



Have a Ball Together!

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Resource Centre/Centre de ressources
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Physical activity for 4-6 year olds

Physical activity is important for all children – especially kindergarten-aged children who, as a whole, are less active than preschool-aged children.

For children aged 4-6, physical activity is all about energetic play that causes a child to sweat and breathe a little harder.

24-Hour Movement Guidelines

Move

- Children 3 and 4 years old should be physically active at least 180 minutes a day, of which at least 60 minutes is energetic play – more is better.
- Children 5 to 17 should accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous aerobic physical activity and several hours of light physical activities each day. Vigorous physical activities, and muscle and bone strengthening activities, should each be incorporated at least 3 days per week.

Sleep

- 10-13 hours a day for those aged 4, which may include a nap, with consistent bedtimes and wake-up times.
- 9-11 hours of interrupted sleep for those aged 5 to 13, with consistent bedtimes and wake-up times.

Sit

- Leisure screen time should be no more than 1 hour per day for those aged 4 and no more than 2 hours per day for those aged 5 to 17.
- Sitting for extended periods should be limited.

Benefits

Physical activity helps your child:

- Build a healthy heart, lungs, bones, muscles and joints
- Develop confidence in their movement skills
- Develop positive self-esteem
- Improve the ability to deal with stress
- Develop friendships
- Promote leadership skills
- Be better prepared to learn
- Do better in school

Physical activity also promotes healthy lifestyle habits that lead to healthy and active lives. By laying a strong foundation, children will remain physically active as they get older because physical activity will be an important part of their lives. This will keep them healthy and prevent certain diseases as they age.





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Skills to Develop

Here are some physical skills you can help your kindergarten-aged child develop:

- Walking in a straight line
- Changing directions when running
- Throwing and catching a ball
- Climbing playground equipment
- Hopping on 1 foot
- Skipping

Tips

To help your child develop their movement skills, you can:

- Provide opportunities to be active through play, games and sports.
- Choose age- and skill-appropriate activities.
- Provide lots of opportunities for repetition to learn and practice.
- Be an active role model and play with your child.
- Make sure the activity is fun so your child enjoys their active time.
- Encourage your child to make up their own games.
- Try something active instead of watching the TV.
- Encourage outside play as children are more active when outside.
- When appropriate, walk instead of using a vehicle to get places.
- Set a timer to go off every hour and use this time for a quick energizer such as an active game or song.
- Have a 'boredom buster' jar that includes different ways to be active.

Activity Ideas

Here are some activity examples to get your child moving:

- Help your child build an obstacle course.
- Play a game of catch.
- Try a game of hockey using pool noodles instead of sticks.
- Draw a hopscotch grid using sidewalk chalk.
- Play a game of *What Time is it Mr. Wolf?*
- Visit a local skating rink or splash pad.
- Have your child make the letters of the alphabet in the air using their hands and feet.
- Try balancing a bean bag on your hand, shoulder or head while walking around.
- Play a game of *Simon Says*.
- Go for a nature scavenger hunt around the neighbourhood.

Whether at home, in childcare, at school, or in the in the community, we all have a role in getting kids active. Help set the path to a happy childhood and a lifetime of healthy living!

References

Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (<http://csep.ca>)

Nipissing District Developmental Screening (<http://www.ndds.ca>)

For more information, tips and activity ideas, visit haveaballtogether.ca