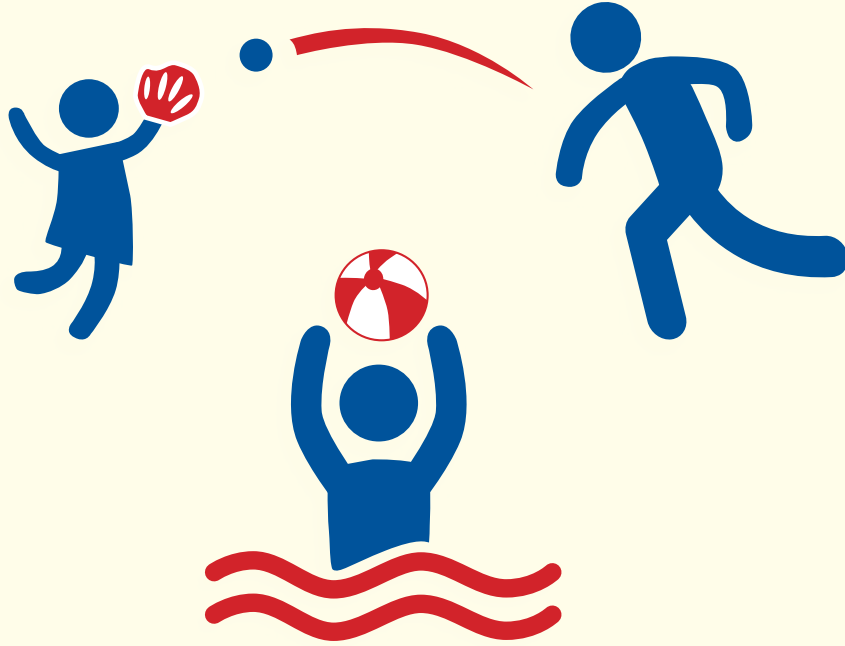
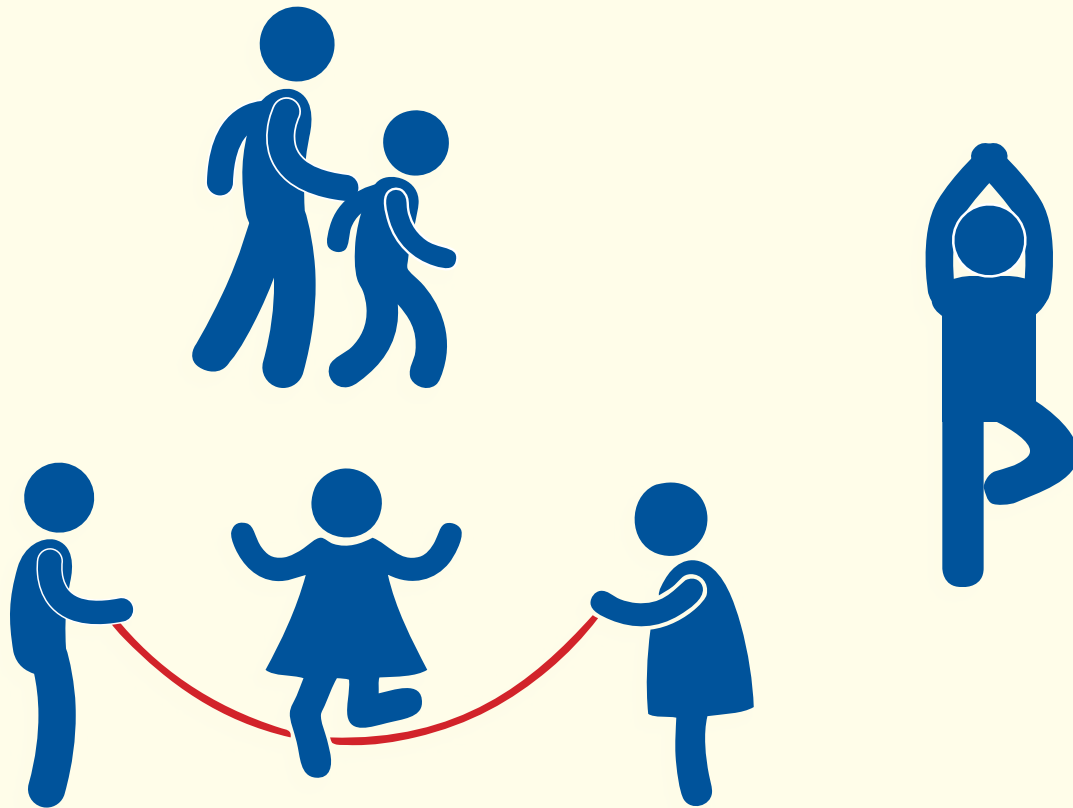




PRACTICES



Practices





Practices

Table of Contents

Putting Guidelines into Practice

Physical Activity Definitions	1
Types of Physical Activity.....	2
Active Toddlers and Preschoolers	3
Screen Time.....	4
Tips for Screen Time.....	5
Active Video Games.....	6
Facilitating Active Free Play or Unstructured Play	7

Other Useful Information

Promoting Physical Activity	10
Marketing and Advertising to Children.....	12
Nine Tips for Promoting Safe Physical Activity.....	13
Practitioner as a Healthy Role Model.....	17



Putting Guidelines into Practice

Use this section to support
the Healthy Beginnings
recommended guidelines



Physical Activity Definitions

Physical activity can be defined as any body movement performed by the muscles that use energy.

