

Educating, Developing, and understanding Young Minds

Staying fit is important at any age. Maybe you want to get your family active but don't know how to go about it. Here are ten good ideas to help educate you on fitness so you can make changes in your life. Obesity is an epidemic in our world today. It is not just eating more fattening foods but the lack of activity that is contributing to the problem. As a family unit, you can help turn things around one day at a time. Try one idea and then another.

10 tips to make fitness fun and easy

No one necessarily wants to exercise. Doing it alone can be a chore, but when you are with another, say a family member, it can become friendly competition that benefits all involved. Try the following.

1. **Talk to your family** – We all could be a little more active each day. Encourage your family by telling them that you are doing it together so the person with the most weight to lose is not singled out. Everyone works together.
2. **Have fun** – Especially for kids, an activity that is fun is more likely to be repeated day after day. They may even remind you about an activity if you forget.
3. **Make fitness more accessible** – It can be a hassle driving to the gym if it is not close. Also coordinating schedules could be a nightmare. For days when you can't get away have equipment home to work with. Try DVDs, exercise bands, free weights or bicycles.
4. **Take a class together** – The best thing about classes is that no one is looking at you but at the instructor. Zumba is hot dance exercises craze that is a great calorie burner for men, women, young and old.
5. **Play sports** – Organized sports not only builds physical endurance but also camaraderie in the family. It doesn't have to be a school team but a church or neighborhood team.
6. **Plan healthy meals** – Exercise is only a part of the equation. If you want to see your body transform quicker, make small changes each day to your household-eating plan.
7. **Do something every day** – There is nothing like consistency to bring about change. Plan to do something together each day even if only one or two can participate. Eventually everyone will be able to get on board.
8. **Buy sporting equipment** – You can find items at a good price so that physical activity is only a few feet away at any one time.
9. **Prepare the back yard for fun** – Anytime you want to have a friendly competition you can go outside. Keep the yard set up with volleyball net or bases for kickball or whiffle ball.
10. **Be a role model** – Kids are more apt to follow what they see. If you, as a parent, are active they will try to follow suit.

You can turn things around in your family. It is never too late to get healthier and more active.

The Kids 'R' Kids Experience



Studies show that hitting the books with your preschooler improves early literacy. It helps kids sharpen language and vocabulary, and sparks discussions with the parent that promote a better understanding, says child psychologist, Richard Gallagher, PhD.

Books that tell a story and ones that teach counting, ABC's, sorting and matching, and similar core concepts are perfect for this age, says Gallagher, who is an associate professor of child and adolescent psychiatry at New York University's Child Study Center.

Source: WebMD

ALICE STERLING HONIG

little kids
BIG WORRIES



STRESS-BUSTING TIPS
FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSROOMS

How Can Adults Respond to Children's **STRESS?**

Assisting children in understanding and using effective adaptation and coping strategies must be based on the child's developmental level and understanding of the nature of the stress-inducing event. Teachers and parents can prevent and reduce stress for children in many ways:

- Help the child anticipate stressful events, such as a first haircut or the birth of a sibling. Adults can prepare children by increasing their understanding of the upcoming event and reducing its stressful impact (Marion, 2003).
- Over-preparing children for upcoming stressful events, however, can prove even more stressful than the event itself (Donate-Bartfield & Passman, 2000). Adults can judge the optimal level of preparation by encouraging the child to ask questions if he or she wants to know more.
- Provide supportive environments where children can play out or use art materials to express their concerns (Gross & Clemens, 2002).
- Help children identify a variety of coping strategies (e.g., "ask for help if someone is teasing you"; "tell them you don't like it"; "walk away"). Coping strategies help children feel more effective in stressful situations (Fallin, Wallinga, & Coleman, 2001).
- Help children recognize, name, accept, and express their feelings appropriately.
- Teach children relaxation techniques. Consider suggesting to a child such things as "take three deep breaths"; "count backwards"; "tense and release your muscles"; "play with play dough"; "dance"; "imagine a favorite place to be and visit that place in your mind" (use creative imagery) (O'Neill, 1993).
- Practice positive self-talk skills (e.g., "I'll try. I think I can do this.") to help in promoting stress management (O'Neill, 1993). Other basic strategies include implementing sound positive discipline strategies, following consistent routines, enhancing cooperation, and providing time for children to safely disclose their concerns and stresses privately and in groups.

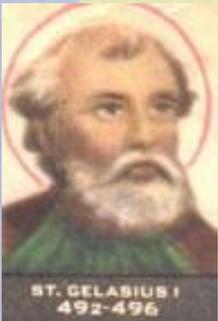
Our increasing knowledge about the importance and impact of stress on young children should be put to good use in reducing stress factors for young children and in assisting children to increase coping strategies and healthy responses to the unavoidable stresses in their lives.

Source: Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education

A Valentine History

When Pope Gelasius declared February 14 St. Valentine's Day, it was not until much later that the day became definitively associated with love. During the Middle Ages, it was commonly believed in France and England that February 14 was the beginning of birds' mating season, which added to the idea that the middle of Valentine's Day should be a day for romance. Valentine greetings go back as far as the Middle Ages, though written Valentine's didn't begin to appear until after 1400. The oldest known valentine still in existence today was a poem written in 1415 by Charles, Duke of Orleans, to his wife while he was imprisoned in the Tower of London following his capture at the Battle of Agincourt. (The greeting is now part of the manuscript collection of the British Library in London, England.) Several years later, it is believed that King Henry V hired a writer named John Lydgate to compose a valentine note to Catherine of Valois.

