



*Healthy U*

## 101 Ways to Keep You and Your Kids Moving

Sometimes all it takes is one good idea to get you off your feet. Well we've got over 100 for you to try!

Choose activities that you think sound like fun. Always consider your abilities and current level of fitness before trying something new. Starting slowly is safe for most people. If in doubt, consult your health professional.

### Outdoors

1. Go for a family walk with the dog, or borrow a dog from a friend.
2. Turn off the television and go for a walk around the neighbourhood.
3. Take a Frisbee and head out to the park for a picnic.
4. Go outside and build a snowman or snow fort when it snows.
5. Dig into gardening! Plant a garden and get everyone to help out with their own special section.
6. Rake up the leaves and take turns jumping into the pile.
7. See if the local museum or historical society has a brochure of historical walks in your neighbourhood or town. Go out and explore together.
8. Take the time to explore a local attraction on a road trip.
9. Run through the sprinkler on a warm day.
10. When it snows, gather toboggans and sleds and head to a nearby hill.
11. Take a Frisbee, soccer ball, or baseball along on the road trip.
12. Build an outdoor rink or go to a nearby rink and go skating.
13. On a windy day, go to an open field and fly a kite.
14. Make your weekly family social activity, active! Go to the park instead of the cinema.
15. Plan "walk and talk" outings with your friends and their children. This is a great substitute for going for coffee.
16. When it snows, bundle up and make snow angels.
17. Plan an active family vacation. Try hiking, camping, or swimming.
18. Get a bicycle carrier (and helmets for everyone) so the whole family can go for a ride together.
19. Plan a family night at the bowling alley.
20. Play catch at a local park.
21. Learn how to hacky sack together.
22. Get some chalk and play hopscotch.
23. Make a family commitment to try a new activity each season. Try activities such as snowshoeing, curling, fishing, and in-line skating, clubs and organizations many can introduce you to something you've never tried before.
24. Plan a family hike through a scenic park.
25. Challenge your children to a basketball, volleyball, tennis, or baseball game. They'll love the idea of playing and competing against you.
26. Explore different leash-free parks, even if you don't have a dog.
27. Go to the neighbourhood playground and help your children to climb and swing.
28. Go bird watching. See how many birds you can spot.
29. Take a moonlight or flashlight walk in the evening. Go stargazing.
30. When your children are learning to ride a bicycle, put on your running shoes and run along side. Support them and teach them proper bicycle safety while running with them around the block.
31. Allow your children to include friends when planning some physical activities. This will encourage their peers to be active as well.

### Indoors

32. Too cold for a walk outside? Go for a walk in a mall.
33. Too cold to play outside? Take the family to an indoor playground.
34. Select indoor activities that offer some type of physical activity. Bowling, skating, or touring a museum are better choices than seeing a movie.

### On The Go

35. Organize a walking "school bus" in your neighbourhood and have the parents take turns walking the kids to school.
36. Take the stairs instead of the elevator when at the mall.
37. Get off the bus two stops early and walk home.

38. Park the car near the back of the parking lot when grocery shopping.
39. Walk, wheel, or cycle for short trips to the corner store.
40. Walk to the library on a sunny afternoon.
41. Walk to the local post office to mail your letters.
42. When doing errands, park in a central location and walk from place to place.
43. Use your child's practice times to walk around the playing field, rink, or gymnasium.
44. Schedule time for active play, just like you schedule time for homework.
45. Get everyone to carry some of the groceries to the car instead of using the shopping cart.
46. Plan ahead. Keep a foam ball or a skipping rope in the car so that you can stop off at a local park if there is a chance between chores or activities.
47. When on a road trip, take a break at a park and play tag with your kids.
48. Walk or bike (helmets included) with your kids instead of giving them a ride in the car.
49. During the holidays, walk or cycle instead of driving to view the festive decorations.

### **Games**

50. Play a game of charades. One person acts out a game or activity and the others guess what it is. You'll be surprised how active this is.
51. Practice stretching by playing "Simon says." Be sure to stretch your legs, back and arm muscles.
52. Check out a book from the library about games from around the world. Try out a game you've never played before.
53. Take turns swinging the skipping rope for the kids.
54. Play tag with the whole family.
55. Play actively with the kids. They will enjoy having you as an active role model.
56. Go for a family walk and make it a scavenger hunt. Have each of your children collect common things such as a round rock, a leaf, and a pinecone.
57. Organize neighbourhood games to help your kids make active choices. A soccer, football, baseball, or dodgeball game that is parents vs. children involves everyone.
58. Play hide and seek, inside or outside.
59. Play "remote control hot potato." Pass the remote control and whoever is left holding the remote at the commercial has to lead a family exercise break.
60. Encourage informal play. Organized sports have value, but it's important for your children to "play" creatively on their own. Playing house, building a fort, or putting together a show are all ways to engage the brain and body.
61. Get actively involved in the sports your children participate in. Play catch or kick the soccer ball around as a family.
62. Play games in the backyard such as bocce ball, badminton, or lawn darts.
63. Have a scavenger hunt as part of birthday celebrations to encourage activity.
64. Ask children to invent new rules for old games.
65. Take the blankets off the bed and play parachute games.

