



# Be a Fitness Role Model

**L**iving a healthy lifestyle is important to you, and while you might not know it, you've become a role model. Be proud! Your desire to eat healthy and work out on a regular basis is inspiring, and your drive is influencing your family, your friends, and even your co-workers. But if you want to continue to motivate and help others, you must stay positive, educate yourself, and follow your own good advice.

## EDUCATE YOURSELF

If you want to educate others about fitness, you've got to start by educating yourself. You need to keep up on all the health and fitness trends out there, and know which ones work and which ones don't. You've got to understand the different kinds of workout programs and routines, and how they go about helping people become fit. This is going to require a little research and reading up! For example, lifting weights in order to bulk up is very different from lifting in order to be toned or sculpted, and this is the sort of difference that you should know about.

## KEEP UP YOUR DRIVE

You've got to maintain your drive and energy if you want to be a role model. If

you're not motivated to wake up and jog in the morning, how can you expect your friends or family to be? Role models are the ones that inspire through example, and help others stay on track.

## STAY POSITIVE

Along with motivation, it's important to maintain a positive attitude. Once negative feelings come into play, you and your co-exercisers will lose momentum and find that working out and eating well begin to lose their importance. Focus on the successes of the friends or family members you're helping. Keep them positive, and take the necessary steps to show them that they're making strides.

## FOLLOW YOUR OWN GOOD ADVICE

If you tell your friend he or she needs to run three times a week, then you should also be running three times a week. If you suggest cutting out cake and cookies, then you should lay off the sweet stuff as well. If you don't practice what you preach, others aren't going to take you seriously, and they're not going to follow your suggestions. This is especially true for moms. If you're concerned that your child isn't active enough, or is eating unhealthy foods, don't just tell them what behaviors

to change—change them yourself! Continue giving your child someone to look up to.

## BE SUPPORTIVE

If your friends or family want to go to the gym for a swim or an aerobics class, go with them. It can be hard going to a gym alone for the first time, and as a role model, you can be there to offer comfort and support. You might even want to help your fellow gym-goer plan workout routines for each day or week—they'll need some direction and advice. If you go to the gym on a weekly basis, encourage your friend or family member to join you. Help him or her incorporate working out into a regular weekly schedule.

## PROVIDE FEEDBACK AND OTHER RESOURCES

As a role model, you should be giving positive reinforcement, as well as feedback. People will want to know what they're doing well and what they can improve on. Being a role model means helping others find the answers to their questions and concerns.

You didn't know you being a role model could be so easy, did you? Just remember the most important part: stay positive and motivated, and have fun! ☺