Sedentary behaviour/time is the time spent inactive, or not moving.

Fundamental movement skills are basic movement skills. They can be categorized into stabilizing skills, locomotion skills, or manipulative skills.

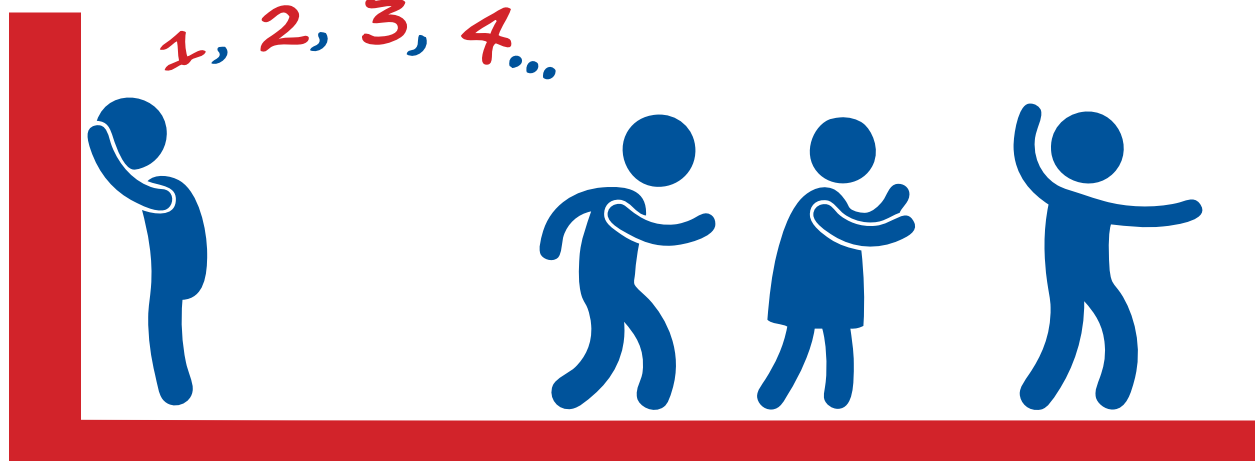
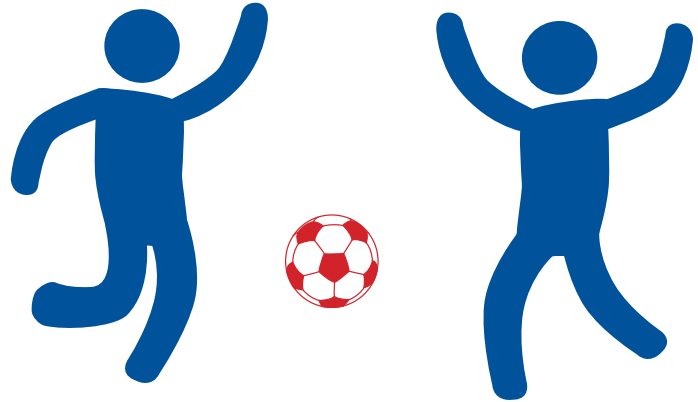
Balancing (stabilizing) skills involve maintaining balance against gravity, such as holding a front support position, or balancing on one foot.

Locomotion skills are the skills that allow children to move from one place to another in a variety of ways such as galloping, walking, crawling, bear walking or hopping.

Coordination (manipulative) skills, sometime called hand-eye or foot-eye coordination, involve gross motor manipulation of objects such as tapping a balloon with a bat, kicking a ball or throwing a beanbag.

Structured/facilitated play is physically active time when a child is following movement lead by an instructor or adult.

Unstructured/free play is physically active time when a child is moving their body in a self-directed way.





Types of Physical Activity

This information supports the following Healthy Beginnings 2-5 guidelines:

- In a full day, children should accumulate 120 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily, while in childcare.
- In a half day, children should accumulate 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily, while in childcare.

Preschoolers and toddlers often alternate short bursts of activity with rest. Young children should do many short bursts of physical activity using large muscle groups (legs, body, shoulders, and upper arm muscles). These should add up, so that preschoolers are active for several hours a day.

Light Intensity Physical Activity

A preschooler should not be sweating and their rate of breathing will not have changed. They should be able to maintain this intensity for a long time.

