

8 Tips on Hiking with Your Kids

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“I’ve always loved nature. When Marty and I were dating, we would go hiking every weekend. It was my favorite way to stay fit. And for me, going for a walk is essential to manage stress. When the children came, I wanted them to also enjoy this beautiful and healthy activity.”

“At first I was nervous to take the boys out into the country. They have always been restless and have a lot of energy,” Liz tells us. “I imagined Ricardo breaking an arm climbing trees while Agustin fell over a cliff for running instead of walking.”

Liz soon learned that taking children under the age of 6 on a “real hike” was not realistic. “I realized that they were just too young for a regular hike and I had to adjust.”

She then came up with a new plan. “For the little ones, the plan was to get outdoors, enjoy a nice day and play. By the time they’re 7-9, they can be taken on longer hikes.”

Liz was determined to inspire the love of the outdoors in her children so step by step, poco a poco, she and her family started a beautiful tradition.

“We started slowly and little by little we became a family of explorers. Now my boys love hiking and the outdoors. We spend wonderful times together out in nature. It is one of the things that makes us feel stronger, healthier, and bonded as a family.”

Here are some tips from Liz on how you can enjoy the great outdoors with your children:

1. Involve the Whole Family and Other Friends:

Let's face it, exercise is more fun when done with the people you love. Invite your abuela, tía and fellow super-mamás to get active in the great outdoors. Hiking is a perfect low-impact, group activity for people of all ages and fitness levels. It doesn't have to be a long hike to start. Start with an hour or two. Or go for an hour, rest, have a snack and come back.

2. Keep it Easy & Make Plenty of Time:

Especially for your first few adventures, choose a hike that's short, on a mild incline, and has a great destination to look forward to. Waterfalls, lakes and vistas are all great choices, but if your little ones get sidetracked along the way, no worries! It's about the journey, not the destination, so give your kids plenty of time to look around and investigate.

3. Be Prepared For Everything:

As a proud super-mamá, we know you're prepared to handle just about anything. But the trail can throw some unexpected surprises at you. Be sure to pack these 10 essentials.

- Map or guide
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Extra clothing
- Flashlight
- First-aid supplies
- Matches
- Knife
- Extra food
- Charged cell phone

You might also want to pack some kid-friendly items like a magnifying glass, binoculars and a safety whistle. No matter the weather, dress the entire family in layers. Bring rain clothes, hats and gloves in case of chilly or wet weather, and an extra set of clothes for after the hike in case the little ones get wet or muddy.

4. Take Breaks & Stay Positive:

If you are going for a longer hike, 2 hours or more, remember that hiking takes a lot of energy. Frequent rests for healthy snacks, water and exploration will help keep your child's energy — and your own — in tip-top shape. While wandering, use positive reinforcement to help your kids feel good about trying something new. Make sure to tell them how awesome they are!

5. Play & Follow the Leader:

Letting your little ones lead the way can help them feel empowered — just be sure to change leaders so everyone gets a turn. This will help them feel invested in the end destination and ensure you're setting a kid-friendly pace. To keep things fun, play a game along the way. Try counting all the different kinds of birds, flowers or types of trees you see so the trip is not just fun but educational!

6. Leave No Trace:

Hiking helps you create healthy lifestyle habits not just for the family, but for being mindful of taking care of the environment. Bring a bag for your trash or [make a game of collecting trash](#) you see on the way back to the car. Pass on the value that together we can help take care of nature so we can all enjoy it.

7. Hike Often:

Make hiking a family tradition. Tradition can be a powerful motivator, especially for families and friends. Take turns planning the adventure with other moms or family members by choosing one weekend a month to start. Help your kids look forward to the trip each time by letting them help choose the destination and pack their own supplies. Just have a checklist ready to make sure you have everything you need.

8. Track Your Trip:

Use the activity tracker in the De Las Mías app to track your hikes. Tracking your hike will help you and your family see your accomplishments. It will also show the progress you've made on your journey to embrace a joyful, healthy life. Download the [De Las Mías App](#) to track all your activities and learn more about maintaining a healthy life. Share your goals and success stories with your friends, comadres and families.

Now that you've got these tips in your back pocket, get out there and explore!