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Even a "Health Nut" Benefits from the Family Wellness Program

Patricia Spada, Nurse Care Manager, doesn't consider healthy living a challenge. She exercises regularly, eats mainly fresh organic foods, tries to get at least seven to eight hours of sleep and "devours" health shows, magazines and books in her spare time. She also regularly passes along health tips to her friends and family. Yet, she decided to participate in the Family Wellness Program in January.

"My family questioned why I chose to become part of the program. In fact, I also questioned why, especially since I didn't know exactly what I was signing up for," she says. "But I thought if it could help me learn more about family wellness, I should do it."



As she began setting her family's goals, Patricia actually was challenged. During her first meeting with her wellness coach, Christa Davis (pictured left with Patricia), she worried about finding time to fit in more family activities. Eating dinner as a family shouldn't be hard, but Patricia's family is busy. With work, school, sports and recreational activities, eating dinner as a family had faded to a last priority.

"We were fortunate to squeeze in one day a week together. I panicked wondering how we could possibly fit in more family dinners," she says. "I quickly realized that it all needed to start with me, since I am the main chef and keeper of the troop's schedules."

Patricia kept family dinners as her main goal throughout the program. The partial one-night-a-week meal they ate together turned into two to three days a week, plus occasional weekend lunchtimes. Patricia was thrilled to see her family eating together, but more excited that they were sharing their lives together, too.

Each week, Patricia worked with her coach to set additional, attainable goals for her family, which included taking walks, playing games, making crafts, journaling and attending at least one Children's fitness class each week. One of the more difficult goals was convincing her 16-year-old son that it was "cool" for guys his age to wear the Polar fitness watch.

"Being able to reach each goal has given me a sense of satisfaction and a continued desire to stay connected with my coach for reinforcement and accountability," Patricia says. "Eating dinner with my family has become priceless. Also, developing an awareness of the need to set certain goals has become a new lifestyle for me. This eight-week journey has definitely been a healthy experience that I will not forget."

The pilot phase of the Family Wellness Program was such a success that Strong4Life plans to roll out the next session in May. Be on the lookout for an upcoming story on Careforce Connection with details of when and how to sign up.

Tyana Crowe also had a positive experience with the Family Wellness Program. [Read her family's story.](#)