

## *Walk to School Day*

### **Ideas of Things to Do All Year**

Use the following list of ideas to interest your family in a more active lifestyle. If one idea does not appeal to your family, try another idea. The most important thing is to find an activity that your child or family enjoys and will continue doing. Physical activity should be fun!

Ben Franklin said it best, "A good example is the best sermon." So remember to get active with your child or family!

1. Buy toys or equipment that promote physical activity
2. Select fitness-oriented gifts with the child's (or adult's) skills, interests or needs in mind.
3. Use physical activity rather than food as a reward (e.g. family goes in-line skating).
4. Emphasize the importance of having fun and learning; avoid a push "to win".
5. Insist that recess is available daily for elementary school students.
6. Volunteer to help with physical activity events at your child's school.
7. Always use the stairs.
8. Walk, jog, or skip instead of driving (to and from school, grocery store, library park, etc.)
9. Park the car as far away from the entrance as possible.
10. Discover what free and low-cost physical activity areas are near your home (park, bike trail, hiking trail, tennis court, swimming pool, etc.).
11. Shovel snow ... build a snow sculpture; make snow angels; build a snow house.
12. Dig and plant in the garden ... help everyone plant their own vegetables, fruits and flowers.
13. Talk a long walk or jog on the beach.
14. Cross country ski around town and into the woods.
15. Use a compass to map out a course – then set out on a walk, jog, or bike hike.
16. Canoe or raft for an entire afternoon.
17. Dive into a pile of leaves.
18. Play active indoor games like Twister.
19. Ice skate for a great winter workout.
20. Skiing always gives the family a lift.
21. Enjoy water exercise activities.
22. Play a game of mixed-age water volleyball.
23. Visit outdoor education centers.
24. Take a nature hike.
25. Go to a driving range or enjoy a game of miniature golf.
26. Go camping where you can pitch a tent, gather firewood, fish, bike, and walk.
27. Visit farms throughout the year where you can pick your own strawberries, beans, apples, etc.
28. Plan cycling trips on safe trails by calling your local bike shop or bike club.
29. Run, jog, and walk on a family treasure hunt.
30. Toss around as many different-shaped balls/objects as you can find.
31. Learn to juggle with the entire family.
32. Play "Hit and Go" croquet – hit the ball and run to it – across the whole yard.
33. Count hula-hoop rotations.
34. Jump rope – practice rhythms, rhymes and tricks.
35. Play "Ultimate Frisbee".
36. Play an action-packed game of badminton ... serve from where the birdie drops.
37. Build stilts and walk on them to create laughter and exercise.
38. Ride on a skate board (with knee, wrist and elbow pads and helmets).
39. Play hopscotch and organize a family tournament.
40. Run and dodge in a "Tag and You're It" game.
41. Play traditional and modified backyard sports: soccer, basketball, softball, volleyball, etc.
42. Practice on inline skates (with knee, wrist and elbow pads and helmets).
43. Take the family pet for a walk or jog.

44. Create your own Olympic events or friendly challenges at a family event or neighborhood block party.
45. Organize a family swim outing – be sure to swim with a buddy in supervised areas.
46. Walk or bike to a nearby playground – challenge family members to try their skills swinging, and crossing a horizontal ladder.
47. Take a historical (or architectural) walk or cycling tour.
48. Plan a “block fitness festival”.
49. Adopt a highway, park, or beach, and keep it clean.
50. Help organize mall walks – especially in bad weather.
51. Research and build a new community exercise opportunity.
52. Enter a “fun run” or a “bike-a-thon”.
53. Create or build a fitness trail for the community.
54. Organize a party at an indoor ice or roller skating rink.
55. Walk to the tennis court and play!
56. Participate in a mixed-age martial arts class.
57. Create a family video of exercise routines.
58. Invite friends and neighbors over for some country western line dancing.
59. Invent a new dance and name it after your family.
60. Dance to three songs on the radio.
61. Throw an ethnic/multi-cultural dance party.
62. Encourage everyone to “act out” a story as you read it.
63. Build an obstacle course in the basement or garage on a rainy day.
64. Hike through the woods and eat your picnic lunch among the trees.
65. Walk or ride a bike to a friend’s house.
66. Encourage schools to have walking field trips (e.g. walk to the local museum).
67. Have a day set aside to walk to school (e.g. Walkable Wednesday).

Adapted from: 99 Tips for Family Fitness Fun, NASPE/AAHPERD Publications, Reston, VA, Stock No. 304-10256.

#### **OTHER RESOURCES:**

1. Rails to Trails website – [www.railtrails.org/MI](http://www.railtrails.org/MI)
2. Michigan Recreation and Parks Assn. Website – [www.MRPAonline.org](http://www.MRPAonline.org)
3. Brochures available from Governor’s Council: “Michigan Keep Moving!”, “Heart Happy Exercise” at [www.michiganfitness.org](http://www.michiganfitness.org)