



BETTER
KID CARE
PROGRAM



Family Time Work Time

A B A L A N C I N G A C T

BUILDING STRONG FAMILIES

Family Fitness

Most of us are aware that we need to be active to be physically fit. Parents need to make sure their children have enough active times to be fit. Exercise can help reduce the risks of developing health problems later in life, such as heart disease, diabetes, colon cancer, and high blood pressure. It can also provide hours of fun family times together.

Here are some suggestions to help keep your family fit:

- Take regular walks together. Walk around your neighborhood. Look for seasonal changes, clouds in the sky, construction projects, etc.
- If you want to walk at a steady pace, have your child ride a tricycle or bike. You will then have to walk at a fast pace or maybe even jog to keep up.
- Play catch, baseball, basketball, or tennis with your child. Swimming can be another fun activity for the whole family.
- Do household chores together. You can all get exercise by cleaning the house and doing yard work together.
- Set limits for television and computer time. Remember, snacking in front of the television can cause overeating and promotes inactivity.

Organized Sports for Children — Good or Bad?

Sports can help children build strong, healthy bodies and keep fit. Make sure you choose wisely for your child. Preschoolers are too young for organized sports. They get upset by losing, become easily bored and distracted, and can become disruptive. Children age eight and older can begin team sports. They are



ready to learn about teamwork and can accept coaching tips.

Find a sports program where the adults involved have positive attitudes. Many children love team sports at first, but are driven away by parents or coaches who are too critical or competitive. Find a program where the focus is on having fun and teaching skills while playing rather than on winning.

If your child wants to be on a team, limit it to one sport and leave time for family activities. These are important, too. If a sport takes away from too many family times, such as regular meals and other activities, consider another one. Children

need unstructured time to play by themselves and with friends. If you keep the attitude positive and the time commitment under control, sports can be a positive part of your child's life.

Share Your Favorite Sport

Share your love for a favorite sport with your child, but resist the urge to become a "coach" to your child. Play together as partners. Have fun watching and playing. This will create happy memories and can build a shared love of sports. Children will stay involved longer and enjoy an activity more if it is playful rather than educational. Coming on too strong might make your child grow to dislike your favorite sport.

Food Guessing Game

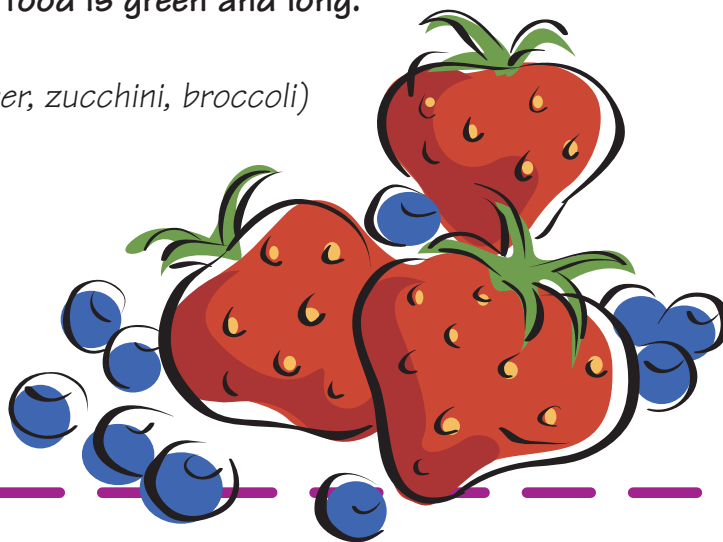
Here is a game that you can play with your child. At first you can give the questions, but if your child has good skills at describing something, you can take turns. This game can keep your child busy and thinking while you are preparing a meal.

Here are some ideas for the game,
but you and your child can make up others:

- I am thinking of a food and the food is red and round.
What food am I thinking of?
(Answers include: apple, strawberry, red pepper, tomato, raspberry, or even an uncooked hamburger patty.)
- I am thinking of a food and the food is blue and round.
What food am I thinking of?
(Answers include: blueberries, plums, grapes)
- I am thinking of a food and the food is white and oval.
What food am I thinking of?
(Answers include: egg, potato, turnip)
- I am thinking of a food and the food is green and long.
What food am I thinking of?
(Answers include: celery, cucumber, zucchini, broccoli)

He or She? Him or Her?

Please note: In this and all Better Kid Care publications we take turns referring to children as "he" or "she." When we use he or she, we include all children.



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Dr. James E. Van Horn, Better Kid Care Program Director

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Developed by: Nancy Wilson, Penn State Better Kid Care Program, Penn State University

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