

Bringing Family Fitness Indoors

Winter is here and it is more challenging to incorporate fitness in your family's routine. Studies have found that the average person gains from five to seven pounds between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. While some of that can be attributed to overindulging some can also be credited to a lack of exercise. Statistics have shown that if parents are involved with their Childs fitness it will increase the chance of them being physically active by 20%. The key is to find alternative indoor activities that are fun, invigorating and give you the same cardiovascular boost and toning benefit. You need to block out time for these family activities, so head indoors when the weather is bitterly cold and check out the following activities that the whole family can enjoy:

Swimming: An activity that can be done year-round, swimming or playing with the kids in the pool offers numerous health benefits, according to the U.S. Water Fitness Association. Improved strength and flexibility, better muscular endurance and balance, improved circulation, and a stronger heart are but a few.

Indoor Rock Climbing: Since America's first climbing gym opened in Seattle in 1987, climbers at more than 700 rock gyms across the country now receive an aerobic and anaerobic workout as they strengthen muscles and build confidence. According to Michelle Humi, president of the American Sport Climbers Federation, climbing an artificial rock wall can burn up to 700 calories an hour for a 140-pound person and up to 974 calories for someone weighing 50 pounds more.

Roller skating / Ice-Skating: Many runners find ice-skating to be a lower-impact, yet equally effective, way to keep fit during the winter months. It works the legs, inner thighs, abductors, hamstrings and gluteal muscles – even arms, waist and abdomen – while being kinder on joints. The American College of Sports Medicine states that a 150-pound person burns approximately 600 calories for every hour of continuous skating, equivalent to running five miles an hour.

Bowling: Although not normally perceived as a highly aerobic workout, bowling is a surprisingly good way to keep fit. According to a study reported in the California Bowling News, a Penn State nutritionist estimated that bowling can burn 100 calories for every 20 minutes of bowling – or 300 calories an hour. It also works muscles and joints, and keeps tendons and ligaments limber.

If the weather outside includes snow, and the wind chill is save, get out with the family and go sledding or build a snowman and have some fun playing in the snow.

Reference: American College of Sports Medicine