

# Fitness For Families

## Getting Active Together

(NAPSA)—Studies have shown that only one-fourth of us get the 30 minutes of exercise each day the Surgeon General recommends. Sedentary children are more likely to become sedentary adults, so it's important to encourage healthy habits early on.

“Getting fit and staying active is something families can do together,” says Sharon Bergen, senior vice president of education and training for Knowledge Learning Corporation, the nation's leading provider of early childhood care and education. “In addition to the many health benefits, it can be great family fun.” Bergen offers these tips for parents:

Pick an activity the family can do together. Swimming, bicycling and gardening are activities nearly everyone can enjoy. In the winter, try ice skating or sledding. Set aside time for physical activity and make it part of your family's routine.

Rediscover walking as transportation. Walk to the grocery store instead of driving. Encourage your child to walk with you whenever possible. Visit the library or recreation center on foot.

Plan active vacations and weekend getaways. Instead of sightseeing through the window of your car, plan vacations that get the family moving. Explore a national



Photo Credit: Knowledge Learning Corporation

park's hiking trails or tour a historic site by bicycle. Use a canoe to find a secluded picnic site. Give gifts that encourage physical activity. Instead of video games or DVDs, how about sports equipment, skateboards or rollerblades?

TV, video games and the Internet can be enjoyed in moderation but should be balanced with physical activity. For every hour your child spends in front of a screen, encourage him to spend as much active time.

The effort you put into cultivating healthy habits now will pay big dividends later in your child's life.