

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN AGED 5-12 YEARS

Children should participate in a minimum of 60 minutes moderate to vigorous physical activity every day



Parents/carers play a critical role in encouraging children of all ages to adopt a positive attitude towards activity. Role modelling an active lifestyle is just as important as giving them the time, space and materials for play.

Children learn from watching, listening and imitating what happens around them. If parents/carers are active in their own lives, children will often want to join in or try the same activities. As parents and caregivers, the messages we give to children when they are moving and learning can either develop or harm their self-esteem, so is it important to be mindful of this. Children develop good feelings about themselves when adults say and do positive things while they are being active.

It is important that children develop healthy habits. Being physically active every day is an ideal way to foster their physical and emotional health as well as aiding in their social development.

Increasingly children are spending time in front of screens and on electronic devices, as parents/carers we are obliged to introduce more activity into their lives to reduce this sedentary behaviour.

Active and fun

- Encourage and join in active games like obstacle courses, tag, skipping or throwing a ball or frisbee
- Visit playgrounds, parks, nature reserves and beaches
- Get children involved in different sports and activities

Active at home

- Have floor space available inside and simple equipment
- A cubby house, trampoline, swing or climbing frame is perfect for the yard
- Start a garden with your children

For stronger muscles and bones

- Skip, run, hop and jump
- Climb or swing on monkey bars and trees
- Play games like Leap Frog and Hopscotch
- Structured activities like dance, gymnastics and martial arts

Active travel

- For short trips, walk or ride safely
- For longer trips, park the car some distance away and walk with children for the rest of the trip
- Walk to the train, bus or tram
- Take the stairs not the lift or elevator

- **Make a trip to the park a special treat instead of TV or computer time, and enjoy quality time together**
- **Negotiate a 'no screen time' rule at dinner time and make bedrooms TV and computer free zones**
- **Walk or ride safely to school, or ask them to help wash the car, walk the dog or dig in the garden**