### **Around The House**

66. Create a family obstacle course using objects from the house or yard. Keep a chart with everyone's time, and challenge each other to improve. This is a great game for the basement on a rainy day.
67. Run on the spot, try push-ups and sit-ups, and stretch during the commercials of your favourite television show.
68. Get a foam ball to play catch with during commercials of television shows.
69. See who can do the most jumping jacks during the commercial breaks.
70. Make up a dance to your favourite song. Pick a new favourite song every month.
71. Wash and wax the car with the whole family.
72. Play Frisbee on the front lawn.
73. Use household chores as a fitness class. Assign everyone a task. Pick a favourite tune and turn up the music.
74. Take those few extra steps and use the upstairs bathroom.
75. Move the home exercise equipment into the TV room and use it.
76. Plan a walk everyday after dinner and chart your steps on a map on the fridge.
77. When it snows, get enough shovels for the whole family to help shovel the sidewalks and steps in your neighborhood.
78. Round up a couple of hula hoops and take turns.
79. Diversify the TV room with a ping pong table and paddles. Have an ongoing family tournament.
80. Do a physical activity routine with leaders on TV teaching yoga or aerobics.
81. Encourage and participate with children's TV shows that involve singing and dancing.
82. Allow your child to select only one or two favourite TV programs. For every hour they watch, get a commitment for equal time engaged in physical activity. Make the same guidelines for yourself as well.
83. Replace "you can't watch TV" with "Let's turn the TV off and play something fun together."
84. Start each morning with a 10-minute stretch and wake session before breakfast.
85. Reward children with activity, instead of food or movies. For example, give them swim passes to the local pool.
86. Take out a fitness program video when you rent an entertainment video. Do the fitness video together before settling in

for the other one.

87. Involve the whole family in doing yard cleanup, spring or fall. When you're done take the family for a swim.

88. When buying presents for special occasions (birthdays, Christmas, etc.) try and include one active present such as a skipping rope, baseball or a hacky sack.

89. Turn up your favourite CD and dance around the living room.

### **Community Activities**

90. Watch some of the physical activity classes at the recreational centre and try some activities out.

91. If your child is involved in organized sports, offer to help out. Assistant coaches and volunteers are always appreciated. Offer to lead a warm-up!

92. Support quality daily physical education at your child's school.

93. Encourage kids to have fun and learn the benefits of working with others on a sports team. These things are far more important than winning.

94. Encourage your children to be active during their recess and lunch time. Make sure they are dressed appropriately and have proper footwear for running around.

95. See if your parks board or recreation centre has a guide to family walks around your community. If they do, try one!

96. Play a family or neighbourhood street hockey game on a nice day or before the hockey game on television.

97. Form a "family health club" that meets once a week to do an activity in the community (eg. bike ride, recreational swimming pool, floor hockey, etc.). Take turns choosing the activity.

98. Get together with your friends and their children. Stroll around the park.

99. Have a neighbourhood parade! Include children from around the neighbourhood, with bikes, marching, and all sorts of dressing up.

100. Volunteering in your community can be a great way to be active. Look for opportunities that keep you and your kids moving, such helping out with clean-up events, community garden, and painting graffiti. 101. As a family, train and fundraise for a charity walk or run.

### **Sources**

Healthy U would like to acknowledge the following sources for their contribution to the 101 Active Living messages:

- [The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada](#)
- [The British Broadcasting Corporation](#)
- [The American National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [Active Healthy Kids Canada](#)
- [The Public Health Agency of Canada](#)
- [Leeds, Greenville & Lanark District Health Unit](#)
- [SummerActive and WinterActive!](#)
- [The American Heart Association](#)
- [The American National Institute of Health](#)
- [50 Ways to Leave Your Sofa- Ontario](#)

### **Learn More**

#### Frequently Asked Questions about physical activity

Get some answers to some of your physical activity question at the Alberta Centre for Active Living.

#### Fun Fitness Ideas

Get some fun ideas that are good for your kids heart from the Heart & Stroke Foundation.

#### Get Moving Tips

Tons of ideas for you and your family at ParticipAction

#### Fitness Ideas

Great ideas for staying in shape from the BC Health Guide.