

Navigating Family Engagement Today

Get Them (and You) Moving: Exercise at Home

It is certainly frustrating to be stuck at home for so long. Adults and children may be experiencing “cabin fever.” We are all so used to our active lives and the current reality is difficult for all of us. We and our children may be feeling sad, angry, lonely, and we may even be arguing with each other more than usual. You are probably not used to being your child’s teacher as well as their parent, and your children do not usually see you in that role, either. This may create tension if not actual arguments. So, is there anything you can do that could help with this?

Consider how you and your children can exercise together! This can be fun if you are doing something you all enjoy, and it can build closer bonds at a time when we may be getting on each other’s nerves.

One of the possibilities is to make certain that EVERY DAY you set aside time for some type of exercise for you and your children. When we are at home day after day, we simply move less. And less exercise can contribute to gloominess, bad moods, tensions, and arguments. Moving more will go a long way to lessen some of these emotions.



So why exercise?

- Exercise breaks the routine, especially when our physical surroundings may be moving in on us.
- Exercise is fun.
- Exercise keeps us healthier.
- Exercise breaks increase our ability to think and learn.
- Exercise reduces stress.

Since we are not all physical education teachers, here are a few suggestions for exercises at home:

- Take a walk, run, or bike outside on nice days. Remember stay at least 6 feet away from people outside your household.
- If you have a basketball hoop, shoot free throws, play “Horse,” with someone living in your house (don’t let others touch the same ball or come within 6 feet of you), or just practice alone.
- Jump rope indoors or outside.
- For younger children, set up an obstacle course through your house.
- Play balloon volleyball, kickball, or soccer in a basement, hallway, or other open space.
- Have a dance party. Invite friends to join via FaceTime or some other platform.
- Hallway bowling using any ball and plastic bottles (fill with water to add weight).
- See how long you can fake a temper tantrum! It will release tension and could cause some laughs.
- Play games with your family that require movement (such as Twister).
- Follow along with in exercise programs on TV, YouTube videos, or downloads of exercise videos for both adults and kids, yoga sessions, Zumba, and other dance exercise programs. Watch TV listings or search the Internet if you have access.

BOTTOM LINE: Keep your children and yourself moving every day. It will improve everything!
