



# NEWS RELEASE

## Defense Commissary Agency

Corporate Communication

1300 E Avenue □ Fort Lee, VA 23801-1800

Tel: (804) 734-8000, Ext. 8-6105 DSN: 687-8000, Ext. 8-6105

FAX: (804) 734-8248 DSN: 687-8248

[www.commissaries.com](http://www.commissaries.com)

---

**Release Number:** 06-11  
**Date:** January 24, 2011  
**Contact:** Karen Hawkins, DeCA dietitian  
**Tel.:** (804) 734-8000, Ext. 4-8404  
**E-mail:** [karen.hawkins@deca.mil](mailto:karen.hawkins@deca.mil)

## Make physical fitness a fun, family routine

*By Karen Hawkins,  
DeCA dietitian*

**FORT LEE, Va.** – It's a new year and a great time to start being active with your family. Bike riding, walking, jumping rope, playing ball and roller skating are all great ways to be active, according to the Physical Activity Guidelines for Children and Adolescents. When was the last time you jumped rope or put on roller skates? Try doing these today with your family and you may find you feel young again, too.

Children need one hour or more of physical activity daily. This is just one of the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Many of the activities found in these guidelines for children can be enjoyed by the whole family, which contributes to better health and helps create strong family bonds.

So, to help your children get an active start, check out more on the types and amounts of physical activity for Americans age 6 and older at <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines>. The main idea behind the guidelines is that regular physical activity over months and years can produce long-term health benefits, which is so important for children and adolescents.

### Be Active – How to Help Get Kids Moving

Check out your local morale, welfare and recreation facility or gym for equipment, sport teams and events that your children and adolescents can participate in today. Be your child's advocate, and talk with school administrators and teachers about the Physical Activity Guidelines and how they might be included during the school day. There are lots of ways for

children and adolescents to be active. Here are guidelines to help you and your family get started:

- **Daily activity:** Children and adolescents should do 60 minutes or more of physical activity every day.
- **Aerobic:** Most of the 60 or more minutes a day should be either moderate- or vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity and should include vigorous-intensity physical activity at least three days a week.
- **Muscle strengthening:** As part of their 60 or more minutes of daily physical activity, children and adolescents should include muscle-strengthening physical activity at least three days of the week.
- **Bone strengthening:** As part of their 60 or more minutes of daily physical activity, children and adolescents should include bone-strengthening physical activity at least three days of the week. Encourage children and adolescents to participate in physical activities that are appropriate for their age, that are enjoyable and that offer variety.

Being active in the winter months, whether building a snowman, having a snowball battle, snowshoeing or skiing are just a few options. While cross-country skiing with my sons last week, I saw many families pulling their infants and young children in ski sleds. Stopping along the trail, we talked while bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked babies snuggled away in the sleds. Cross-country skiing is a great and economical way to introduce your children to skiing, and it's a little easier to learn than downhill skiing. What's important is to find what you like to do to be active together, and make it a family tradition.

For more information about making healthy choices, visit Ask the Dietitian on <http://www.commissaries.com> and post your questions on the DeCA Dietitian Forum. Be sure to look for other useful information in the Dietitian's Voice archive. Sign up with the DeCA Dietitian on [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) and get messages sent to your cell phone today. For delicious recipes, check out Kay's Kitchen. And to enjoy all your commissary has to offer, sign up for the *Commissary Connection*.

**-DeCA-**

**About DeCA:** *The Defense Commissary Agency operates a worldwide chain of commissaries providing groceries to military personnel, retirees and their families in a safe and secure shopping environment. Authorized patrons purchase items at cost plus a 5-percent surcharge, which covers the costs of building new commissaries and modernizing existing ones.*

*Shoppers save an average of more than 30 percent on their purchases compared to commercial prices – savings worth more than \$4,400 annually for a family of four. A core military family support element, and a valued part of military pay and benefits, commissaries contribute to family readiness, enhance the quality of life for America's military and their families, and help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve their country.*