Activities include:

- Wandering the playground
- A short, slow walk
- Playing catch



Moderate Intensity Physical Activity

A preschooler should be sweating a little and breathing harder than normal. They will be able to have a conversation, but should not be able to sing a song out loud while active.

Activities include:

- Jogging and climbing on the playground
- Longer duration walks, possibly up hills, on uneven terrain, or at a higher pace
- Kicking a soccer ball with a buddy

Vigorous Intensity Physical Activity

A preschooler should be sweating and be out of breath. They should not be able to say more than a few words without having to catch their breath while active. Activities include:

- Fast-paced climbing and playing on the playground
- Tag games, or other games that involve bursts of maximum-speed running
- Highly active games with balls, such as relay races or kick-chase-retrieve games

Adapted from NASPE, CSEP and <http://www.participaction.com/get-informed/physical-activity-guidelines/guidelines-for-parents/guidelines-for-parents-children-5-11/>



Active Toddlers and Preschoolers

This information supports the following Healthy Beginnings 2-5 guideline:

- At least two activities the early learning practitioner leads will target basic movement skills (such as running, hopping, jumping, balancing, throwing, catching and kicking);
- At least one skill will target throwing, catching, kicking or batting an object.



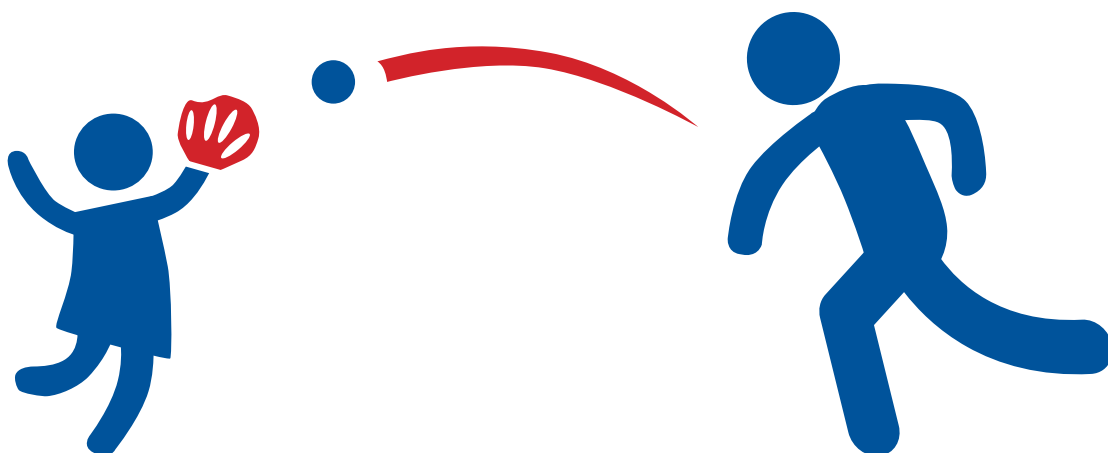
The early years are an important time for children to learn how to move. Experts agree that young children need daily physical activity (both free play and structured) to be healthy. Toddlers and preschool children need to learn to be active through the fundamental movement skills: balancing, locomotion and coordination.

It is important to learn how to run, jump, balance, catch and throw because they are the building blocks we need to be active for the rest of our lives.

Balancing (or stabilizing) means to hold a position without falling (such as standing on one foot). This helps to develop body control.

Locomotion (or locomotor) gets children from one place to another. Try moving in different ways like galloping, walking, running, skipping, crawling, marching, gliding, sliding, leaping, jumping or hopping. This helps preschoolers learn to understand where their body is in space, which develops body awareness.

Coordination (or manipulative), also called hand-eye or foot-eye coordination, uses different ways of moving objects like hitting a balloon with a spoon, kicking a ball, throwing a beanbag at an object or catching a scarf. This helps to develop body control and awareness.





Screen Time

This information supports the following Healthy Beginnings 2-5 guidelines:

- Children will be exposed to 30 minutes or less of screen time daily while in childcare.
- Alternatively, no more than 150 minutes of screen time will be accumulated through the week in childcare. Less is better.
- This includes computers, movies, video games, tablets, smart phones, active video games, etc.
- Do not expose children under two years to any screen time.

Screen time is described as the viewing or use of anything with a screen, including TV, DVDs, video games and computers. Most Canadian children are exceeding the recommended guideline of no more than one hour a day of screen time. While in childcare, Healthy Beginnings recommends no more than 30 minutes a day of screen time activities (alternatively, no more than 150 minutes per week).

Recreational screen time is time spent engaging in screen time activities such as watching movies, playing video games, playing active video games or sitting at the computer. Recreational screen time does not include educational opportunities such as learning to read.

Educational screen time takes place when a child is learning. This can be done on the computer, using tablets or e-readers or watching an educational program on TV. Although this is a positive learning time, it is still time spent where a child is inactive. Time spent engaging in educational screen time is included in the recommended no more than 30 minutes a day of screen time.

