

WEEK 4

*My Movement is Why*

Get Non-Athletes to be Physically Active



As kids get older and the lure of the playground starts to fade, it can be hard for them to get an hour of physical activity each day. Team sports are great, but they're not for everyone. Other activities will help your child stay active and heart healthy.

**They'll also help:**

- manage stress
- control weight
- build strong bones
- sleep better
- decrease the risk of heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure
- and improve the quality of life

**Here are some ways to encourage your “non-athlete” to get up and get moving.**

1. **Don't make exercise a punishment.** Forcing your child to go out and play, or to play a sport he or she doesn't like, may increase resentment and resistance. Work on creative ways to encourage physical activity. For example, let your child ride his or her bike for 30 minutes after school but before homework. Your child may beg for 20 more minutes outside just to put it off!
2. **Find an age-appropriate activity they love.** Try running, swimming, martial arts, dancing, cycling, skateboarding, yoga, soccer, ice skating, jumping rope or tennis. The possibilities are endless.

Encourage your child to explore multiple activities to find one that clicks. And remember: Activity means any activity that gets your heart rate up! Walking for exercise is also a great idea. The whole family can do this together after dinner or on the weekend. Find time for the whole family to be heart healthy.

3. **Build confidence.** Some kids are embarrassed to participate in sports because they don't think they're good enough. Find time to practice together and boost their confidence. Support whatever activity they choose as long as it's safe and they're getting exercise.
4. **Be a role model.** Kids with active parents tend to be more active than kids with parents who aren't. Do your best to get moving and keep moving!
5. **Don't overdo it.** Keeping your kids active is the goal, so don't overdo exercise to the point of pain or frustration. Learn when to stop. It's hard for anyone to stick with something that causes their muscles to feel pain.
6. **Find a friend or be a friend.** See if any of your child's friends are interested in trying a new sport or activity with your child. If you can't, step in and be a friend yourself. It's a perfect opportunity to spend time with together and get active too.

Be patient with your kids as they explore activities they enjoy. Be willing to try several sports or activities to help them develop lifelong healthy habits. You'll be glad you did!

