



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.

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