The largest source of screen time is television, followed by computers and then video games. Other sources of screen time activities include:

- iPods, iPads, iTouch and tablets
- E-readers
- iPhones, smartphones

Screen time is a sedentary activity. Too much screen time has been linked to:

- **Obesity:** The more TV a child watches, the greater his or her risk is of becoming overweight. Having a TV in a child's bedroom also increases this risk. Children can also develop an appetite for junk food promoted in TV ads, as well as overeat while watching TV.
- **Irregular sleep:** The more TV children watch, the more likely they are to have trouble falling asleep or to have an irregular sleep schedule. Sleep loss, in turn, can lead to fatigue and increased snacking.
- **Less time for play:** Excessive screen time leaves less time for active, creative play.

Adapted from Active Healthy Kids Canada and The Mayo Clinic



Tips for Screen Time

This information supports the following Healthy Beginnings 2-5 guidelines:

- Children will be exposed to 30 minutes or less of screen time daily while in childcare.
- Alternatively, no more than 150 minutes of screen time will be accumulated through the week in childcare. Less is better.
- This includes computers, movies, video games, tablets, smart phones, active video games, etc.
- All attempts should be made to avoid exposing children to marketing and advertising.

When possible, TV shows/movies should be interactive and educational. Moderate amounts of educational television or software can help build vocabulary, number, or letter skills (Dragon Tales, Arthur).

Choose shows that encourage imaginary play and role-playing, and use ideas from the TV show to play with your students.



Children under the age of 2 should not be exposed to any screen time.

Watching DVDs, recorded TV and educational DVD's will help limit children's exposure to marketing through commercials. If avoiding commercials is not possible, mute the TV and have the children work on balances, jumping jacks or anything physically active that divert their attention from the TV.

Adapted from CSEP Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines 0-4 Years and Media Smarts.



Active Video Games

This information supports the following Healthy Beginnings 2-5 guidelines:

- If screen time includes video games, physically active games are considered more desirable than sedentary games. **Active video games should not replace physical activity time.**

As the lure of technology rises and physical activity levels of kids fall, active video games—also called “exergames”—are often presented as a possible solution to getting kids to move more. But do they actually get children closer to reaching their recommended physical activity minutes?

Active Healthy Kids Canada is a national organization that focuses its efforts to make physical activity a major priority in the everyday lives of Canadian families.

Active Healthy Kids’ official position on active gaming is that they **do not** recommend active video games as a strategy to help kids be more physically active.

Active Healthy Kids explanation for not recommending active gaming as a means to increase physical activity levels is as follows:

- Playing active video games doesn’t lead to increased overall daily physical activity levels.
- Active video games may get heart rates up, but they’re not significantly helping kids get to the 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity required each day.
- Kids find active video games appealing, but the appeal wears off over time and many don’t stick with them.
- Active video games don’t offer the fresh air, vitamin D, connection with nature and social interactions that come with outdoor active play.



Tips for Active Video Gaming:

- Active video games are a good way to break up sedentary time, like sitting on the couch, but not as good as playing real active games or sports.
- Enjoy playing active video games with your kids, and let them enjoy playing them with their friends, but don’t misunderstand this as a replacement of real physical activity.
- If money is spent on active video games as a means of exercise, it might be better spent on skipping ropes, balls, ice skates or other sporting equipment.

Active Healthy Kids Canada (2012)



Facilitating Active Free Play or Unstructured Physical Activity

This information supports the following Healthy Beginnings 2-5 guidelines:

- In a full day, children should accumulate 60 minutes of free play/unstructured physical activity.
- In a half day, Children should accumulate 30 minutes of free play/unstructured physical activity.

Active free play, or unstructured physical activity, is when a child is actively moving their body in a self-chosen way. A practitioner should set up and monitor the play environment, but children should choose and direct the play activities.

Unstructured physical activity allows preschoolers to practice social skills, lets them make up their own games and rules, and encourages creativity,

Active free play emphasizes active parts of unstructured physical activity. It is important that practitioners set up environments that encourage preschoolers to move their bodies during free playtime.

- For example, if a child is sitting at the playground playing with a truck, they are not being active. However, if they are running the truck along the equipment in the playground and racing it down the slide, they are participating in low to moderate intensity physical activity.

