



Sample Newsletter #1 - Physical activity intensities

How hard should I be working my body?

Dear parents,

This week, in the Healthy Beginnings 2-5 program, your child has learned about how hard they should be working their bodies when they are physically active. The key messages were the following:

- When we move our bodies, how hard we are working can be grouped into three categories: not very hard, kind of hard and really hard. These are also known as light, moderate and vigorous physical activity intensities.
- It is important to participate in all three types of physical activity, although preschoolers should try extra hard to play at moderate and vigorous intensities for as long as they can each day.
- Higher-intensity physical activity can be lots of fun and can involve all kinds of games.

A preschooler is doing **light-intensity** physical activity if:

- They are not sweating.
- Their rate of breathing has not changed.
- They are able to sing a short song, such as “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” out loud while active.
- They can maintain this intensity of activity for a long time.

Activities include:

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





A preschooler is doing **moderate-intensity** physical activity if:

- They are starting to sweat (they are feeling sticky to their clothes).
- Their breathing has increased slightly.
- They can have a conversation, but they cannot 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

A preschooler is doing **vigorous-intensity** physical activity if:

- They are sweaty.
- They are out of breath during the activity.
- They cannot say more than a few words while active without having to catch their breath.
- They cannot maintain this intensity for more than a few minutes.

Activities include:

- Fast-paced climbing and running 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



It is important to remember that parent modeling is key to promoting healthy physical activity behaviours for your child. Participate and play with your preschooler, and challenge yourself to reach moderate to high intensities.