

Active kids are healthy kids

Every child needs to be active. It is important for their health and physical development and enhances learning in the classroom. Children need to be given plenty of opportunities to engage in fun active movement. Modern conveniences, technology and safety concerns mean that many children do not have enough physical activity.

- **Children should participate in at least 30-60 minutes of physical activity on most if not all days of the week.**
- **At least three times per week, the type of physical activity should be vigorous** (Note: Vigorous physical activity is activity that makes you “huff and puff”, and where talking in full sentences between a breath is difficult)

Encouraging kids to build active movement into their daily routine helps create a pattern that will stay with them for the rest of their lives. Below are some useful guidelines to help you plan activity times with and for your children:

- Encourage your child to walk or cycle to school. Ask your school about walking school buses. If this is not possible, consider dropping your child off a few blocks from school and then letting them walk.
- Limit ‘screen’ time (computer, play station, TV) and instead suggest time is spent outside playing.
- Invite other children over to play and encourage them to play games that involve physical activity.
- Choose presents that are fun and involve being active e.g. kites, balls, skipping ropes, frisbees, hacky sacks, skateboard.
- Make family outings fun and active. You don’t need to spend extra money. Go for a walk/bike in the park or at the beach.
- Involve children with you in household activities such as washing the car, sweeping leaves, stacking wood etc.
- Be a role model. If you are active the chances are your child will be too. Everyday things such as walking up stairs, walking to the dairy and parking some distance away will all help to develop a more active lifestyle.
- Encourage your child to take part in organised sport such as swimming, gymnastics, active holiday programmes.
- Give your child positive messages about being active.
- Remember the key is FUN! Make sure your child enjoys participating and experiences success.