

# JIFNEWS

A Quarterly Newsletter from the Somerset County Joint Insurance Fund featuring Safety, Health & Wellness



## LIMIT SCREEN TIME AND GET YOUR KIDS (AND THE WHOLE FAMILY) MOVING



Experts from the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend that kids over 2 should get no more than one to two hours of screen time a day except to do homework. But on average, 8- to 12-year-olds spend four to six hours a day using various forms of media. Teenagers often get more than nine hours of media a day, not including time spent using media to do homework.

While you may know that your kids need to watch less TV or put down their devices, you might dread the possible screaming, yelling and crying that could follow. First and foremost, remember you are the parent. It's your job to set healthy limits. We know it's not easy, but it's important for their health and well-being. And each child is different, so what works for one child may not work for another.

### HERE ARE SOME IDEAS ON LIMITING YOUR FAMILY'S SEDENTARY TIME:

**1. MAKE A PLAN FOR EVERYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD.** Be prepared to offer age-appropriate alternatives to TV or video games after school. Review your plan often and revise it as your children grow.

**2. IDENTIFY FREE TIMES FOR ACTIVITY DURING THE WEEK.** Make time to get the whole family moving. Make physical activity a regular part of your family's schedule. Write it on a shared weekly calendar.

**3. BE ACTIVE WITH YOUR KIDS.** Experts say that what kids want more than anything is time with their parents. To give them that, don't just send them out to play — go play with them! Develop a set of activities for you and your family that are available regardless of the weather.

### 4. LIMIT TV, COMPUTER, SMARTPHONE AND VIDEO GAME TIME.

- \* Set screen-free zones, such as in your dining room or children's bedroom.
- \* Set screen-free times, such as while they are doing homework (if devices aren't needed) or before bed.
- \* Position your furniture so the TV is not the focus of the room.
- \* Avoid using TV time as a reward or punishment.

**5. PLAN TV WATCHING IN ADVANCE.** Pick the shows you want to watch. Turn the TV on only for those shows and turn it off afterward. Don't just watch whatever comes on next.

**6. PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH.** Your kids won't accept being restricted to two hours of screen time if you can veg out for four hours. The best way to influence your kids' behavior is by being a good role model.

These habits take a little thought and a lot of practice. **Do what you can as often as you can.**

### SOME ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES TO SCREEN TIME INCLUDE:

- \* Family game night
- \* Shoot hoops or kick a soccer ball
- \* Walk the dog
- \* Explore a nearby park
- \* Turn on some music and dance
- \* Do chores that require some physical activity

### YOU CAN DO IT!

**BE STRONG, HAVE A PLAN AND DON'T BACK DOWN. YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR.**

## HOW TO STAY ACTIVE IN COLD WEATHER

When winter blows in, you can pull the blankets over your head and go back to sleep—or you can suit up and head out for an outdoor winter adventure!

There's no reason you need to take a break from physical activity when the temperature drops. In fact, exercising in cooler weather has some distinct advantages over working out in warmer weather.

### TIPS AND BENEFITS TO KEEP IN MIND

**1. There's no heat and humidity to deal with.** Winter's chill might even make you feel awake and invigorated.

**2. You may be able to work out longer in cold weather** — which means you can burn even more calories.

**3. It's a great way to take in the sunlight (in small doses).** Not only can light improve many people's moods, it also helps you get some vitamin D.

**4. Exercise boosts your immunity during cold and flu season.** Just a few minutes a day can help prevent simple bacterial and viral infections, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

### STAY WARM, STAY SAFE

Staying warm and dry when heading out to exercise in cold weather is all about layers. A little preparation can keep you safe from cold weather hazards like hypothermia and frostbite.

Cold temperatures, strong winds and damp conditions (like rain and snow) can steal your body heat. For example, according to the National Weather Service, a 30-degree day with 30-mile-an-hour wind feels like about 15 degrees. And if you get wet (from rain, snow or perspiration) that effect is magnified.

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# Family and friends who dine together SHINE TOGETHER.

As cheesy as that sounds, research does show that people who enjoy frequent meals with others have better social and emotional well-being.



Weekly sit-down meals with family, friends or neighbors can reduce stress, boost self-esteem and make everyone feel more connected.



Research shows that people who enjoy frequent meals with others, particularly parents with their children, have better social and emotional well-being.



## LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION (really doesn't matter)

Keep it simple: You could whip up a grazing board ahead of time, go the potluck route or just order takeout.



## CONNECTION, CONNECTION, CONNECTION (is what's important)

Spending time together has mental and physical health benefits that can't be denied. So relax and enjoy the conversation. After all, social connection is the whole point.

## THE FOUR SIMPLE RULES OF TOGETHER TUESDAYS:



Eyes up.  
Phone down.



Share a table.  
Or a Zoom screen.



Savor each bite.  
Live in the moment.



Do it your way.  
Make it fun!

