

# ACCENT + HEALTHY LIVING



## Let's get moving!

Here are some strategies for helping tweens and teens get the exercise they need

**Rachel Levin** The New York Times

As any parent overseeing home-school knows: Zoom PE is hardly a hard-driving Peloton class. It's more like your kid lying on the floor of the living room doing halfhearted leg-lifts by the light of her laptop.

Many students, particularly tweens and teens, are not moving their bodies as much as they are supposed to be — during a pandemic or otherwise (60 minutes per day for ages 6 to 17, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

A March 2020 report in The Lancet offers scientific evidence as to why your kids won't get off the couch: As children move through adolescence, they indeed become more sedentary, which is associated with greater risk of depression by the age of 18. Being physically active is important for their physical health as well as mental health.

Yet with many organized team sports on hi-

atus and athletic fields, playgrounds and climbing gyms closed or restricted to smaller groups during shorter hours, what's an increasingly lazy child to do? More accurately: What's a mother or father of an increasingly lazy child to do?

Many parents are taking charge, finding informal and creative ways to entice their isolated tweens and teens off their screens and outside — with others, safely. To get your own younger ones moving, here are a few ideas from families around the country, all almost-guaranteed hits, even with winter coming.

**Start a small running club.**

In San Francisco, under rain, fog or blue skies (or even the infamous orange one), a group of sixth graders have been gathering in Golden Gate Park two times a week to run 2 miles. Their unofficial motto: "Safe Distance, Minimal Distance." Masks are required, and

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**Teens and tweens need exercise. Many parents are finding informal, creative ways to encourage their isolated offspring to get outside safely.** LUCI GUTIÉRREZ/NEW YORK TIMES

## Zoom helps keep everyone safe during holidays



**Boomer Health**  
Steve Dorfman  
Palm Beach Post  
USA TODAY NETWORK

For those of us forced by the pandemic to work from home, it's hard to remember a time before Zoom existed.

This holiday season, however, countless folks who never figured they'd need to become familiar with a videoconferencing app are going to be spending time with friends, relatives and loved ones via their laptop, tablet or smartphone.

"Zoom is probably the easiest and most popular videoconferencing tool to set up, other than group Facetime, which is exclusive to iPhone users," said Matt Munro, co-founder of GroovyTek, a Boca Raton education-based company that offers one-on-one, in-home and over-the-phone personal technology training sessions for smartphones, tablets and computers.

As the post-Thanksgiving surge in coronavirus cases has demonstrated, the 2020 holiday season is not the one in which to be hosting — or attending — large indoor gatherings.

Especially if you want to keep the most vulnerable among us safe.

But that doesn't mean you have to feel isolated during the holidays.

With Zoom, said Munro, there's virtually no limit to the, well ... virtual possibilities. "The best use of Zoom that I have seen was from a friend who hosted a family reunion via Zoom to reconnect everyone with whom she otherwise might have gone years without speaking to."

That said, Munro does have few suggestions to make sure that you, your kids, your parents, grandparents and all other friends and loved ones get the most out of your Zoom get-togethers.

**1. Set an exact time and date.**

It's always preferable to schedule these get-togethers at least a few days ahead of time. When it comes to multigenerational invites, Munro said he has found that "millennials and Gen-Zers are more likely to have a 'rolling availability of schedule' and can multitask during videoconferencing. Baby boomers tend to be more singular with their availability and usually do not like to be bothered out of schedule. In any event, be considerate of the invitees and their time. A meeting between two close friends is usually informal and needs less notice than a family reunion of 20 people."

**2. For large groups, set an agenda — but be flexible.**

The bigger the group, the easier it is to manage if you know at least some of what you want to talk about ahead of time.

Munro recommends that you "set times for each guest to speak and share updates or family news." If you want or anticipate that your get-together will last longer than 60 min-

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**Pastor Chuck Brannon**

## I'm Still Learning To De-stress From Life's Stress

**We're all lifelong learners** about stress because it barges in often and ties us in mental and emotional knots. It disrupts our sleep and appetite, makes for snarly relationships, and blots out the sunshine of optimism. We smile less, stress more, and life stinks! Stress doesn't discriminate, everybody can have some - young or old. But God has/is our constant antidote for chronic stress.

I love Psalm 120:1: *I call on the Lord in my distress, and He answers me.* You can call today. Learn these skills/attitudes/actions to bring personal relief. **First**, everyone stresses, but don't exaggerate it like the man taking a walk who slipped then slid off a cliff, grabbed a vine and hung on until he couldn't. Thinking death, he fearfully let go - and plunged a full six inches to the ground! **Second**, some stress serves God and man. St. Mark says Jesus was deeply distressed, his sweat like drops of blood,

before crucifixion for our sins. He did it because we were worth it. **Third**, learn your stress "triggers" to survive and thrive. **Fourth**, memorize Scripture like Philippians 4:7 to repel distress. Mental and spiritual resilience work. **Fifth**, be smart. Does your best friend stress way out? Uh-oh, could be contagious. **Sixth**, check yourself, we often stress the ones we love, killing kindness, fun, romance, family life and future plans. **Finally**, believe that Father God made you for peace, built you for endurance,

created you to be confident, designed you to do well, engineered you to enjoy, and fashioned you for fellowship with Him. **I can testify** that Christ is my Savior and psychologist, and the Holy Spirit is my helper for all my stressors. Jesus said: *The thief comes only to steal, kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it abundantly.* I invite you to "call on Christ" as Savior to forgive your sins, plus empower you to defeat personal, chronic stress.

