



The Working Mom by Kay Luna

Work and play

Thursday, May 20th, 2010

Now that spring is in full swing, my 3-year-old daughter, Babycakes, is constantly asking to go outside and play — and I think that’s great.

I’d much rather see her hankering for the outdoors instead of being a couch potato (although sometimes, I’d secretly rather just stay inside and watch TV. Ha! Hey, it’s the truth).

Ya know, it’s probably good for me, too, because it gives me the chance to sneak in some Mommy exercise while she’s playing. Last night, our whole family — even the dog — went for a brisk walk together. When she got tired, I ended up carrying Babycakes on my back for a while. Whew.

Yeah, I’m out of shape. I see that now.

So, when I ran across some tips about how to turn the playground into a workout, I thought, “I need that!” You, too?

Here are a few from [Tara Zimliki, founder of Tara’s Bootcamp](#):

- **Use the monkey bars** for chin ups or pull-ups, which will effectively tone your triceps, biceps, core and back
- **The swing set** is a perfect tool to use for stability and core exercises. Try a one-leg squat with one foot in the seat of the swing. Target your abs by sitting on the swing and leaning back about 45 degrees. Hold your legs straight out in front of you and cross them over one another in a “scissor” motion
- **Park benches are not just for sitting.** Target your shoulders and triceps with a bench dip. Place your hands on the edge of the bench seat and your feet angled in front of you. Lower yourself off the bench with your hands until your elbows are at about a 90-degree angle, and lift back up.

I’ve done stories about [Stroller Strides](#), which meets in the Quad-Cities and leads parents in workouts with their small children in tow. The moms I met truly looked like they were having a lot of fun with it!

Hey, even a quick walk through the mall or the grocery store counts as exercise, in my book. How do you stay active with kids under foot?