

The Importance of Playing (Exercising) with your Family

By Jayme Green

Video games, T.V., computers, and automobiles are all part of our daily lives. In today's culture, it is normal to spend many hours attending to all these conveniences. As with any area in our life, we need to be balanced when it comes to using these items or allowing them to use us. These conveniences can directly relate to inactivity or being sedentary. Right now in the United States, children's obesity rate is skyrocketing. According to the CDC, children's obesity rate has more than tripled over the past 30 years. What does this mean for our children? What are the negative health effects of being an obese child? What can we as parents/teachers/family members do to help prevent or correct this obesity problem?

According to the Mayo Clinic, childhood obesity is a serious medical condition that affects children and adolescents. It occurs when a child is well above the normal weight for his/her age and height. This can cause many negative health conditions such as: type 2 diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, bone and joint problems, sleep apnea, as well as social and physiological problems. Research also shows that children who are obese have a greater chance of being obese when they are adults.

What can we do to help prevent this? We can start exercising with them when they are young. There are many health benefits to exercising such as: promotes good health habits, prevents disease, gives you more energy, prevents osteoporosis, prevents colds, reduces the severity of asthma, and prevents cancer. Exercise can also boost self esteem. Children should engage in 60 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most if not all days of the week. Make sure to make the exercise fun and enjoyable. Take

a walk, play tag, play ball, or swim. Make exercise a family affair by exercising (playing) together. This will draw you closer as a family and install healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

You're family/child does not have to be part of the children's obesity statistic. By exercising/playing with your family, you impart so many great health benefits which can reduce or prevent many ailments for the future. A great way to start exercising with your family could be by joining Nimkee Fitness Center's Families in Motion Class. The class is for children ages 6-13 that are registered with the Nimkee Clinic and their Fitness member parent(s). In the class, parents and children participate in fun exercises that tone muscles and work the heart. The class is every Thursday from 5:30 to 6:30pm. So come in to Nimkee Fitness Center and build a healthier family!

References: www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/obesity

www.acefitness.org