

How to help your child become more active.



As parents, carers and family members you already know you have a huge role to play in your children's physical well-being.

How active they are and how they feel about themselves, has an enormous effect on their health, both now and in the future. By working together with the school, you can make a real difference to your child's health by giving them good advice and helping them towards a healthy lifestyle.

If children get the same messages at home and at school they are much more likely to make healthier lifestyle choices. By encouraging your child to be physically active you will help them to do better at school.

With a balanced diet, regular physical activity and the confidence to make good lifestyle choices, your child will:

- Have more energy
- Be able to concentrate better
- Stay at a healthy weight
- Get fewer illnesses
- Feel less stressed
- Sleep better.

Begin by showing them that you enjoy exercising and being healthy and they will be far more willing to give it a chance. Let your child show you how to play a game that they made up. Don't forget small things like walking instead of driving. Get moving yourself. If you do active things, chances are that your child will too.

Planning Family Exercise

Here are some planning steps to getting the family ready for a more active lifestyle:

- Talk as a family about why it is important for creating some time to be active as a family.
- Agree as a family so everyone is on board.

- Start by making a list of the activities you all enjoy.
- Encourage everyone, including the children, to give their suggestions and look for activities that everyone can do.
- For fun, ask the children to create a family “Being Active Is Fun” Calendar to remind everyone.
- Plan one activity a week
- Activities can be simple like a family walk or bike ride.
- If you can’t do once a week, then start once a month and add another activity as your schedules permit.
- Start with 15-20 minutes and work your way up to an hour.
- Try to plan something special once a month or every other month, like a trip to the zoo.

There are also many quality local clubs to become involved in that cater for all ages, so the whole family can enjoy being active or simply being a spectator whilst your youngsters enjoy the thrill of competition.

<http://www.fenitonfc.co.uk/>

<http://honiton.2day.ws/honiton/section/LocalClubsGroups/>

<http://www.ledleisure.co.uk/SportsAndExercise/Ottery/index.asp>

<http://www.wfh.naturalengland.org.uk/walkfinder/south-west/east-devon-walk-this-way>

<http://www.honitonrc.com/>

Above all, the message is to have fun exercising, whilst engaged in some quality family time.