For ideas and conversation starters, go to [heart.org/together](https://heart.org/together).

### APPLE PIE BY GRANDMA OPLE

PREP TIME: 30 MIN | COOK TIME: 1 HR

#### INGREDIENTS

- 8 small Granny Smith apples, or as needed
- ½ cup unsalted butter
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- ½ cup white sugar
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- ¼ cup water
- 1 (9 inch) double-crust pie pastry, thawed



#### DIRECTIONS

- STEP 1** Gather the ingredients. Peel and core apples, then thinly slice. Set aside. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F.
- STEP 2** Melt butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Add flour and stir to form a paste; cook until fragrant, about 1 to 2 minutes. Add both sugars and water; bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for 3 to 5 minutes. Remove from the heat.
- STEP 3** Press one pastry into the bottom and up the sides of a 9-inch pie pan. Roll out remaining pastry so it will overhang the pie by about 1/2 inch. Cut pastry into eight 1-inch strips.
- STEP 4** Place Sliced apples into the bottom crust, forming a slight mound. Lay four pastry strips vertically and evenly spaced over apples, using longer strips in the center and shorter strips at the edges.
- STEP 5** Make a lattice crust: Fold the first and third strips all the way back so they're almost falling off the pie. Lay one of the unused strips perpendicularly over the second and fourth strips, then unfold the first and third strips back into their original position.
- STEP 6** Fold the second and fourth vertical strips back. Lay one of the three unused strips perpendicularly over top. Unfold the second and fourth strips back into their original position.
- STEP 7** Repeat Steps 6 and 7 to weave in the last two strips of pastry. Fold and trim excess dough at the edges as necessary, and pinch to secure.

**STEP 8** Slowly and gently pour sugar-butter mixture over lattice crust, making sure it seeps over sliced apples. Brush some onto lattice, but make sure it doesn't run off the sides

**STEP 9** Bake in the preheated oven for 15 minutes. Reduce the temperature to 350 degrees F and continue baking until apples are soft, 35 to 45 minutes.

## HOW TO STAY ACTIVE IN COLD WEATHER *(continued from cover page)*



That's why layers of clothing are so important. They help trap the heat and form a kind of insulation against the elements.

Resist your instinct to start layering with cotton. Once cotton becomes wet with sweat or snow, the moisture is trapped and will make you feel colder and heavier. For your first layer, you want something that pulls moisture away from your skin, like the moisture wicking fabrics used in high-performance sportswear. Next, add a layer of fleece; top it off with a thin waterproof layer.

### Know the signs

Hypothermia means the body temperature has fallen below 35 degrees Celsius or about 95 degrees Fahrenheit. It occurs when your body can't produce enough energy to keep the internal body temperature warm enough. It can kill you.

### Symptoms can include:

- \* Lack of coordination
- \* Mental confusion
- \* Slowed reactions
- \* Slurred speech
- \* Cold feet and hands

- \* Shivering
- \* Sleepiness

Children and the elderly are at higher risk because they may have limited ability to communicate about symptoms or impaired mobility affects them even without hypothermia's symptoms and signs. Elderly people also may have lower subcutaneous fat and a diminished ability to sense temperature, so they can suffer hypothermia without knowing they're in danger.

### STAY HYDRATED

Don't forget to drink water when exercising in cooler weather. Thirst isn't the best indicator that you need to drink.

### BYE-BYE, COUCH POTATO!

When winter weather deters you from getting outside, don't just reach for the remote. Make your time inside count. There are many ways to get physical activity indoors — no gym required. Hand weights or resistance bands are a great addition, but not necessary. You can also wear a heavy backpack to add intensity to your workout.

### Try these indoor activities:

- \* Home workout circuit
- \* Dancing
- \* Active housework such as vacuuming and sweeping
- \* Mall walking
- \* Bowling
- \* Roller skating

- \* Yoga or other fun group classes at your local gym, studio or community center
- \* Stair climbing

### FIT IN FITNESS

Follow the American Heart Association physical activity recommendations of at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise per week to improve your quality of life. Move more, with more intensity, and sit less.

### What if I'm recovering from a cardiac event or stroke?

Some people are afraid to exercise after a heart attack or stroke. But regular physical activity can help reduce your chances of having another heart attack or stroke.

The American Heart Association and American Stroke Association publish scientific statements that direct health care professionals to prescribe physical activity to heart and stroke patients since there is strong evidence that physical activity and exercise after a heart attack or stroke can improve cardiovascular fitness, walking ability and upper arm strength.

If you've had a heart attack or stroke, talk with your health care professional before starting any exercise to be sure you're following a safe, effective physical activity program.



Clocks will "fall back" one hour at 2 a.m. on Nov. 3, granting most people an extra hour of sleep. With the change comes earlier sunrises and nightfall well before 7 p.m. It won't be until March 2025 that we adjust our clocks to "spring ahead" once again.

