



Overcoming Barriers to Physical Activity



With technology advancing, our lives have become less active. Understanding common barriers to physical activity and creating strategies for those barriers can make physical activity become a part of your daily life! Below are common types of barriers and suggested strategies on how to overcome them.

Common barriers to physical activity:

1. “I don’t have time”



What you can try:

- Take the stairs whenever possible.
- Plan fun “active” activities with friends and family.
- Walk or ride your bike to school, instead of riding the bus or getting dropped off by parents. (This applies only if you live close to the school, and if school is in-person)
- Use a calendar to schedule time after school to include some type of physical activity.
- Continue with Camp in a Box activities like hopscotch, tag, jump roping, charades, and scavenger hunt, for example.

2. “I don’t like sports” or “I’m not good at any sports”

What you can try:

- Consider active hobbies (example: Gardening, Frisbee) instead of playing sports, if that’s not your interest.
- Walk your dog, if you have one.
- Choose activities you enjoy.



Adapted from:

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/fitness/Pages/Overcoming-Obstacles-to-Physical-Activity.aspx>

- Find a friend, sibling, or family member to be an “active buddy” and schedule fun activities 2-3 times a week.

3. “My neighborhood isn’t safe”

What you can try:

- Do a workout video at home.
- Dance to your favorite music at home.
- Find a community recreation center in your neighborhood, as available.
- Sign up for active after-school programs, as available.



4. “I’m overweight or out of shape”

What you can try:

- Start slow with 10-15 minutes of activity.
- Walking is a great way to start working out.
- Build short activities into your day (example: take the stairs, do squats before down).
- Try low-impact workouts that are 20-30 minutes long.



sitting

5. “I’m too tired”

What you can try:

- Schedule time to be active when you feel energetic. Mental fatigue is what prevents us from exercising.
- Give it a chance! If you give physical activity a chance, your energy level will increase.
- Stay positive. Use positive statements in your mind, such as “Let’s do it”, “Keep going!”, or “It’s not what happens to you, but how you react to it that matters”

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Barriers to Activity Challenge

Use the following checklists to help you begin the process of overcoming barriers to physical activity becoming part of your daily life

✚ Identify at least five 30-minute time slots you could use for physical activity.

1. Day: _____ Time: _____
2. Day: _____ Time: _____
3. Day: _____ Time: _____
4. Day: _____ Time: _____
5. Day: _____ Time: _____
6. Day: _____ Time: _____
7. Day: _____ Time: _____



✚ Add physical activity to your daily routine.

- Walk or ride your bike to work, shopping, or some other place you routinely drive.
- Take your dog for a walk
- Exercise while you watch TV (jumping jacks, sit-ups, pushups, etc.)
- When you drive somewhere, park farther away from your destination to add steps to your day
- During phone calls try to stand, stretch, or move and walk around as much as possible



✚ Social Support

- Explain your interest in physical activity to friends and family. Ask them to support your efforts.
- Invite friends and family members to exercise with you. Plan social activities involving exercise.
- Develop new friendships with physically active people. Join a gym or group, such as the YMCA or a hiking club.



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