

Give Me an A for Activity! Motivating Others To Be Physically Active

At times, almost everyone can use a personal cheerleader for encouragement, inspiration, and even celebration when they successfully meet their goal. Cheering on a friend or family member who wants to be more physically active can be a great way to show your support—and it's easy to do. Here are a few tips.

Be open and listen.

- For some people, becoming physically active is a big change. Applaud that first step and continue to reinforce the decision to be active.
- Listen to the challenges, brainstorm solutions, offer a pat on the back, and celebrate progress.

Help it happen.

- Go along to buy new shoes or workout clothes or to try an exercise class.
- Volunteer to take over a household errand to make time for your friend to go to her weekly basketball game.

Join in the fun.

- Walking together is a wonderful way to be active and catch up with a friend.
- Try activities that are just right for two—dance lessons or doubles tennis.
- Challenge your friend to a weekly ping-pong game.

Be supportive if interruptions occur.

- Travel, illness, and work can get in the way of physical activity. Work together to find ways to get back on track as soon as possible.

A Few Don'ts

- Don't push too hard. People need to start out at a pace that's right for them and build up from there.
- Don't be judgmental. Negative comments about appearance or performance can quickly halt efforts to be active.



Quick Tip

Try making a contract with a friend to become physically active. It can help you both stick with it.

VISIT

www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life

- Read more tips.
- Print useful tools.
- Order a free exercise guide or DVD.
- Share your exercise story.

