

News Release

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Exercising with Your Family

Benefits to physical and mental health help lead to family bonding, kiddos doing better academically

It's not too late to make a resolution to exercise more and spend quality time with your family. Combining both can lead to long-term benefits for you and your children's health and their academics.

"I would say that probably the biggest reason that I would want parents to incorporate physical activity with their children is that children are going to practice what they see their parents doing," Tammy Camp, M.D., Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) School of Medicine Pediatrics Residency director, and Texas Tech Physicians pediatrician, said. "If parents are not physically active, or they're being physically active, but their kids never see it, then their kids don't have the motivation or the understanding that exercise is an important part of life."

Suzana Jensen, D.O., TTUHSC pediatric resident and former college student athlete, started bowling when she joined an adult/youth bowling league with her dad.

"I would also add that it's a really great chance to bond between parent and child or whoever you're active with," Jensen said. "It's a great chance to have fun and also stay active."

Physical activity can start as early as a child's newborn stage.

Camp said she teaches pediatric residents to talk to parents about the importance of tummy time. Being on the floor helps the infant develop stronger muscles and creates an opportunity for bonding as they're lying on the floor, face to face.

"Spend time with that baby on the floor on their tummies so that those babies can start to develop those stronger muscle groups in their arms and their legs and their shoulders as they lift their necks," Camp said.

Jensen introduced her stepson to bowling at an early age.

"I have a 10-year-old stepson," Jensen said. "He started bowling by just pushing the ball down the ramp. I think at one year old, pretty much as soon as he could walk, we started becoming active. Physical activity can start when you're pregnant by just walking; it can start by pushing your child in a stroller. It just looks different depending on the stages of life."

