healthy eating habits.
- Do chores, such as raking leaves and shoveling snow, as a family. The work will be completed more quickly, leaving more time for outdoor play!

© Copyright 2020 American Heart Association, Inc., a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit. Kids Heart Challenge is a trademark of the AHA. Unauthorized use prohibited.