

WEEK 4

*My Movement is Why*

## Limit Tube Time and Get Your Kids (and the Whole Family) Moving

Instead of driving to your bus stop, school, church or even grocery store - have you ever realized just how close they really are to your house? As a family, lace up your tennis shoes and give yourself an extra 5, 10 or even 15 minutes of quality family time as you walk, and talk, together to a destination a day.

Experts recommend that kids get no more than 1–2 hours of TV/computer/video games a day. But did you know that most kids today get 4–6 hours of these combined things daily? You know your child needs to watch less TV or put down their computer or iPod, but you're dreading the screaming, yelling and crying that may follow telling them to get up and do something. First and foremost, remember YOU are the parent. You run the show and it's your job is to set limits. We know it's not easy, and each child is different, so what works for one child, may need a slight change for another. **Here are some ideas about how to limit your family's sedentary time:**

1. **Identify free times for activity during the week.** Learn how to find time to get the whole family heart healthy.
2. **Make a plan to add physical activity to your daily routine.** Be prepared to offer alternative age-appropriate activities to TV or video games after school. Make physical activity a regular part of your family's schedule. Write it on a weekly calendar for the whole family.
3. **Be active with your kids.** Experts say that what kids want more than anything else is time with their parents. To give them that, don't just send them out to play — go play with them! Develop a set of activities for you and your family that are always available regardless of weather. Try these easy tips to get active!
4. **Limit TV, computer, video game time.** Don't position your furniture so the TV is the main focus of the room. Remove televisions from bedrooms. And remember to avoid using TV as a reward or punishment.
5. **Plan TV watching in advance.** Go through the TV guide and pick the shows you want to watch. Turn the TV on for those shows and turn it off afterwards. Don't just watch whatever comes on next.

6. **Practice what you preach.** Your kids won't accept being restricted to two hours of TV watching if you can veg out for four hours. The best way to influence your kids' behavior is through example.

All of these might sound easy enough; they just take a little thought and a lot of practice. ***Do what you can as often as you can.*** Here are some ideas that your kids can do on their own or the whole family can do together:

- family game night
- shooting some hoops
- walking the dog
- exploring a nearby park
- turning on the stereo and dancing around the house
- chores that require some physical activity

Remember, you can do it! Be strong, have a plan and don't back down. Your child's health is worth fighting for.

