



Summer Learning Day

June 21



KEEPING YOUR CHILD ACTIVE AND HEALTHY DURING THE SUMMER

It's important for all young people to keep active while school is out. Children are at greater risk for unhealthy weight gain during the summer months. Keeping your child active during the summer can be a challenge when their days do not involve a schedule, as a school day does.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, children should be involved in "moderate-to-vigorous physical activity" at least an hour every day. Here are some ways you can incorporate fun activity and nutrition into your child's summer.

Look for a summer program in your community that promotes physical activity and healthy eating.

Ask specific questions about the activities your child will be involved in and the food they will be eating. Many summer learning programs also provide federally funded summer meals through the USDA Summer Food Service Program.

Encourage your child to get outside and play. Ride a bike, join in on a neighborhood pick-up basketball or soccer game, or just take a nature walk. Just make sure your child drinks plenty of water while out in the heat to stay hydrated.

Be active with your child. Take a walk together, create a scavenger hunt you can do together, or go to your local basketball court and shoot some hoops. It's a great opportunity to not only get some physical activity for you and your child, but it's a chance to bond.

Take advantage of local pools and recreation centers. Many communities have free or low-cost facilities for youth. Call or check out your local city or town website to obtain more information on what resources are available for your child during the summer.

Keep healthy snacks around the house. Freeze some grapes or place a popsicle stick in the middle of a yogurt cup and make a frozen treat. String cheese and fresh fruit smoothies are also great options. Popcorn with cinnamon instead of butter and salt makes a healthy snack.

Turn off the TV and the computer. According to a recent study by the YMCA of the USA, 50 percent of parents surveyed said technological distractions, such as cell phones and television, are a big barrier to getting their kids to engage in healthy behaviors. Encourage your kids to turn off the gadgets and be active with friends or family instead.

Give kids toys that encourage activity. Toys like basketballs or soccer balls, jump ropes, or kites encourage physical activity in your child. Outdoor games that the family can play together, such as volleyball or badminton, are a great way to get everyone moving.



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