

Back to School Means Back to Fitness for Mom

By Kim Siegel, certified personal trainer

The number one reason for not being able to lose weight/get in shape I hear from women is lack of time. Just the other day someone told me that they didn't want to waste valuable quality time away from their kids in order to "pump iron".

I would like to dispel some myths about working out in order to get healthy and fit. Number one, you don't have to spend hours working out to get fit, this is real life, not a reality show. Two, you don't need to have a membership at a gym in order to effectively work out. Three, working out doesn't have to be the same, boring routine that you have to make yourself go through time after time.

Exercising to get into shape can be fun for the whole family, and what better way to experience quality time with your kids than to show them that exercising to stay healthy should be an important part of their lives. It has been found that kids as young as 7 have are beginning to have plaque forming in their arteries due to poor nutrition (fast food) and lack of proper exercise (too many computer games).

While it is true that the more hours you spend effectively working out will influence how quickly you reach your goals, you can reach your goals in a realistic time frame with just a few hours a week spent exercising with your friends and family in a manner that is fun for everyone.

Let's talk about the steps to getting started with an exercise program. First ask yourself "where am I?" in other words, are you overweight, have high cholesterol or blood pressure? Have you undergone surgery or are recovering from an illness that has limited you physically? The key is to be honest with yourself in your assessment.

The second question is "where do I want to be?" you need to set **realistic** goals, both short term and long term. These goals need to be specific, measurable, and have a timeline. Ex. I will walk 3 times a week for 30 minutes each time. An example of a long-term goal would be: I want to lose 2 inches from my waist in 2 months.

The third question is "how do I get there?" what do you need to do in order to achieve your goals. Examples of items in this answer could be to find a set time each day to exercise. Maybe it's a bike ride after supper, or maybe it's taking a group fitness class a couple of times a week Remember, your kids have their time with their friends, so should you. Find a friend or relative that wants to work out also and you can hold each other accountable. Another option is to hire a professional to help you set your goals and teach you how to reach them. Remember to set up rewards for yourself for achieving both your short-term goals as well as your larger, long-term goals.

The important thing to remember is that if you don't find the time now to incorporate exercise into your life, you might miss out on the future with your kids due to illnesses,

lack of energy, etc. Exercising will benefit your entire family now as well as for the future and can be an enjoyable experience.

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A native Texan, Kim changed careers after 30 years in the retail industry following her successful battle against breast cancer. Kim holds personal training certificates from The Cooper Institute and The National Academy of Sports Medicine. She has trained for and completed the Breast Cancer 3-Day, a 60-mile walk to raise funds to fight Breast Cancer. She is currently training for the Danskin Triathlon to support Breast cancer research. Contact Kim at 214-557-4566, or siegelk@comcast.net