

## Family fitness: Health for everyone

**E**xercise is important for people of all ages. Families can work out together for more bonding time while getting fit. You can make a connection or strengthen your relationship while exercising. You can also be a role model for your children. Making healthy choices together now sets the tone for the rest of their lives, experts say.



Photo above by Christopher Futcher, below by g-stockstudio, courtesy iStockphoto

### Quick facts on family fitness:

**1** Parents who are physically active with their kids can get closer with them. They can also get a good look at their physical health, including motor skills, balance and how they play, according to experts.



**2** Some studies have shown that kids who exercise are more likely to choose healthy behaviors, such as not smoking.

**3** Everyone who exercises can see health benefits, such as better heart health, improved blood pressure and a potentially lower risk of obesity. But there are mental health benefits too: Playing with parents can boost kids' self-esteem.

**4** Family exercise can be easy and fun. A walk or bike ride can be a good way to get outside. Indoors, you can have a dance party or clean while music is playing. Kids need at least one hour of exercise a day.

**5** Turning exercise into a fun competition can keep your kids interested. Try to see who can pull the most weeds or make the most three-point shots.



>> For more information on family exercise, visit [www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)