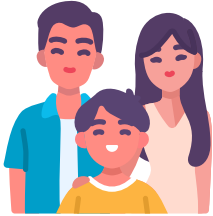


Simple Ways to be an Active Role Model



Did you know that one of the **best ways to encourage healthy choices in children is to model those choices as an adult?**

Parents, older siblings, teachers, and other role models can **help kids and teens make healthy choices by simply engaging in healthy behaviors like eating nutritious foods and being physically active.**

In addition to making healthy choices themselves, there are many ways adults can be role models for positive behaviors like physical activity. Take the simple steps below to encourage youth physical activity while being a super role model!

Communicate positively about the various benefits of physical activity

This includes improving sleep, increasing academic performance, preventing illness, and strengthening social connections. Keep your audience in mind and discuss how participating in physical activity can safely align with their interests.

Demonstrate physical activity

Demonstrate physical activity and behaviors that safely support an active lifestyle with and in front of others. As a parent or caregiver, this could mean doing yoga in your living room with kids or while kids play nearby. As an educator, this could mean being active with students at recess, leading classroom physical activity opportunities, or making the gym available for physical activity during lunch.

Encourage family physical activity

School staff and community leaders can encourage family physical activity by assigning active homework to students, hosting active events, utilizing joint use agreements to make physical activity facilities such as gyms and playgrounds available outside of school hours, and providing low-cost resources/classes to families.

Plan and set goals for physical activity

Track physical activity with this **handy chart**, then reinforce progress with healthy rewards such as a special family outing or the opportunity to win a prize.

Encourage community physical activity

Parents and family members can encourage physical activity for their children outside of the home by joining wellness committees, volunteering for active events like a Family Fitness Night or Fun Run, and asking how physical activity facilities such as gyms and playgrounds can safely be made available to the community outside of school hours.

Avoid linking physical activity to discipline

This includes things like taking away recess at school, grounding a child from an athletic competition, or making kids/teens run laps. If physical activity is taken away or used as a form of discipline, kids will associate it with negative feelings like guilt, anger, or fear and will no longer enjoy being active.