Week of May 4, 2015

**Extension News You Can Use**

**Get Active this Summer!**

Summertime is upon us. Many are gearing up for vacations, staycations, weekend getaways and other summertime activities. When it is warm and sunny, this makes getting physical activity both easier and more enjoyable when the whole family is included. Parents, children, teens, even the family pets can join in activities together! The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends 1 hour or more of physical activity every day. There are countless benefits to physical activity, including: strengthening muscles and bones, reducing risk of many diseases such as cancer and heart disease, and improving mood.

Families can enjoy time together by easily incorporating physical activity into their days. Take “dance breaks” during TV commercial time or try taking longer family walks with the increased daylight hours. Instead of playing games that involve being sedentary, try games outside that include movement! Some games include tag, hop scotch, or relay races. Involving everyone in household chores is both productive and inclusive. If available, bicycling, roller blading, or swimming are enjoyable for the whole family. It’s important to stay cool during the summer as well, so remember to hydrate with water often and have it readily available!

When choosing summer camps or programs for kids, look for ones that have a good amount of physical activity mixed into the whole program. Sports camps, horseback riding camps, dance camps, or programs with swimming pools are great choices. Of course, 4-H camps are my favorite! Camps can be educational, healthful, AND fun!
Family vacations are a great time to stay active and fit. When planning, try to choose a place that has easy and safe access to areas like walking or hiking trails, or recreational activities such as pools, volleyball or basketball courts. It’s also smart to pack portable devices that encourage physical activity, such as a jump rope or a resistance band, which are both small enough to squeeze into luggage! Packing quick snacks for these outside adventures is also a smart idea. One power packed snack is Homemade Trail Mix. See below for ideas on how to keep your energy level up while sharing the great outdoors with your family this summer.

The summer is an exceptional time to stay physically active. With a little bit of planning and involvement, the whole family will benefit!

**How to Make Your Own Homemade Trail Mix**

- **Nuts & Seeds** – almonds, pistachios, peanuts, cashews, walnuts, brazil nuts, pecans, macadamia nuts, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, etc.
- **Dried Fruits** – apples, pineapples, bananas, raisins, mango, etc.
- **Grain** – Chex, cheerios, granola, oats (toasted), sesame sticks, popcorn, etc.
- **Sweet Treats** – M&Ms, chocolate chips, butterscotch chips, and yogurt covered raisins, mini marshmallows, etc.
- **Extra Flavors** – salt, garlic powder, cinnamon, cayenne pepper, ground ginger, coconut flakes, coffee beans, wasabi peas, etc.

**Steps:**
1. Choose what ingredients you like.
2. Mix all ingredients in a big bowl.
3. Divide mixture into bags for easy transportation.
4. Enjoy!

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For more information on this or other family and consumer sciences related topics, contact Shelly Barnes, Family and Consumer Sciences Extension agent for UT Extension in Wilson County. Barnes can be reached at sbarnes@utk.edu or 615-444-9584. For more information about 4-H Summer Camps contact Johnny Barnes or Amanda Woody, 4-H Extension Agents for UT Extension in Wilson County. Johnny Barnes may be reached at jbarnes1@utk.edu and Amanda Woody may be reached at agray8@utk.edu. Both may be reached at 615-444-9584.