

## FORWARD CORNER

### April is Move More Month and Every Kid Healthy Week

In the current climate, FORWARD reminds us all that maintaining a healthy weight and building a healthy immune system is the body's first line of defense in fighting any chronic illness or virus such as COVID-19. By understanding and incorporating healthy lifestyle best practices, DuPage families can improve their health and their ability to fight disease. To equip families with information and best practices, the month of April is filled with healthy living messaging activities and opportunities. The American Heart Association celebrates **Move More Month**, encouraging everyone to move more and commit to being physically active. Action for Healthy Kids is sponsoring **Every Kid Healthy Week**, April 20-24, to celebrate school health and wellness achievements.

The [American Heart Association](#) reminds us that Active kids are more likely to have:

- A healthy weight.
- Stronger, healthier bones and muscles.
- Better heart and brain health.
- Improved brain function, including memory, attention and problem-solving.
- Better school attendance and academic performance, especially in math, reading and writing.
- Lower long-term risk of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and some kinds of cancer.
- Less stress and fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression.
- Less inappropriate and distracting classroom behavior.
- Improved mental health and psychological well-being, including confidence and self-esteem.

[Action for Healthy Kids](#) reminds us that when kids are out of school/child care for any reason, (weekends, a holiday break, school closure), parents can use these activities and resources (be sure to check out the links) to keep their kids moving, learning, and eating healthily. Some activities need to be modified to make them appropriate for preschoolers.

1. [Practice yoga techniques and poses](#) to build strength and flexibility and help relax.
2. [Get "family fit" using activity points](#) to encourage movement.
3. [Create a backyard \(or basement\) fitness circuit course](#).
4. Have recess at home by playing [old school throwback games](#), [jumping rope](#), or doing any of [these 50 ideas](#).
5. Play! Try [sensory play](#) or [play on the go](#) to encourage kids' imaginations whenever, wherever.
6. [Do a nature scavenger hunt](#) to get kids exploring the outdoors.
7. [Have active screen time](#) using these fun, kid-friendly physical activity videos compiled by Active Schools.

### JOIN THE HEALTHY MOVEMENT TODAY BY TAKING ACTION!

**April Call to Action for Families:** If your children are home with you during the Stay At Home order or because their early childhood programs are closed, commit to at least sixty to ninety minutes of outdoor time daily for all children, infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school agers.

**April Call to Action for Early Childhood Providers:** Until life returns to normal, be a resource to your families by emailing them (or posting on your website) weekly tips on physical and nutrition activities they can do at home.

For information on healthy eating and activity initiatives in DuPage, check out [www.forwarddupage.org](http://www.forwarddupage.org).