THE ROLE OF FAMILY IN PROMOTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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What is a family?

- Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines a family as “a group of people united by certain convictions or a common affiliation”
- Families can take various shapes and formats, but the most important aspects about them is that members support each other
- In American society, family are usually the most important educational unit
Physical Activity in America’s Youth

- Fewer than 49% of boys and 35% of girls ages six to eleven do not meet the recommended 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day.

- 1/3 of American youths are overweight or obese.
What is Causing the Decline in Physical Activity?

- Less access to physical activity in schools
- Poor neighborhood planning and violence
- Decline in recreational sports programs
- Economic opportunity for child to be in organized programs
Family Based Physical Activity Promotion

- What is one way to bring physical activity to children?
- Family support of physical activity may be one of the most cost effective and successful ways to get kids active
Influence of Families

- Parents are extremely important in determining the physical activity levels of children.
- Children of two parents who are active were 5.8 times more likely to be active than children with two sedentary parents (Moore, et al. 1991).
- Children with siblings were more likely to be active than children without siblings.
Support Rather Than Modeling

- Parental support for physical activity may be just as important than parental participation in physical activity.
- Support through compliments, positive reinforcement, and ensuring enjoyment of an activity are all ways parents can promote physical activity.
Approaches to Family Based Promotion

- Shared and Goal-Directed Programs
- Family Supported Active Transport
- Parental Advocacy for Programs
- Integrated and Multilevel Approaches
Shared and Goal Oriented Programs

- This approach involves all members of a family working together to increase physical activity levels.
- Examples include a family setting a step count goal for each member for a day, or taking time each week to take walks, etc.
Family Supported Active Transport

- Although recent urban developments and current city planning has made it difficult for active transport, family can and should make promote it.
- Active transport is a way to get more physical activity into every family member’s life.
Parental Advocacy for Programs

- Parents play a role in placing children in programs that provide them with opportunities for physical activity.
- After school programs and organized youth sports programs provide children for opportunities for physical activity and can be supported by parents.
Integrated and Multilevel Approach

- Integrated and multilevel approaches utilizes churches and schools to provide physical activity opportunities to families in all neighborhoods.
- Parents who support these types of programs can help reduce the cost issue of organized programs and lead to greater life style changes.
The So What For You?

- Hopefully we will all be parents some day
- It is essential we know that family based approached to physical activity are easier and cheap (even free!)
- It is important as a parent to support physical activity in children through both words and actions
- Remember to make physical activity important for you future family!
The Challenge to You!

- [Link to YouTube video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qaMLFuAko4)