Practitioners can facilitate unstructured physical activity by:

- Choosing environments carefully
 - Ensure children have lots of space to move
 - Remove areas that encourage sedentary behaviour, such as chairs
- Making suitable equipment available
 - Provide some equipment that children might associate with being active, such as the beanbags you had used earlier that day in an active game
 - Provide less-traditional equipment that encourages reaching, jumping, balancing, or changing body position
- Large boxes, tunnels, foam blocks, taped pathways on the floor
- Planning structured and unstructured physical activity together
 - Introduce new equipment by giving preschoolers free time to explore the equipment. Follow this up with a structured game using this equipment and end with unstructured physical activity time with the same materials
- Encouraging active narratives
- Play high-tempo music in the background
- Modeling active free play

Adapted from <http://healthypreschoolers.publishpath.com/part-4-structured-and-unstructured-physical-activities> and <http://www.sparkpe.org/blog/structured-activity-unstructured-activity/>



Other Useful Information

Tips and ideas to promote
fun and safe physical activity



Promoting Physical Activity

Physical Activity: when most of the body is moving (e.g. riding a tricycle, running or digging in the garden). It does not include play such as puzzles or drawing.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

1. Participate with the children.
2. Provide for active play every day.
3. Encourage vigorous play.
4. Help children develop fundamental movement skills.
5. Build physical activity into the day.
6. Use physical activity to support learning and social development.
7. Promote creativity and self-expression.



1. Participate with children: Not only are you modeling that physical activity is fun, you are supporting children’s development. As a bonus, playing with the children is a great way for you to be active.



2. Provide active play every day: Preschoolers need at least three hours of active movement every day. They shouldn’t be inactive for more than an hour at a time, except when sleeping.



3. Encourage vigorous play: Preschoolers need opportunities to use up energy. Running, jumping, and skipping are great because they use the large muscles in the legs and body and burn energy. Healthy body weight, bone strength, heart and lung fitness, and muscle strength come from large muscle activity.



PRACTICES



- 4. Help children develop fundamental movement skills:** Preschoolers need many opportunities to practice and gain confidence in basic movement skills. These skills are the building blocks of more complex movement patterns and include. **Balancing skills** such as balancing and making shapes with their body. **Locomotion skills** involve moving our bodies from one spot to another. This can be done in many ways such as hopping, jumping, and skipping. **Coordination skills** involve manipulating objects. These include throwing a beanbag, catching a scarf, and kicking a ball.
- 5. Build physical activity into your day:** Young children learn from what they see us do. Choose active options when you can. For example, walking to drop off children at school or taking the stairs instead of an escalator.
- 6. Use physical activity to support learning and social development:** Playtime is when children can actively explore the environment, practice cooperating, sharing, and dealing with conflict. Play strengthens thinking skills and language and literacy development.
- 7. Promote creativity and self-expression:** Preschoolers need opportunities to express themselves through movement and to make believe. Play that allows children to create new ideas and solutions helps develop their thinking and social skills.

Excerpt from the HOP Early Learning Practitioners Resource (Decoda Literacy Solutions)

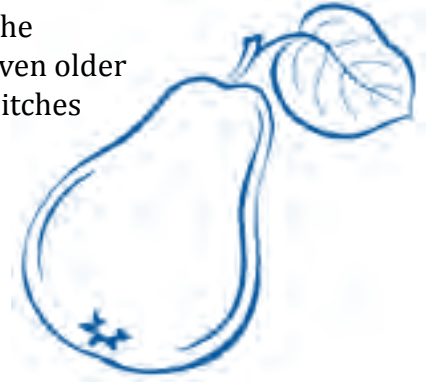


Marketing and Advertising to Children

Television and Internet advertising is the primary way that companies target children to market their products. Among children two to six years old, even a brief exposure to advertisements can influence their subsequent food, drink and toy preferences.

Studies show that children under the age of five years can't tell the difference between commercials and television programming. Even older children do not have the cognitive abilities to distinguish sales pitches from facts and stories.

Early learning practitioners have a responsibility to support healthy childhood growth and development by creating supportive healthy environments that are free of marketing and advertising and that foster healthy choices.



Here are some tips:

1. Allow only commercial-free TV programs or pre-record TV programs and movies. Be sure to fast-forward through commercials in both TV programs and movies. Watch children's programming on commercial-free channels. This helps to create an "advertising-free" zone!
2. If children are using computers, avoid company-sponsored websites, advertisements on Internet sites and all digital advertising through email, text messaging, online quizzes, puzzles and advergames (videogame promoting a brand-name product by featuring it as part of the game).
3. Educate families so they also limit their children's screen time and become advocates for stricter rules on food and beverage advertising to children.

See the Healthy Beginnings 2-5 Healthy Eating and Sugar-Sweetened Beverage manual for more ideas on how to avoid exposing children to marketing and advertising.





