Try interval training
Interval training—or switching between different paces while exercising—is a great way to build endurance. Have your child try this routine: To warm up, run at an easy pace for 10 minutes. Then, sprint for 30 seconds, return to baseline for 30 seconds, and repeat 9 times. Cool down with another 10 minutes of easy running. This approach works well for walking and swimming, too.

Did You Know?
Our bodies need about 20 minutes to realize that we’re full. Encourage your tween to eat slowly so her brain has time to catch up with her stomach. Enjoying pleasant conversations between bites is a nice way to pace meals so she can better recognize when she’s full.

Nutrition at your fingertips
It's simple for your teen to check nutrition information on a smartphone. Apps like Fooducate let him scan the food product code or look it up by name right at the store. Details pop up on everything from the calorie count to trending recipes. Tip: Find other nutrition apps by searching “healthy eating apps.”

Just for fun
Q: Why couldn’t the athlete listen to his music?
A: Because he broke the record.

More cooks in the kitchen

There are so many benefits to cooking with your child. Perhaps the greatest one is that it gives you a chance to teach him healthy habits he can use his whole life. Consider these ideas.

Find favorites
A good place to begin is with familiar meals. Ask your teen or tween to list five favorite meals, and then make one together each week. As he gets more comfortable in the kitchen, he could take on more responsibility. For instance, have him fix dinner for his siblings on nights you work a late shift.

Use shortcuts
Show your teenager how cooking can fit into his busy schedule. He might use frozen onion pieces or cut-up vegetables from the grocery store salad bar to save chopping time. Or he could start with a rotisserie chicken rather than raw meat. Tip: Let your child invite friends to help with prep and stay for dinner.

Be creative
To keep things interesting, suggest that your teen choose a theme when he cooks. He might select an ingredient, such as garlic or lemons, to include in each dish. Or maybe he’ll center his meal on a country like Italy or Japan. Also, you could encourage him to put his own spin on recipes, perhaps making pasta into a pie or tucking roasted vegetables into sandwiches.

Idea: Look for a cooking class you can take together through your local recreation center or at a cooking school.

Lights, camera, action!

Here’s another idea to get your tween or teen excited about homemade meals—film her own cooking show! Try these steps.
1. Ask your child to choose a recipe.
2. Have her measure all the ingredients into separate small containers before you start to film. Tip: You can explain this is something professional chefs do— it’s called mise en place (French for “put in place”).
3. As you film, your teen should describe the cooking techniques. (“Now I’ll brush the marinade onto the fish fillets.”) Encourage her to point out healthy cooking tips, such as cutting down on oil or adding extra vegetables.
4. Watch the show together, invite friends for a viewing, or send a copy to Grandma!
Strength training

Your child can use her own body weight—no weights or machines required—to do strength training. Suggest these exercises to focus on different parts of the body.

**Arms.** Standing with legs hip-width apart, extend your arms straight out to the sides. Do small arm circles clockwise for 30 seconds and then counterclockwise for 30 seconds. Repeat twice more.

**Legs.** With your back against the wall, slide down until your knees are bent at a 90-degree angle, like you’re sitting. Hold this “wall-sit” position for 1 minute.

**Back.** Lying on your stomach, lift up your arms in front of you and raise your legs in a “superman” position. “Clap” your hands and feet together at the same time. Lower down. Repeat 8 times.

**Stomach.** Lie on your back with your arms on the floor straight above your head. Slowly bring your legs into your chest, and at the same time, lift your shoulders and move your arms to hug your legs. Return to the starting position, and repeat 5 times.

### Standardized-test fare

**Q:** My daughter has standardized tests this month. What should she eat to help her do her best?

**A:** Eating a nutritious breakfast can help your daughter feel energized during the test, while also boosting her brainpower and memory.

Suggest that she eat a balanced breakfast every day—not just on test day—that includes protein, dairy, produce, and carbohydrates. She might like Greek yogurt with chopped almonds and cut-up apples, for instance. Or for something warm, she may enjoy a whole-grain tortilla filled with shredded chicken, cheese, and sliced tomatoes.

Keep in mind that a balanced meal doesn’t mean a big meal. In fact, a large breakfast could make her sluggish and sleepy. Then, along with healthy breakfasts, she should eat nutritious lunches and dinners to help her stay alert and at her best throughout the testing period—and beyond.

### Getting active with chores

Doing tasks around the house not only teaches responsibility, it also gives your tween or teen a chance to squeeze more exercise into his day. Here are active ways he can help out:

- **Have him pitch in on laundry day.** There’s a lot of movement in sorting clothes and towels, moving them from washer to dryer, and folding and putting them away.

- **Ask him to remove dead branches or leaves from shrubbery and trees.** Depending on the season, your child could also shovel the walk, mow, or rake the lawn. **Note:** Encourage him to do yardwork for neighbors who need help.

- **Give him a scrub brush and mild cleaner to remove mildew and soap scum from shower walls.** He can also wash down bathroom sink surfaces and mop the floor.

- **Wiping down kitchen cabinets, stovetops, and counters uses a lot of elbow grease.** Your teen will also get a workout from sweeping and mopping the floor.

### In the Kitchen

**Eggs for dinner**

Eggs are not just for breakfast! Full of protein and other nutrients, eggs are great for dinner, too.

**Shakshuka**

In a skillet, sauté ¼ cup each diced onion and bell pepper in 1 tbsp. olive oil until soft. Stir in ½ tsp. each chili powder, cumin, and paprika. Add 128-oz. can whole tomatoes, and break up tomatoes with a wooden spoon. Simmer for 7 minutes. Mix in 3 oz. crumbled feta cheese.

Using the back of the spoon, make 6 “dents” in the mixture. Crack an egg into each. Bake at 375° until the eggs are set, 8–12 minutes.

**Spinach-egg casserole**

Heat 1 tsp. olive oil in a skillet, and cook 4 cups fresh spinach until wilted. Spread spinach in a 9” pie dish coated with cooking spray. Sprinkle with 1 ½ cups shredded low-fat cheddar cheese. In a bowl, whisk together 4 eggs, 4 egg whites and 1 tbsp. Dijon mustard. Pour into the dish. Top with ¼ cup thinly sliced green onions. Bake at 375° for 30 minutes or until lightly browned.