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# Moving

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photo breaks are frequent, as is post-run ice cream. Started on a whim by local parents in August, the club has been such a hit, attracting anywhere from six to 20 kids each run, that some occasionally call for a third afternoon per week, even a 7 a.m. before-school meetup (in which case they serve doughnuts). But treats are not the ultimate draw.

"I like the experience of being with my peers and actually doing something, all at the same time," 11-year-old Henry Gersick said. "Instead of just sitting there."

## Jump! Jump! Jump!

One of the most accessible, inexpensive, socially distanced sports is something you may not even realize is a sport. Since the pandemic began, jump-roping has become "a TikTok craze," according to Nick Woodard, a 14-time world-champion jump-roper and founder of Learnin' the Ropes, a program designed to teach kids and adults the joy of jumping. "All you need is time, some space and a \$5 jump rope, and you're good to go," Woodard said.

Based in Bowling Green, Kentucky, Woodard and his wife, Kaylee (a six-time world champion in her own right), have been leading virtual workshops for children as young as 6, from Malaysia to Germany. A 30-minute class costs \$35 for one child, and includes spiderwalk warm-ups, instruction and challenges. (How many jumps can you do in 30 seconds?)

"They have so much fun, they don't even realize they're getting exercise," Kaylee Woodard said. But a selling point right now is that jumping rope — unlike team sports — is something you can do together, apart.

## Take a hike with family or frie.

"My kids are reluctant to do anything outdoors, unless we're meeting up with another family, then they're totally into it," said Ginny Yurich, founder of 1000 Hours Outside, a family-run Instagram account with over 112,000 followers that challenges youth to spend an average of 2.7 hours a day outdoors per year. "Make sure you have food, a first-aid kit and friends — friends are the linchpin," she said. (Masks, too.)

Yurich, a Michigan mother of five, was inspired by the 2017 book "There's No Such Thing as Bad Weather," by Swedish American author-blogger Linda McGurk, who espouses the Scandinavian concept of friluftsliv, or "open-air living." For Yurich and McGurk, experiencing the outdoors is paramount to children's development and well-being.

## Form a neighborhood bike gang.

"Kids are biking like never before," said Jon Solomon, a spokesman for the Aspen Institute's Sports & Society Program, the nonprofit's initiative to help build healthy communities through sports. Over the year, leisure bike sales grew 203% year over year, he said.

Ali Freedman, a mother of two in Boston's Roslindale neighborhood, has loved watching children of all ages on her street playing together. "Every day around 3:30 p.m., kids we never knew



Luckily for those living in South Florida, it's easy to hold outdoor exercise sessions this time of year. JOHN MOORE/TNS

before COVID come biking by our house asking 'Can you play?'" Freedman said.

The young crew all wear masks — "Moms have a text thread going to check on enforcement when masks become chin diapers," said Freedman, who peers out the window every so often — and best of all: "They stay out until dinner."

## Invent your own game.

In a September survey conducted by the Aspen Institute and Utah State University in response to the coronavirus pandemic, 71% of parents said "individual games" (like shooting baskets solo) were the form of sport with the highest comfort level for their kids, followed by classic neighborhood pickup games like basketball or tennis.

But inventing your own game has its own rewards. One otherwise boring day in suburban Maryland, Solomon and his son, 11, came up with something they call hock-ball. It involves a hockey stick and a tennis ball and an empty sidewalk or street.

Solomon attempted to explain. "You roll the tennis ball like a kickball — it could be smooth, or slow or bouncy — and the person with the stick tries to hit it past the pitcher, then runs back and forth to home plate." There are points and innings, and it's apparently fun for all ages. "Only problem is, the ball inevitably rolls under a parked car," Solomon said.

## If all else fails, bribe them.

Pay your kid — a dollar, a quarter, a penny — per minute to walk the pandemic puppy you just got.

"It gets them out of the house and out of my hair — and they earn some money," said Murray Isgrig, parent of Wyatt in Denver. "Even though they don't have anywhere to spend it."



Running clubs, with safety measures in place, are an increasingly popular way to get youngsters moving. LUCI GUTIÉRREZ/NEW YORK TIMES

# Dorfman

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utes, be sure to pay extra for a premium Zoom account because the premium account enables users to meet for longer than one hour.

## 3. 'Zooming' safely with teens and pre-teens.

According to Munro, "Zoom's policy is 16 years old and over for use. Anyone younger should be monitored or logged on with an adult. Zoom is not an open chat room like the old AOL days, but a meeting invite CAN be sent to anyone if you have their email or phone number. Be mindful of who your child is communicating with at all times."

As with all things Internet-related, Munro stressed that "the internet is forever. Even if you delete it, there is always proof, especially if the host is recording the Zoom meeting."

To avoid inadvertently going viral for something you say or do at a Zoom get-together, Munro suggested you ask yourself twice:

- Am I potentially embarrassing myself by saying or doing this?
- Am I potentially embarrassing anyone else by saying or doing this?
- Would anyone find this comment or speech offensive?
- Could what I say or do land me in any legal trouble?

As long as you can answer "no" to all of the above, you should be fine.

So go ahead and have fun with your friends, family and loved ones this holiday season — but do so from a safe digital distance.



At La Posada, an active adult community in Palm Beach Gardens, residents have been keeping touch with their families via Zoom videoconferencing. Here, we see masked-up staff member Rick Minichino set up a tablet so resident Milton Steir can enjoy his 103rd birthday with relatives earlier this year. PROVIDED