9 Tips for Promoting Safe Physical Activity

1. Dressing for Active Play

- Drawstrings, loose jackets, baggy pants, and long hair can often get tangled up in play equipment. Encourage parents to look for well-fitting clothes with Velcro, elastic, or snaps, and invite children to tie back long hair. Parents and practitioners should also note seasonal considerations, such as sunscreen or mittens
- Some shoes provide better grip, stability, and safety than others- some slip on shoes, sandals, and socks might be slippery or fall off a child's feet. Encourage parents to look for shoes that enclose a child's heel, and for boots that fit snugly

For more information, please check out:

- > http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/footwear_for_children
- > <http://www.parentingtoddlers.com/toddlershoes.html>

2. Playing Safely on the Playground

- Always follow safety guidelines your jurisdiction may have surrounding play structure safety, including the height of the structure, type of activities, and landing surface required
- The Canadian Pediatric Society states that monkey bars, trampolines, climbing structures, and swings are the cause of most playground injuries. Looking for bucket swings, low equipment, and handrails, implementing some rules, and active supervision can help to reduce this risk
- Playground rules might include: waiting your turn, holding onto handrails, sitting down on swings, sliding feet first, and respecting 'safety zones' at the bottom of slides, climbing areas, or around swing sets



Other Useful Information

For more information, please check out:

- > <http://www.cps.ca/documents/position/playground-injuries>
- > http://kidshealth.org/parent/firstaid_safe/outdoor/playground.htm#
- > <http://www.safekidscanada.ca/Professionals/Safety-Information/Playground-Safety/Index.aspx>
- > <http://www.childsafetylink.ca/toddler-safety/playground-safety.html>
- > <http://www.livestrong.com/article/221698-playground-safety-facts/>



3. Being Safe while Active Indoors

- Consider the space available and the other materials in the room. Watch for glass doors or nearby windows, provide soft floor surfaces, and block off any potential hazard areas

For more information, please check out:

- > <http://www.nhs.uk/Change4Life/Pages/play-for-life.aspx>



4. Water Safety

- According to Safe Kids Canada, children can drown in as little as 2.5cm of water- this includes buckets of water, small pools, natural puddles, and playground water features. Close supervision, proper training, appropriate lifesaving equipment, a proper fitting personal flotation device (lifejacket) and fencing or barriers around water areas are important

For more information, please check out:

- > <http://www.safekidscanada.ca/Professionals/Safety-Information/Drowning-Prevention/Index.aspx>
- > <http://www.redcross.ca/article.asp?id=881&tid=024>
- > <http://www.lifesaving.ca/main.php?lang=english&cat=watersafety>

5. Snow Safety

- Young kids need to go inside frequently to warm up and re-hydrate
- Colder temperatures require appropriate clothing (jacket, boots, mittens, snow pants) and layering. A child's head, ears, and hands should always be covered. Any wet clothing should be quickly removed
- Safe Kids Canada recommends kids should not play outdoors if the temperature is below -25°C or if the wind-chill is -28°C or colder
- The Canadian Red Cross requires that ice be at least 20cm thick for skating or walking as a group
- Special safety precautions should be taken for building snow forts and tobogganing, including not building by the road, maintaining safe distances from other forts and sleds, not overcrowding a sled or snow structure, and wearing helmets

For more information, please check out:

- > <http://www.childsafetylink.ca/toddler-safety/seasonal-safety/winter-and-sledding-safety.html>
- > <http://taketherooffwinter.ca/safety.php>
- > <http://www.redcross.ca/article.asp?id=20590&tid=021>

Adapted from Healthy After Schools



6. Playing Safely in your Surroundings

- Rural childcare centers should take special precautions surrounding natural hazards, such as wildlife, streams, or local poisonous vegetation, and farm safety

For more information, please check out:

- > <http://www.safekidscanada.ca/Professionals/Safety-Information/Farm-Safety/Index.aspx>
- > <http://www.fs4jk.org>
- > http://jcsda.com/kids/wilderness_tips.htm
- > http://health.kaboose.com/active-kids/hiking_tips.html
- > <http://www.cbif.gc.ca/pls/pp/poison>

- Urban childcare centers should consider traffic safety for both walking and playing

For more information, please check out:

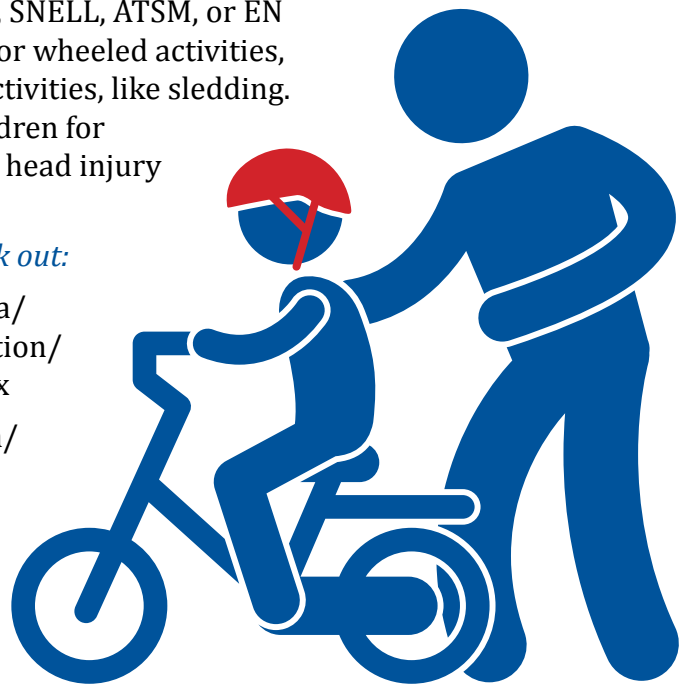
- > <http://www.childsafetylink.ca/child-safety-3-5/pedestrians.html>
- > <http://www.safekidscanada.ca/Professionals/Safety-Information/Pedestrian-Safety/Index.aspx>
- > <http://www.wehealthunit.org/family-health/safety/booklets/Kidestrian-Book-WECHU-Logo-SingleFinal-Nov-08.pdf>

