Get Up & Move!

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Aerobic Activity
According to MyPyramid, children should get 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Much of that activity should be aerobic in nature. Walking, jogging, bicycling, and swimming are just a few kid-friendly activities that provide aerobic exercise!

Aerobic exercise involves the whole body and gets the heart pumping. This type of exercise is very beneficial to the body. With regular aerobic workouts, the heart becomes stronger and better at delivering oxygen to all parts of the body. And because aerobic exercise involves moving the entire body, all major muscle groups are given a workout as well.

The word aerobic means “with air,” so aerobic activity is an activity that requires oxygen through breathing. When you are engaged in aerobic activity, breathing often quickens because the body needs more oxygen. Another way to tell if a person is getting aerobic exercise is to check his or her pulse, or heart rate. In this month’s physical activity, members learned how to check their pulse to determine how hard their bodies are working during exercise.

By understanding the importance of being physically active, parents can model fun and healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

Here are some tips:

- Help your child participate in a variety of activities that are right for his or her age.
- Establish a regular schedule for physical activity.
- Encourage physical activities over watching television, playing video games, and being on the computer. Limit your child’s time spent doing these sedentary activities, and encourage him or her to take frequent activity breaks to stretch and move around.
- Incorporate activity into daily routines, such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Embrace a healthier lifestyle yourself, so you’ll be a positive role model for your family.
- Find a fun, family aerobic activity, so your entire family can enjoy exercise together!

(Sources: www.kidshealth.org, USDA, American Heart Association)