Being active is an important part of a child’s life. The advice contained within this leaflet is designed for all families who would like to become more active.

You may want to consult a doctor before starting a new fitness programme particularly if you have any health problems.
This leaflet is designed to give both children and parents ideas for exercise for the whole family to enjoy.

All children require a certain amount of physical activity every day. This should be part of their daily routine. In April 2004, the government produced guidelines saying that all children should have at least 45 minutes to 1 hour of exercise 5 days a week.

Children who are active have better concentration, improved self esteem and better health and fitness levels.

Exercise does not necessarily have to be structured and formal. If allowed time to play outside most children will get enough exercise without prompting.

Making activity and exercise part of the whole family’s routine will benefit everyone. If a child sees their parents enjoying exercise they will too.

**Fit Kids**

**Ideas for Activity**

- Riding a bike
- Walk or cycle to school instead of getting a lift
- A trip to the local park
- Swimming at a local pool - check the times of the fun sessions, there may be extra activities to get involved with!
- Walking to the local shops
- A ball game in the park - football, tennis, rugby or basketball
- Join a club, you could find out about local Cubs, Brownies, Scouts or Guides groups
- Try something new like trampolining, rock climbing, Karate, or skateboarding
- Take the dog for a walk
- Try a dance class or dancing to your favourite music
- Play on a dance mat
- Go to an adventure play park
- Help mum or dad with washing the car and doing the gardening - perhaps you could have your own vegetable patch!

**Things to Remember when Starting Exercise**

**Start slowly**

- Build up the time you spend exercising gradually
- As you get fitter you will be able to spend longer at an activity and you will be able to work harder at it

**Warm up**

- Spend 5-10 minutes warming up, this will help your muscles get ready for exercise and stops you hurting yourself

**Cool down**

- When you have finished the activity don't just stop, spend 5 minutes slowing down before stopping

**Make small changes**

- Choosing to do a few small activities that you like doing will make a big difference

**Have fun**

- Make sure you enjoy the activity you chose to do - you are more likely to carry on with it
- Get your family and friends involved, they will enjoy it too

*Have fun - Get fit as a family*