7. Using Helmets and Protecting Heads

- Children should always wear CSA, SNELL, ATSM, or EN approved proper fitting helmets for wheeled activities, like using a tricycle, and sliding activities, like sledding. Practitioners should monitor children for concussion-like symptoms after a head injury in any physical activity setting

For more information, please check out:

- > <http://www.safekidscanada.ca/Professionals/Safety-Information/Wheeled-Activities/Index.aspx>
- > <http://www.childsafetylink.ca/child-safety-3-5/helmets.html>
- > <http://kidshealth.org/parent/general/aches/concussions.html>





8. Being Aware of Outside Allergens

- The Air Health Quality Index monitors air quality in Canada, and assigns a health-risk ranking (low, moderate, high, very high). The scale has been adapted for children and recommends that children with asthma or respiratory issues limit outside physical activity on moderate or high health-risk days. On very high-risk days, no children should play outdoors
- Pollen forecasts should also be monitored for children with respiratory allergies

For more information, please check out:

- > <http://www.ec.gc.ca/cas-aqhi/default.asp?lang=En&n=CB0ADB16-1>
- > <http://www.ec.gc.ca/cas-aqhi/default.asp?lang=En&n=3D802E46-1>
- > http://www.theweathernetwork.com/pollenfx/canpollen_en/
- > http://kidshealth.org/parent/medical/allergies/ozone_asthma.html

9. Trampoline safety

- The Canada Safety Council recommends that children should be six years old before they are allowed to use a trampoline.

For more information, visit:

- > canadasafetycouncil.org/child-safety/safety-tips-backyard-trampolines
- > www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2013/aug/11/are-trampolines-safe-children-play

Adapted from <http://blog.zisboombah.com/?s=kids+drinking+water> and <http://www.livestrong.com/article/102931-child-drink-water/>



Early Learning Practitioner as a Healthy Role Model

Early childcare centres are important environments to support young children in leading active lives. Early learning practitioners play a very important role in creating and maintaining a healthy environment in their centres. The modeling provided by ELPs is extremely important in fostering healthy children. The following section takes a break from focusing on preschoolers and concentrates on ELPs. It keeps in mind the hectic pace and demanding nature of your work and to gives some adaptable suggestions about packing lunch, maintaining an active lifestyle and modeling a healthy lifestyle.

What about physical activity? How much, and what type, should I be getting?

CSEP has developed the Physical Activity and Sedentary Guidelines for Canadians, and recommends that adults ages 18-64 years:

- Accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate (you should be sweaty and breathing harder than normally) to vigorous (you should be sweaty and out of breath) aerobic physical activity per week, in 10 minute or longer bouts.
- Muscle and bone strengthening activities using large muscle groups should be performed on at least two days each week. These large muscles groups include your back, abdomen, legs, hips, chest and arms.

More information on CSEP guidelines can be found at www.csep.ca/guidelines.

I'm pretty active during the day.

What parts of my job count as physical activity?

According to CSEP, moderate to vigorous physical activity is the most important intensity to accumulate. Any time that you are short of breath or sweating for more than 10 consecutive minutes can count towards your recommended 150 minutes of physical activity per week. Some activities that might count include:

- Running with children, such as playing a tag game
- Playing a high-intensity game with children on the playground
- Vigorous cleaning or centre chores

It is crucial to remember that 150 minutes per week is a minimum recommendation. If possible, look to accumulate as much physical activity as possible.

After a day of work, I'm not able to go to the gym.

What are some other ways that I can get my physical activity in?

Physical activity can be achieved in many ways, including:

- Brisk walking with a partner or community group.
- Search dance, Pilates, or workout videos online and practice them in your home.





PRACTICES

- Biking to and from work.
- Household or garden chores, such as mowing the lawn or raking leaves.

After a long day, small bursts of physical activity can help to keep your energy up. Some small ways to increase your activity level include:

- Park as far from work as possible, and enjoy the walk back to your vehicle at the end of the day.
- If you take the bus, get off a few stops early.
- Take the stairs instead of an elevator.
- Start some chores around the house or begin making dinner immediately when you get home from work. Try to avoid sitting down as soon as you return home.



