

Introduction

There is no question that physical activity is good for children. Just consider the evidence. Physical activity strengthens muscles, bones and joints. It gives children the opportunity to gain self-esteem, confidence, and a sense of well-being. It reduces stress and anxiety levels. It also prevents disease and may even improve blood pressure and cholesterol levels. After school programs offer children fun alternatives to risky behaviors.

Do you know what your children are doing after school?

Visit

www.VERBparents.com

to get new ideas about increasing the physical activity levels of your children.

www.cdc.gov/verb

for information about the campaign.

www.VERBnow.com

to see how children will experience VERB online.

www.americanheart.org

to get tips for raising heart-healthy, active children.

www.shapeup.org

for information about healthy weight management through better nutrition and increased physical activity.

ACTIVE CHILDREN, **ACTIVE FAMILIES.**

A Helpful Guide for
Native American & Alaskan Native
Parents and Caregivers.

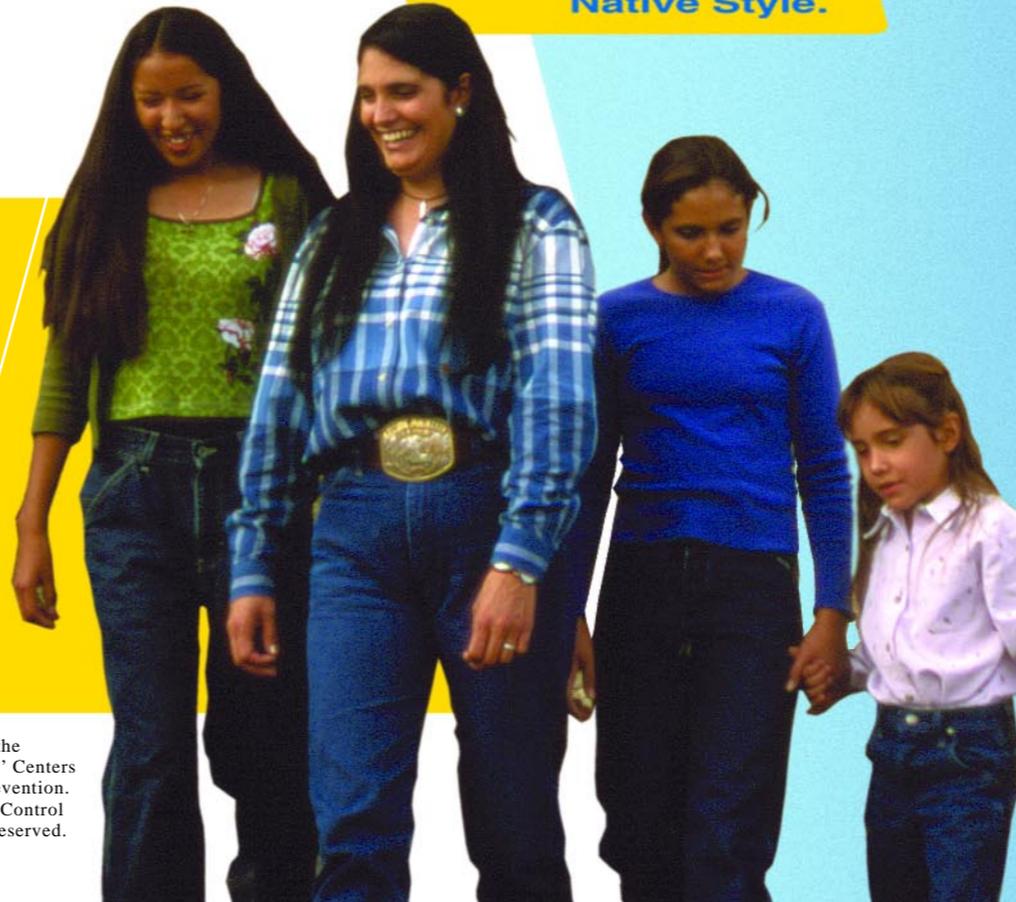
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It's what you do.
Native Style.

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Challenge:

A LACK OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Physical inactivity is a serious problem for many children.

Solution:

MAKE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FUN AND CHALLENGING

Encourage children to participate in 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity every day.

Motivate kids to get involved in supervised activities or support their initiative to be active on their own.

Investigate whether your school and community center have recreational activities, such as basketball and soccer, for youth on weekends or after school.

Search for activities to do “around the house” like shooting hoops, dancing, picking berries, hiking, playing catch or kickball, riding horses or bicycles. Use the seasons to inspire outdoor activities, like skiing and snowshoeing in winter, and swimming in the summer.



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Challenge:

THE COMMUNITY OR SCHOOL LACKS RESOURCES

Some areas lack playgrounds, courts, or after-school programs.

Solution:

BECOME AN ADVOCATE

Talk to teachers and administrators. Ask them to support daily physical education and other school programs that promote lifelong physical activity.

Make sure your children are provided with at least 20 minutes of recess during school each day.

Call on tribal leaders to install park equipment, bike paths, or other resources for physical activity.

Promote Community and Health Centers that offer programs to give children more opportunities to get active.

Challenge:

SCREENS COMPETE FOR TIME

The average child spends up to six hours watching television, playing video games, and surfing the net each day.¹

Solution:

OFFER INTERESTING, EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVES

Start by allowing your children to watch only one to two hours of quality TV programming per day.²

Remove TV sets from children’s bedrooms and encourage them to spend time with different media, such as reading books or dancing to music.

Lead by example to limit “screen time” and encourage participation in physical activities.

¹ Media in the Home 2000: The Fifth Annual Survey of Parents and Children, 2000.
² The American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Public Education, Children, Adolescents and Television, 2001.



Challenge:

LACK OF TIME AND RESOURCES

Including physical activity and daily routines requires some effort and planning.

Solution:

BE A ROLE MODEL IN LEADING PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR CHILDREN, FAMILY & COMMUNITY.

Find activities that can be part of your child’s routine. Explore your surroundings for creative ways to be physically active together.

Walk with your child at every available opportunity, like going to school or doing errands.

Add physical activities such as hiking, biking, or taking long walks to your weekend plans.

Household chores like walking the dog, washing the car, or raking leaves include physical activity, so encourage the children to tackle them with gusto. Make it fun and rewarding.