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Getting Kids Moving – Help for Overweight Teens

By Kathryn Martyn

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by: **Kathryn Martyn**

I recently read about a residential school program for overweight teens with a hefty price tag in excess of \$5,000 per month. Whew, that should sweat off a few pounds just thinking about it. These programs rely on the same course as what is commonly recommended; a strict eating plan and increased activity schedule. Hopefully some counseling is offered, and college prep courses are the curriculum. But what of those kids? Are they getting a realistic head-start on a lifetime of healthier habits or are they simply doing what they are told, only to be fed to the wolves when they leave the safe environment of the school?

I tried to find stories of teens who had successfully completed these programs and gone on to healthy lives, and found none. What I did find were some other ideas, in case you feel you are at the end of your rope and don't know where to turn.

Exercise Should be Fun

First, get your child interested in some type of exercise activity, whether indoor or outdoor. Most overweight kids probably aren't too crazy about running and jumping up and down but what about bike riding? Another idea I'm wanting to try is hiking with a GPS (Global Positioning Satellite). If you like the outdoors, Geocaching sounds like enormous fun and anyone can do it. Adults are reporting losing 20, 30 or more pounds while they are out exploring the woods and hills in their surrounding area. Learning to use a GPS is educational (math, science, physics) at the same time.

I also recommend all parents get their kids into martial arts if they show any interest at all. Martial arts teaches kids discipline, respect for authority and builds self confidence and self esteem, and it has the added benefit of teaching self defense.

Talk to your kids. Find out what they may be interested in, and then explore the options together.

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My son is a good example. He was never overweight but when he was 13 his skin tone was flabby. He didn't go outside much, preferring to play Nintendo, and was an excellent student so he studied every day. Luckily neighborhood kids invited him to start playing football, and today, five years later he's a senior in high school playing football and loving life. His body has shaped up nicely (he's still a young teen but now has muscles and an excellent skin tone). He's confident, well liked, and I have no worries that he'll continue with a healthier lifestyle from this point forward.

Before he took up football we bought him a bike which was rarely used. He has a skate board, a mini-scooter, and a pogo stick. We tried karate classes (sadly, he broke his wrist playing at school so had to stop, and then didn't want to return). Sometimes it takes awhile to find the right fit, but nearly everyone will feel better when they find a physical activity they like.

A search for "indoor sports Vancouver Washington " (without the quotes) gave me lots of ideas. If you live in the city, get out the phone book and/or search the Internet for indoor activities in your town. Here

are a few I found:

Parks & Recreation:

Vancouver Indoor Sports

which offers programs for adults and children

Sports Walking:

(this isn't a local site)

Books on Sports for Kids

The Ultimate Sport Lead-Up Game Book: The Very Best Skill-Building Games For Grades K-8 by Guy Bailey

and The Ultimate Home school Physical Education Game Book: Fun & Easy-To-Use Games & Activities To Help You Teach Your Children Fitness, Movement & Sport Skills by Guy Bailey

I also highly recommended DDR (Dance Dance Revolution), a video game that teaches kids dance steps as a challenge. Since you're moving while you play, those that get good at the game will also achieve excellent physical shape at the same time. There are clubs all around the world and many web sites devoted to the play and practice.

Finding something your kids will enjoy that keeps them active is all it takes, and if they are reluctant, I can tell you once the blood starts pumping they'll get jazzed. You may just find something you love as well. Don't be afraid to try a few different things before you find the right fit, and wait to buy expensive equipment until you know it's something you and your kids really love. You'll be saving an equal amount in less food, soft drinks and medical bills down the road. Get up and get moving and your kids

will naturally follow your lead.

Kathryn Martyn is a Master NLP Practitioner, EFT counselor, and author of *Changing Beliefs, Your First Step to Permanent Weight Loss*. Kathryn has developed a winning program for all ages that includes a simple do-it-yourself process helping kids and adults get past the issues that may be keeping them stuck. Visit her at

for a complimentary copy of

Changing Beliefs to see for yourself how she released over 80 pounds in 1987 and how you can do the same.

Cruises For The Entire Family

By Kirsten Hawkins

Cruise ships are not commonly thought of as family vacation vessels. However, there are a fair amount of cruises, like Carnival's "fun ships" targeted at fulfilling just this purpose. Look at it this way: you know the kids are not going that far, unless of course they have gone overboard. Also, there is a little bit of something for everyone in all age groups. From adults, to teens, to kids, there is are coordinated activities as well as focused facilities for all of the different age groups. You can rest assured that no one will be bored on a family cruise.

For parents there are the usual activities. Your rest, relaxation and rejuvenation is certainly the focus and you can spend all the time you'd like lounging by the pool or on the deck, as well as making appointments for a massage or facial. There is plenty of evening recreation for once the kids are in bed, and it varies from ship to ship. There are also great opportunities for socializing and networking, and it is a good idea to have either a small notebook on hand, or at least copies of your card to give to new friends and contacts. There are also wine tasting groups, exercise rooms and nightclubs are on the adults only agendas for most family cruises.

For kids, there are all kinds of activities on board family cruises. From special times in the pool, to special gym classes, the kids are at least seemingly the focus on a family cruise. There are also children's centers focused on entertaining the kids and keeping them busy while the adults enjoy their alone time. There are craft activities and fully certified staff to work with your most precious commodities: your kids.

If you have older kids, there are also teen centers on board some cruise ships. This is becoming a more and more popular trend. In fact Coca-Cola recently teamed up with the Carnival cruise line to bring exciting new teen centers to their fun ships. These teen centers have been created out of extensive market research and include dance floors, jukebox listening stations, a mock bar with non-alcoholic specialty drinks and space for the teens to just hang out. This is a revolutionary concept, since teens are a previously untapped market in terms of cruise line focus marketing. Teens are also more likely to find things that they enjoy in the ports of call than will younger kids, simply because they are more independent.

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One reason that cruises are a great idea for family vacations is that most of the costs are included in the base price of the trip. While you are on the ship, things like meals and activities are for the most part covered. This is great because you do not have to give per diems to your kids and you can know up front how much your vacation is going to cost. Of course, you will want to have extra money on hand for when you leave the ship and get to do some real travel.

Kirsten Hawkins is a cruise and travel expert specializing in discount cruises and travel. Visit [for more information on how to cruise the world for little or no money.](#)

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