

NEWSLETTER

WebParentTip, Volume 9, # 6 for 6-4-08

HOME HEALTH SPA

Summer is a great time to focus on health, each person's health and the health of the family as a whole.

Not all of us can afford to go to a luxury spa where people spend lots of money learning how to live a healthy life style and get pampered at the same time.

How about turning your own house into a home health spa? Start with a family meeting with two items on the agenda. 1) How is this family going to increase the amount of exercise we do individually and as a family. 2) How is this family going to eat healthy and decrease the consumption of junk food?

Involve the kids. Have a contest with all of you keeping track of exercise and the one who does the most gets a prize. Be sure that your vacation destination has opportunity for lots of exercise. Do your sight-seeing on foot. Arrange a mystery trip to a nearby park or hiking trail. Try to have at least one family walk or hike a week. It's my favorite kind of multitasking: you get to exercise and be with the kids at the same time.

Go over all the food in your cupboard with the children. Another contest: a prize for the child who identifies the most junk food. Another prize for the child who comes up with the longest list of healthy food to choose on the next trip to the market. De-junking your house is the best way to cut down on the excess calories of junk food.

How do you add pampering to the mix? Give each other back and neck rubs. Buy scented body wash for the shower and good-smelling bubbles for those long soaks in the tub. A pedicure kit and a basin of hot water enables older kids to give each other (and the parents) one of the best pamper-ings I know.

Finally, cut down the noise and slow down the pace "It's summer time and the livin' is easy" so do as much as you can to lower everybody's stress level. No matter how busy you are or how programmed the kids are be sure each member of the family has enough do-nothing time. This kind of time not only decreases stress but it gives growing children time to daydream and think of their future.

Have a healthy summer!