

10 Tips for Keeping Kids Active During the Winter

When the weather turns cold and it gets dark early, keeping kids active can take some creativity. Here are some ideas for keeping your family moving all winter long.

1. **Discover Indoor Facilities**

Visit an indoor pool, ice skating rink or basketball court at a local gym, school, or community center. You can visit <http://www.ymca.net/> to locate your local YMCA and find out about indoor programs they offer.

2. **Dance Your Heart Out!**

Encourage your child to pick the music, crank it up and then dance away! March, box step, bounce, spin, shake it...it is a great way to burn calories.

3. **Take it Outside**

If there is snow where you live get the whole family outside to do some sledding, build snow forts and throw snowballs, build a snow sculpture—anything that keeps the kids moving and having fun.

4. **Walk the Mall**

When it's too cold to venture outdoors take the family for a brisk walk around the nearest mall. Walk up the stairs versus taking the escalators.

5. **Keep it Clean**

Recruit your kids to help with the house cleaning. Pick jobs based on age and capability: younger children can pick up toys while older kids can vacuum, sort laundry, or scrub the bathtub.

6. **Visit the Library**

Libraries are a great resource for children's fitness videos and books, which you can use to teach your child about indoor exercises. Best of all, it's free!

7. **Hit the Trails**

Go snow trekking, skiing or snowboarding with the kids for a fun aerobic workout. If you don't have the equipment (or a nearby resort), find a hill ideal for sledding or tubing. Climbing back up after each run will get hearts pumping.

8. **Visit a Zoo or a Farm**

Zoos and farms are fun winter destinations for learning how life changes through the seasons. Kids can also learn how animals are taken care of during winter.

9. **Sign 'Em Up**

Enroll your child in an instructional group class. Try dancing, gymnastics, martial arts, fencing, indoor swimming lessons—anything that will get him or her excited about staying active.

10. **Find Middle Ground**

If it's impossible to pry kids away from the TV, encourage them to do jumping jacks, sit-ups, and push-ups during commercial breaks.