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**Helping Your Child Stay Fit**

**By Kirsten Hawkins**

Would your child rather watch television and play video games all day than move an inch? Children are battling obesity and inactivity at alarming rates. It's time to get our kids in shape now, before they face serious health problems in the future. But how?

As you can guess, the plan includes lots of fun. Any time you can add excitement and laughter into an activity, you've got a winner. Let's take a look at some of the ways you can help your child not only become healthier, but enjoy the process!

First, plan some family nights out, and by that I mean Outdoors. Catching fireflies, passing football, even camping out in the backyard get the whole gang moving. Plus, you're making memories for a lifetime.

Secondly, kids love fun, unusual games. Check out a book of outdoor games at the library, and play some of the oddest ones. Use a tennis racket and large plastic ball for baseball, a giant exercise ball for kickball, and balloons for volleyball. The simple changes make the game more fun -sometimes downright hysterical!

Next, it's time to look for a physical hobby - something that requires movement. Gardening's a great one - plant giant pumpkins, King Sunflowers, grape tomatoes, mini carrots, and odd-shaped gourds for novelty. Check out a book on carpentry for kids, and let your child learn to build some simple items like birdhouses and feeders.

You may want to consider investing in one of the large, inflatable waterslides or rock climbing wall. Some of these inflatable items are surprisingly sturdy and provide hours of physical fun and exercise.

Finally, enhance your child's creativity as well by having him or her design an obstacle course in the backyard. Beware! You may have to run through it, too! But activities that provide fun and fitness for the whole family can't be beat!

Who knows? Before long you may find the video games on a shelf gathering dust. Wouldn't that be a nice change of pace?

Kirsten Hawkins is a nutrition and health expert from Nashville, TN. Visit

<http://www.popular-diets.com/>

for more great nutrition, well-being, and vitamin tips as well as reviews and comments on popular diets.

### **Tips On Coping With A Child With ADHD**

**By Tina Barraclough**

I am a mother of a 6 year old son who was recently diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). I am by no means an expert on this subject – I am only a mom who struggles to help my ADHD child.

Listed below are some tips I have learned from experience along the way.

1. Life with a child who has ADHD has its challenges, but remember that your child is not acting up because they want to be difficult – they can't help it. So it's up to you to stay calm and avoid arguing with your child. It helps to keep the daily routine and home life as calm, predictable and stress-free as possible.
2. Accept that there is a problem, whether or not you accept the diagnosis. Denial will not help you or your child.
3. Be prepared to feel guilty about the time you spend with your ADHD child compared to the time you spend with your other children. Other family members may start to feel like you are neglecting them.
4. Take care of yourself – it is often challenging to raise a child with ADHD. Caring for your own physical and mental health is an important part of helping your child, and will provide you with the necessary energy when you need it the most.
5. The most important thing is NEVER punish your child while you are angry. Take a breather away from the child before you hand out any punishment to your child. Discipline that belittles or shames a child can truly be harmful.
6. Start rewarding instead of punishing. You've probably already discovered how useless it is to try to punish your child when he's running around or tuning you out. What I have found with my child is how well he responds to simple rewards. Praise good behavior immediately ("You brushed your teeth, just like I asked you to! Thanks so much!") and give your child a reward that pleases him such as a special snack or extra time to watch TV, for example. The reward should be something he can enjoy right away; kids with ADHD don't like to wait.

## Helping Your Child Stay Fit

7. Realize you are not alone. There are many parents out there who have a child with ADHD. If you need to talk to someone, you can find support groups out there. Talk to your Doctor or Therapist. They can point you in the right direction to find support.

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Tips On Coping With A Child With ADHD

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