In addition to the United States, Valentine's Day is celebrated in Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, France and Australia. In Great Britain, Valentine's Day began to be popularly celebrated around the 17th century. By the middle of the 18th, it was common for friends and lovers of all social classes to exchange small tokens of affection or handwritten notes, and by 1900 printed cards began to replace written letters due to improvements in printing technology. Ready-made cards were an easy way for people to express their emotions in a time when direct expression of one's feelings was discouraged. Cheaper postage rates also contributed to an increase in the popularity of sending Valentine's Day greetings. Americans probably began exchanging hand-made valentines in the early 1700s. In the 1840s, Esther A. Howland began selling the first mass-produced valentines in America. Howland, known as the "Mother of the Valentine," made elaborate creations with real lace, ribbons and colorful pictures known as "scrap." Today, according to the Greeting Card Association, an estimated 1 billion Valentine's Day cards are sent each year, making Valentine's Day the second largest card-sending holiday of the year. Women purchase approximately 85 percent of all valentines. Source: History.com



Pope Gelasius



Charles,
Duke of Orleans



King Henry V



Catherine of Valois



John Lydgate

The Prince's Valentine

Author Unknown

Once upon a time there was a little Prince, and he wanted to give a valentine to a little Princess who lived in a neighboring kingdom. She was a very beautiful little Princess indeed, for her smile was as bright as her golden hair, and her love for her subjects was as deep as the blue of her eyes. "What kind of a valentine shall I get for the Princess?" the Prince asked. "A heart, your Highness; nothing but a heart will do!" said the Court Wise Man. "A beautiful heart, your Highness; nothing but a beautiful heart will do!" said the Court Ladies. "A priceless heart, your Highness; nothing but a priceless heart will do!" said the Court Chancellor. So the Prince started out to get a heart valentine for the little Princess that would be both beautiful and beyond price, and he did not know where to find it. Before long, though, he came to a jeweler's shop that was full of pretty, costly things to wear. There were pins, and bracelets, and necklaces made of silver and gold, and set with rubies, and sapphires, and emeralds, and diamonds. "This is the place to find a valentine for the little Princess," thought the Prince, and he selected a diamond heart hung on a gold chain as thin as a thread for the little Princess to wear about her neck. The Prince gave the jeweler his bag of gold and started out of the shop with the diamond heart in his hand. But he stopped at the door, looking at the heart. It was dull, and no longer shining. What was the matter with it, he wondered. Then he remembered. It was not the right valentine for the little Princess because it had been bought with his bag of gold. So the Prince gave the diamond heart back to the jeweler, and went on again. After the Prince had gone quite a distance he came to a pastry shop. It was full of delicious things to eat, jam tarts, and little strawberry pies, thickly frosted cakes, and plum buns. In the window of the pastry shop was a huge cake baked in the shape of a heart. It was rich with sugar and spices, and the icing on the top was almost as thick as the cake itself. "This is the place to find the valentine for the little Princess!" thought the Prince, and he pointed to the great heart cake in the window. "How much must I pay for that cake?" he asked of the pastry cook. "Oh, you could not buy that cake!" the pastry cook replied. "I made it as a decoration for the shop for Valentine's Day. But I will give it to you, your Highness." So the Prince thanked the pastry cook, and started out of the shop with the great cake in his arms. "This must surely be the valentine for the little Princess, because I could not buy it," he thought. Then the Prince almost dropped the cake. It had suddenly grown too heavy for him to carry. What was the matter with the rich, huge cake, he wondered. Then he remembered. It was not the right valentine for the little Princess because something rich to eat is not beautiful. So the Prince gave the cake back to the pastry cook, and went on again. Now he went a long, long way, and he came to a bird seller beside the road. He had little gold birds, and bright-colored ones in green basket cages. They were all singing as if their throats would burst, but the Prince could hear one soft note above the others, because it was so clear and sweet. It was the cooing of a little dove that sat in her cage apart from the others. The Prince thought he had never seen such a beautiful little dove, as white as snow, and with rose red feet. "Why does she sing so much more sweetly than the others?" the Prince asked, pointing to the little white dove. The bird seller smiled. "She sings because of her heart," he said. "The other birds sing in the sunshine, but look"—he held up the dove's cage, and the Prince saw that the little white dove had closed, blind eyes. "She sings in the dark because of her happy heart," the bird seller said. "May I buy her," the Prince asked, "to give as a valentine to a little Princess?" "Oh, I will give her to you," the bird seller said. "Very few people want to take care of a blind bird." But the little Princess did. She liked the white dove better than any of her other valentines. She hung her cage in a pink rose tree in the sunniest part of the garden, and she often invited the Prince to sit with her under the tree and listen to the dove's sweet song.



Kids 'R' Kids Learning Academies work with the interactive technology that today's children need to experience. We're believers in the appropriate use of technology – utilizing creative computer applications and other innovations to help your child grow – in keeping with the technologies he will need to understand for future success. Our technology-based learning activities are developed with your child in mind and extend beyond the boundaries of traditional daycare.

The Kids 'R' Kids Experience