

Toolbox Activity #9:

Fun and Physical Activity in the Early Childhood Program

The following tips and checklist, based on the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines, are designed to support your efforts in helping youngsters get the fun and physical activity they need. Aside from a great way to cope with life’s stressful times, physical activity is critical for healthy growth and development.

Wondering how much activity children should have every day? (for more details see www.csep.ca/guidelines).

- Toddlers (aged 1–2 years) and preschoolers (aged 3–4 years) should accumulate at least 180 minutes of physical activity at any intensity spread throughout the day.
- Children 5-11 should accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity of physical activity throughout the day.

Here are some suggestions that can help children get the daily physical activity they need for healthy growth and development.	How are you doing?		
	Everyday	Most/Some Days	Plan to Change
Integrate physical activity in to the daily program. By starting early these behaviours can last a lifetime! Play music, dance, animate stories through movement, learn action songs together. Want other ideas? Check out www.participaction.com			
Don't let weather keep you inside – just dress for it.			
When possible, get to where you're going by walking (or skipping, jumping, crawling, biking ...).			
Offer a variety of activities in different environments (e.g., energizers to start the day, calming stretches to end of the day, encourage free play during lunch, walk to a nearby park or greenspace).			
For children five and up, progress to offering longer bouts of energetic play.			
Encourage active options: take the stairs, invite the children to help move chairs, toys, etc. (keeping safety first as a priority of course!).			
Avoid screen time and minimize the time that children are sedentary for extended periods – stand up every hour and move around the room or “shake your sillies out”.			
Share physical activity-related information and tips with parents and caregivers. Check out the references below for some ideas. ¹			
Be an active role model – actions speak louder than words – not to mention you'll have fun and feel great! Did you know that adults need 150 minutes of accumulated moderate to vigorous physical activity each week?			
Keep it fun! Sports are great for developing physical skills and positive attitudes. Just remember – the goal is the gift of a lifelong love of being active (and developing skills). It's not about winning!			

¹ www.csep.ca/guidelines



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Toolbox Activity #9:

Fun and Physical Activity for My Child

Daily physical activity is a great stress management tool, and it's also critical to health in general, and to your child's healthy growth and development. The following tips and checklist, based on the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines¹, are designed to support you in helping your child get the fun and physical activity he/she needs.

Wondering how much activity your child should have every day? (for more details see www.csep.ca/guidelines).

- Toddlers (aged 1–2 years) and preschoolers (aged 3–4 years) should accumulate at least 180 minutes of physical activity at any intensity spread throughout the day.
- Children 5-11 should accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity of physical activity throughout the day.

Here are some suggestions that can help children get the daily physical activity they need for healthy growth and development.	How are you doing?		
	Everyday	Most/Some Days	Plan to Change
Integrate physical activity in to your family's daily life. By starting early these behaviours can last a lifetime! Need ideas? Check out www.participation.com			
Think active when buying or making gifts for kids and other family members. Balls, bikes, child-friendly racquets, chalk, hoops... there's plenty that's affordable and adaptable so all can join in the fun.			
Don't let weather keep you inside – just dress for it.			
When possible, get to where you're going by walking (or skipping, jumping, crawling, biking ...). Young children can push their stroller or pull their wagon, rather than riding the whole way in it.			
Provide numerous opportunities for activity during the day, both indoors and out. Start your day with a short walk, dance to music, build a fort out of cushions, play hide and seek, allow your child to walk up and down stairs, try throwing and catching a beach ball, go outside and play a game.			
Display a positive attitude that being active is fun and feels great! (As one expert in the field said, "if we could bottle its effects and sell it, we'd make millions!")			
Younger children enjoy activity in short bouts of time, so look for small windows (i.e., 10 minutes) of time for them to be active. For children five and up, encourage longer bouts of activity.			
Limit screen time – aim for no more than 2 hours per day and none for children under 2 years of age. Unplug and play – we and health experts say!			
Check out programs and opportunities in your community. Most offer a range of affordable options.			
Be an active role model – actions speak louder than words! Did you know that adults need 150 minutes of accumulated moderate to vigorous physical activity each week?			
Keep it fun! Sports are great for developing physical skills and positive attitudes. Just remember – the goal is the gift of a lifelong love of being active (and developing skills). It's not about winning!			

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