

# Safe kids • Healthy kids • Happy kids

## Help Your Overweight Teen “Get Fit”

Many people do not like exercise. This is especially true for overweight teens.

- Increased weight makes moving difficult.
- They are often self-conscious about their body. Wearing exercise clothes is embarrassing.
- They do not exercise on a regular basis. As a result, they can only stand a small amount of exercise at a time.
- They are often the victims of bullying. It is why many do not exercise or try out for sports teams. Instead, they tend to stay at home.

Many overweight kids do not feel naturally athletic. Still, you can help your overweight teen be more physically active. Get your teen to *move*. It may not start with exercise.

- Persuade your teen to get out of the house. Instead of exercising, encourage her to take a class at the local college. It could be art or photography. She

gets exercise as she walks from the car to the class.

Encourage her to join a drama group. Acting or painting scenes gets her moving. For extra fun, she could take a friend.

- Start with an easy activity for a small amount of time. Walk 5 minutes a day. Increase the walking time by 1 minute every other day. Do the activity with him.
- Find an activity that does not take extra skill. She could bike, swim or shoot hoops.
- Encourage exercise at home. Exercise between video games or during TV ads. Gradually decrease TV and screen time to no more than 2 hours a day.
- Consider strength training at home. He could lift weights or use resistance bands. Doing these exercises 3 times a week

can lower his body fat and increase muscle and strength. Consult his doctor first.

- Make a chart of new activities and minutes spent in each activity or exercise. Let your teen see her progress on a chart.

The CDC tells us that kids who are physically fit and active often do better in school than those who are not active. Exercise boosts learning and memory.

It also:

- Promotes better sleep.
- Improves concentration and behavior.
- Makes bones strong.
- Helps with weight control.
- Relieves stress and anxiety.
- Boosts mood.

*Brought to you by Parent Help Line and St. John's Children's Hospital*



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1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week  
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