



Wee Mentors (6+ years): Kids Fitness: When Your Child Won't Exercise

Some children just aren't into sports, but that shouldn't mean they have to be glued to the tube. Creative kid fitness may be as simple as a walk in the park. Help your sedentary son or daughter discover the benefits and joys of physical activity with these Kid Fitness Tips:

Tip #1: Think outside the playing field. Not everyone is drawn to organized sports such as soccer or baseball. Look for other activities your child will enjoy, like dancing, rock climbing, swimming, or martial arts.

Tip #2: Join in the game. Children love it when their parents play with them, so encourage children's fitness by doing an activity together as a family (i.e. going for a hike).

#3: Limit screen time. Experts say that kids should not get more than one to two hours of screen time a day, whether that's watching TV, surfing the Internet, or playing video games. Encourage active alternatives to these passive pastimes, such as shooting hoops at the local playground, walking the dog, or a game of tag.

Tip #4: Lead by example. If you sit in front of the TV every night, the remote control in one hand and a bag of chips in the other, you are not practicing what you preach and your children aren't likely to respect restrictions you set on their screen time either. Check your own viewing behavior and serve as a role model by incorporating physical activity into your everyday life.

Tip #5: Offer positive feedback. Praise a child for perfecting that handstand or figuring out how to pump those legs to swing high in the sky. Out-of-shape or uncoordinated children need to hear encouragement for reaching even small goals, such as walking or biking further than last time. Remember, acknowledge the effort -- choosing to be active or trying to improve a skill, rather than the outcome, to help build your child's confidence.

Tip #6: Bring a friend along. Kids love to hang out with their peers, so invite a buddy along for a bike ride, offer to bring a friend ice-skating, or head to the pool with a companion. If your child is more likely to check out a team sport with a friend in tow, then go ahead and sign them up.

Tip #7: Use exercise as a reward. Exercise should never be punitive, instead, try using physical activity as a reward. Your child might be happy to play kickball for 20 minutes if it is a chance to take a break from homework.

Tip #8: Establish a regular routine. Make sure that children's fitness is plugged into the family schedule in the same way that school, work, shopping, chores, birthday parties, and playdates find their way onto the calendar.

Tip #9: Put your child in charge. Let each child take a turn choosing an active weekend pursuit or after school activity. Whether you wind up at a batting cage, bowling alley, or belly dancing class, they all count as children's fitness activities and your child can feel a sense of control over the situation. For younger children however, you may want to limit how many options they have to choose from.

Tip #10: Make it fun. Little children do not need much encouragement to stretch like a cat, run like a tiger, or jump like a kangaroo, they'll have a blast doing it if the activity is fun.

Whatever the activity, you want to keep the FUN in kid fitness.

Source: <https://wb.md/37JinTu>

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