Muscle strengthening activities that you can do at home include:

- Body weight resistance activities, such as push-ups, sit-ups or squats.
- Shovelling snow or digging in the garden.
- Using a belt or old T-shirt as a resistance band. Search online for resistance band exercise suggestions.
- Going for a walk up a hill or on uneven terrain.

Adapted from www.csep.ca/guidelines and www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/adults.html

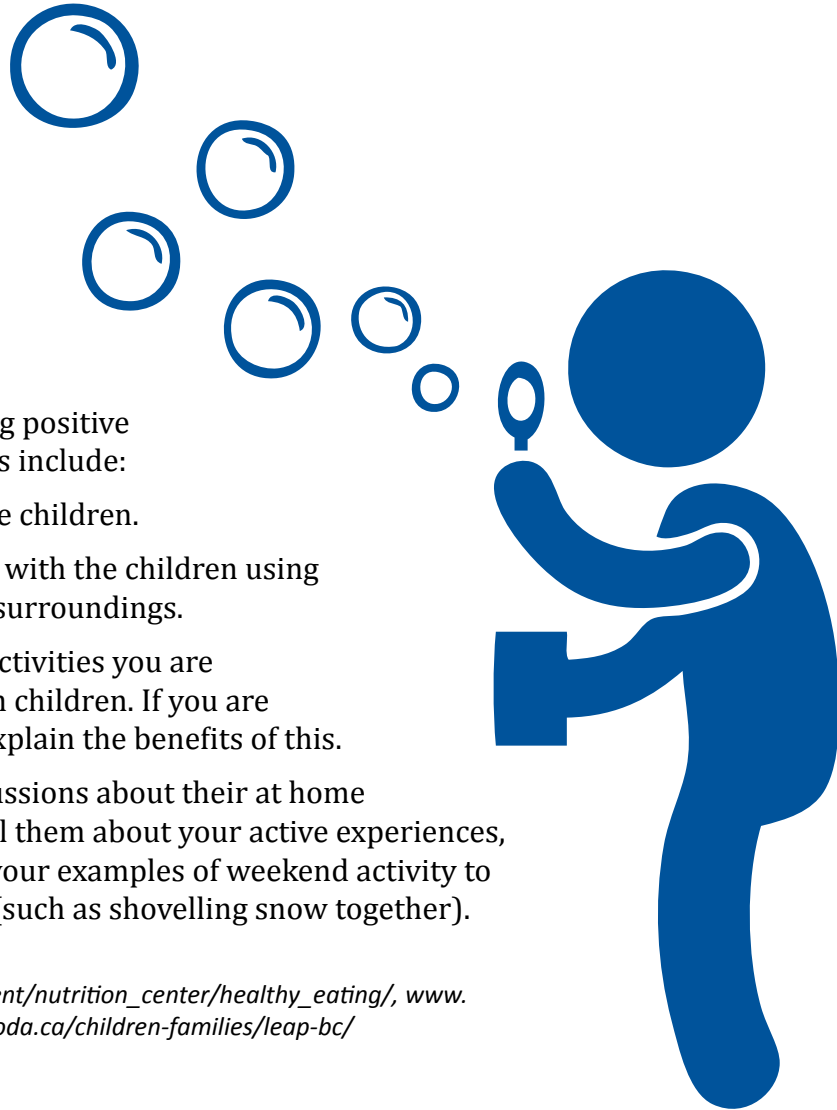
There's a lot of information out there about physical activity, mental health and stress. How can this help an ELP?

According to CSEP, increased physical activity can improve mental health and boost self esteem. The Canadian Mental Health Association recognizes that physical activity can positively impact depression, anxiety, tension, fatigue, anger and vigour.

Taking part in a favourite physical activity can help to release endorphins, which combat stress, anxiety, and fatigue. Aside from this, here are some other activities that might help to reduce stress after a busy day:

- Yoga allows for some flexibility improvements, interspersed with periods of focusing on breathing and relaxation.
- Gentle stretching can decrease stress. Focus on feeling a gentle pull in muscles you are stretching, and stop if you feel pain.
- Turn some favourite music on and dance vigorously. This burst of exercise will help to reduce stress.

Adapted from www.csep.ca/guidelines and http://www.cmha.ca/mental_health/benefits-of-good-mental-health/



Additional tips for modeling positive physical activity behaviours include:

Participate actively with the children.

- Create active games with the children using the equipment and surroundings.
- Enjoy the physical activities you are participating in with children. If you are breathing heavily, explain the benefits of this.
- Engage kids in discussions about their at home physical activity. Tell them about your active experiences, and possibly bring your examples of weekend activity to the centre to share (such as shovelling snow together).

Adapted from kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_center/healthy_eating/, www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/, and decoda.ca/children-families/leap-bc/

