

## 70 GREAT IDEAS for you and your family to get active!

*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. Take a Frisbee and head out to the park for a picnic.
3. Go outside and build a snowman or snow fort when it snows.
4. See if the local museum or historical society has a brochure of historical walks in your neighbourhood or town. Go out and explore together.
5. Gather toboggans and sleds and head to a nearby hill.
6. Build an outdoor rink or go to a nearby rink and go skating.
7. On a windy day, go to an open field and fly a kite.
8. Make your weekly family social activity, active! Go to the park instead of the movies
9. Plan "walk and talk" outings with your friends and their children. This is a great substitute for going for coffee.
10. When it snows, bundle up and make snow angels.
11. Plan an active family vacation. Try hiking, camping, or swimming.  
Plan a family night at the bowling alley
12. Play catch at a local park.
13. Learn how to hacky sac together.
14. 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.
15. Plan a family hike through a scenic park.
16. Challenge your children to a basketball, volleyball, tennis, or baseball game. They'll love the idea of playing and competing against you.
17. Explore different leash-free parks, even if you don't have a dog.
18. Go to the neighbourhood playground and help your children to climb and swing.
19. Go bird watching. See how many birds you can spot.
20. Take a moonlight or flashlight walk in the evening. Go stargazing.
21. Allow your children to include friends when planning some physical activities. This will encourage their peers to be active as well.



### Indoors

22. Too cold for a walk outside? Go for a walk in a mall.
23. Too cold to play outside? Take the family to an indoor playground.
24. 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

25. Organize a walking "school bus" in your neighbourhood and have the parents take turns walking the kids to school.
26. Take the stairs instead of the elevator when at the mall.
27. Get off the bus two stops early and walk home.
28. Park the car near the back of the parking lot when grocery shopping.
29. Walk, wheel, or cycle for short trips to the corner store.
30. Walk to the library on a sunny afternoon.
31. When doing errands, park in a central location and walk from place to place.
32. Use your child's practice times to walk around the playing field, rink, or gymnasium.
33. Schedule time for active play, just like you schedule time for homework.
34. Get everyone to carry some of the groceries to the car at the back of the lot.



35. 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.

36. During the holidays, walk or cycle instead of driving to view the festive decorations.



### **Games**

37. 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.

38. Practice stretching by playing "Simon says." Be sure to stretch your legs, back and arm muscles.

39. Check out a book from the library about games from around the world. Try out a game you've never played before.

40. Take turns swinging the skipping rope for the kids.

41. Play tag with the whole family.

42. 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.

43. Organize neighbourhood games to help your kids make active choices. A soccer, football, baseball, or dodge ball game that is parents vs. children involves everyone.

44. Play hide and seek, inside or outside.

45. 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.

46. Get actively involved in the sports your children participate in. Play catch or kick the soccer ball around as a family.

47. Have a scavenger hunt as part of birthday celebrations to encourage activity.

48. Ask children to invent new rules for old games.

49. Take the blankets off the bed and play parachute games.

### **Around The House**

50. 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.

51. Get a foam ball to play catch with during commercials of television shows.

52. See who can do the most jumping jacks during the commercial breaks.

53. Use household chores as a fitness class. Assign everyone a task.

54. Pick a favourite tune and turn up the music.

55. Take those few extra steps and use the upstairs bathroom.

56. Move the home exercise equipment into the TV room and use it.

57. Plan a walk everyday after dinner and chart your steps on a map on the fridge.

58. When it snows, get enough shovels for the whole family to help shovel the sidewalks and steps in your neighbourhood.

59. Have theme nights with your family and include various activities, i.e., round up a couple of hula hoops and take turns.

60. Diversify the TV room with a ping pong table and paddles. Have an ongoing family tournament.

61. Do a physical activity routine with leaders on TV teaching yoga or aerobics.

62. Encourage and participate with children's TV shows that involve singing and dancing.

63. For every hour they watch, get a commitment for equal time engaged in physical activity. Make the same guidelines for yourself as well.

64. Replace "you can't watch TV" with "Let's turn the TV off and play something fun together."

65. Start each morning with a 10-minute stretch and wake session before breakfast.

66. Reward children with activity, instead of food or movies. For example, give them swim passes to the local pool.

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

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

69. 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!

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

