

Encouraging Your Family To Exercise

It's a disturbing fact that new research from the National Center for Health Statistics shows that nearly 5 million children ages 6 through 17 are severely overweight. Even more disturbing, that number has doubled since 1980.

Health officials agree that being overweight as a child is likely to lead to becoming an overweight adult, at risk for various health problems including high blood pressure, heart attack, and diabetes.

So how do you get a young couch potato off the couch?

It takes commitment. In our busy lives, parents need to make time for walks, bicycle riding, and other physical activities that the family can do together. Life-long exercise habits are one of the best things parents can teach their children. Three out of five children in a recent survey who do exercise regularly said that they did so because their families encouraged them. Be careful, though. If you tell your child "go exercise", they won't do it. Instead, depending on the age of the child, say "let's go play".



The best way to begin? Try an after dinner walk , a morning jog, raking leaves, or playing soccer together. You may even consider joining a gym as a family during the winter months. Whatever you choose, start now to form healthy, life long habits.

Consult with Cascade EAP for recommendations and resources.

