FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES | April 2026

Buckeye Banter

Move Your Way

Staying physically active is one of the most impactful steps you can take to improve your overall health and well-being. You do not have to be a marathon runner or spend hours in the gym to be active. Adding more movement to your day can lead to meaningful, lasting improvements in your physical and mental health. There are lots of small ways to get active that can add up to big health benefits.

Regular physical activity helps strengthen your heart and muscles, reduces your risk of chronic diseases, and can improve your cognitive functions. Being physically active lowers the risk of premature death, even with just 10 minutes more activity a day.

Small choices, like taking the stairs, parking further away, or going for a short walk can all contribute to better health overtime. The key is finding activities you enjoy so movement feels less like a chore and more like a natural part of your day.

Whether it is swimming, gardening, running, or trying a new dance class, every bit of movement counts. Aim to move your way by choosing activities that fit your health, lifestyle, energy level, and personal goals. Take small steps toward a healthier life by moving your way!

Source: "Benefits of Physical Activity". (December 2025). Center for Disease Control. https://www.cdc.gov/physical-activity-basics/benefits/index.html

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd Edition. (2019) US Department of Health and Human Services. https://odphp.health.gov/sites/default/files/2019-09/Physical_Activity_Guidelines_2nd_edition.pdf

Springtime Energy Savings

When the weather finally starts warming up, make sure your household takes advantage of the season to save some money on your energy bills. Springtime in Ohio generally means more temperate, comfortable temperatures outside. Benefit from this nice weather by opening the windows in your house. This will bring the comfy temperatures inside as well as the sweet smell of spring! Daylight will also help with lighting your house, reducing the need for artificial lighting. This too will help lower your electricity bill.

Consider planning to cook more meals outside this spring. By grilling, rather than using your oven or stove, you can prevent heating up your house too much while you are cooking. When your meal is finished, be sure to wait until you have a full load of dishes before starting your dishwasher for a more efficient use of energy.

As you write your spring-cleaning to-do list, make sure to include your cooling system as well. Spring is a great time to schedule a regular maintenance appointment for your HVAC system to keep it in working order. Take time to change the air filter in your furnace and vacuum the air intake vents to remove dust and pet hair to run your HVAC unit more efficiently.

Source: *Spring and summer energy-saving tips*. Energy.gov. (2025, September 24). https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/spring-and-summer-energy-saving-tips

Supporting Families by Managing Parenting Stress

No matter what season of parenting you're in, every parent experiences stress from time to time. If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed or exhausted, guilty for losing patience, or calm one minute and frustrated the next, you are not alone! The reality is that parenting comes with both meaningful moments and difficult ones.

When families find themselves in a stress cycle, it can look like a child's behavior escalating, a parent's stress increasing, a big reaction instead of a calm response, and everyone ending up feeling worse. While stress can be contagious, the good thing is that calm can be too! When parents recognize their stress triggers, such as mornings, bedtimes, transitions, or busy schedules, they can begin using in-the-moment tools to cope. Maintaining predictable routines, like consistent meal and sleep times, can also help reduce stress for both parents and children.

Pausing before responding, taking one small breath, lowering expectations temporarily, and focusing on safety rather than perfection can help keep moments from escalating and create calm for the whole family. No parent is calm all of the time, and repair matters more than perfection. Small moments of connection and understanding can go a long way in strengthening family relationships.

Source: *Comfort & joy: Tips to reduce family stress & support kids' mental health*. HealthyChildren.org. (2025, December 16). https://www.healthychildren.org/

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Call to Action: Start today by adding just a few extra minutes of movement to your routine. Take a short walk, stretch, or choose the stairs, every small step counts toward better health. Move your way and make physical activity a simple, enjoyable part of your day.

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