

Your kids are the picture of health, right? Bouncing around the room, growing out of all their clothes, eating tons of vegetables... wait, maybe not that last part. What's a busy parent to do?

Good health habits begin to form at a very early age. If you think about it, most of the health habits you yourself have, whether good or bad, stem from habits developed in childhood. Not only are adult Americans becoming more obese and less physically fit, poor health and type II Diabetes are on the rise in children as well, due to decreased physical activity and poor diet.

There's good news, though. Helping to establish good health patterns in your children can take only a few minutes a day. Also, kids learn by example, and you've made a commitment to health through Get Fit Colville! Why not try a few of these ideas to help your whole family create a healthier lifestyle? The following ideas are arranged in order of time commitment, ranging from a few minutes a day to a few hours a week.

A few minutes a day:

- Hide the veggies (and eat more of them)! Mash butternut squash into mac and cheese. Make a tasty sandwich filled with veggies. Pour fresh berries and fruit into healthy cereal.
- Play a game of tag together. You'll make great memories AND become a fitter family!
- Make TV ground rules. Try no snacking while watching, or keep the snacks healthy – vegetables with healthy dip or slices of fruit. Consider placing time limits on TV viewing every day and send the kids outside to play. They'll burn more calories and build a healthier body composition.

An hour a week:

- Pizza night! Make homemade pizza from scratch with the kids. Kneading the dough (try whole-wheat) gives little arms a workout. When you're in control of the pizzamaking, you can pile the good ingredients high and add only a little of the less-healthy items like cheese.
- Teach your child to read... nutrition labels! A great place to start is at the breakfast table with cereal boxes. Teach him or her what the numbers mean. You might be surprised at their response.
- How brave are you? Taking kids to the grocery store on a healthy foods field trip can be a great way to educate. You can let them pick their favorite fruits and vegetables and teach them how to choose wisely at the store.

A Few Hours a Week:

- Plan to grow a family garden next summer! Watch as the tiny seeds sprout into nutritious, delicious treats for the whole family! Gardening is a great mild to moderate physical exercise, and the nutritious rewards are well worth the efforts. Kids can even have their very own patch in the garden to grow their favorites.
- Become involved in your local school district and find out what you can do to make sure kids get healthy meals at school lunches and functions. See if there are ways you can help your child's teacher to educate his or her class about healthy choices.
- As soon as the snow flies, get out the sled and hit the slopes with your kids health.