



Handouts for Families



Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviours

Physical activity means any movement performed by the body's muscles. This forces your body to work, as it must use up energy to move. Physical activity ranges from vigorous activities, such as jogging or bicycling, to non-vigorous activities such as walking and gardening.

Physical activity improves health. Many diseases, such as coronary heart disease, hypertension, obesity and osteoporosis, can be caused or made worse by not getting enough physical activity. Being physically active reduces stress, strengthens the heart and lungs, increases energy levels, helps you maintain and achieve a healthy body weight and can improve your outlook on life.

Until recently, there were no universally accepted guidelines for physical activity in preschool-aged children. In March 2012, The Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology released the first Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines for the Early Years (aged 0–4 years). It also released the first Canadian Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for the Early Years (aged 0–4 years).

Sedentary behaviour means time spent not moving your body. When a body is not active, it is not exercising its muscles and not using very much energy.

Although it has been generally assumed that young children are very active on their own, research has shown this is not correct. Many preschool aged children spend too much time being inactive. Sedentary behaviour can negatively impact a child's physical and mental development and may be associated with increased body fat. Some examples of inactivity are light-activity play, watching television, computer gaming or playing video games. Television, computer and video games are often referred to as screen time.

Recommendations from the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology say that television viewing should be limited to one hour per day or less for preschoolers. Children two years and younger should not be exposed to any screen time.

Young children should be physically active daily as part of play, games, sports, transportation, recreation and physical education.

Adapted from the Public Health Agency of Canada and Active Healthy Kids Canada (2012)



Physical Activity Definitions

Physical activity can be defined as any bodily movement performed by the muscle that uses energy.

Sedentary behaviour/time is the time spent inactive, or not moving. This occurs when children are sitting for long periods of time and engaging in activities that are not physically active (such as watching TV, playing video games, in a stroller or high chair, etc.).

Fundamental movement skills are basic movement skills. They can be categorized into balancing, locomotion or coordination skills.

Balancing (stabilizing) skills involve maintaining balance against gravity, such as holding a front support position (using hands or arms to balance), 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.





Active Parent Role Modeling

Parental attitudes towards healthy lifestyle choices, including the physical activity choices that parents make, have a huge influence on children's physical activity behaviours. Here are some tips to help parents model positive physical activity attitudes and practices for their children.

Participate actively with your children.

Create active games with your children. Innovate with equipment and surroundings and encourage them to do as well. Invite children to create stories or characters to accompany their active play.

Incorporate physical activity into daily activities. For example, grocery shopping can be a more active task if you frame it as an adventure, where you might pretend to be animals on a safari or secret agents running from spies.



Enjoy the physical activities you are participating in with your children. If you are breathing heavily, explain the benefits of this (cardiovascular health; your heart is pumping blood around your body to your muscles. Your muscles work hard when you are active and by breathing heavy the blood is bringing oxygen around your body to your muscles and taking away waste).

If there is a physical activity you avoid or do not want to participate in, explain why.

Explain and propose physical activity as a way of playing, or as a way of recreation. While making clear the benefits of being active, don't make physical activity a negative requirement. Don't frame it as something you must do, frame it as an important, but enjoyable, activity.

Be active on your own time. Children need to see you making healthy physical activity choices. Busy parents can increase their physical activity by scheduling time to be active, taking a fitness class and doing a physical activity they enjoy such as cycling or hiking.

Fill family downtime with active games that require no equipment. Simon Says, Hide and Go Seek, or Red Light Green Light can fill boring moments while waiting for an appointment or stuck inside on a rainy day.



Expose your children to a wide variety of physical activity options. Discuss preferred activities, and let children plan how to be active as a family.

Vary the types of games and equipment used. Minimize overly competitive or games that require a great deal of skill, and instead go for high-tempo walks, play soccer or catch, or go for a bike ride.

Adapted from www.healthycanadians.gc.ca, www.webmd.com/parenting/raising-fit-kids/move/raising-active-kids?page=2 and decoda.ca/children-families/leap-bc/

Promoting Physical Activity at Home

Promoting physical activity in the home, and while with family, is extremely important in creating a positive physical activity environment for your preschooler. Many of the games outlined in this document can easily be adapted for home play, so be sure to ask your child about the games they have played at preschool. Asking your child's ELP for a copy of some of the games is also a great way to extend at-school play into the home.

A little flexibility with equipment and space is all it takes to adapt some school-based games for home. Try taking a game outside, involving siblings or neighbours, or creating stories to extend a game. If you do not have the equipment the game calls for, perhaps you can create some together, or invent a game with the equipment you do have.

Here are six active game suggestions designed to fit the space and equipment you might have available at home.





Homemade Race Track

This game can easily be modified to meet your child's interests. For example, it can be a NASCAR race, a jungle parade or a fashion runway.

Physical activity links Muscular control, motor planning, spatial awareness, co-operation, focusing, physical endurance, running skills, locomotion patterns, physical fitness

Language/literacy links Listening skills, pretending, vocabulary

Equipment Pillows
mats (from the bathroom, bedroom, door)
comforters/blankets
sleeping bags
towels

Where Outdoors (with different equipment, such as baseball bats, hockey sticks, or sand castle moulds) or indoors

Let's play:

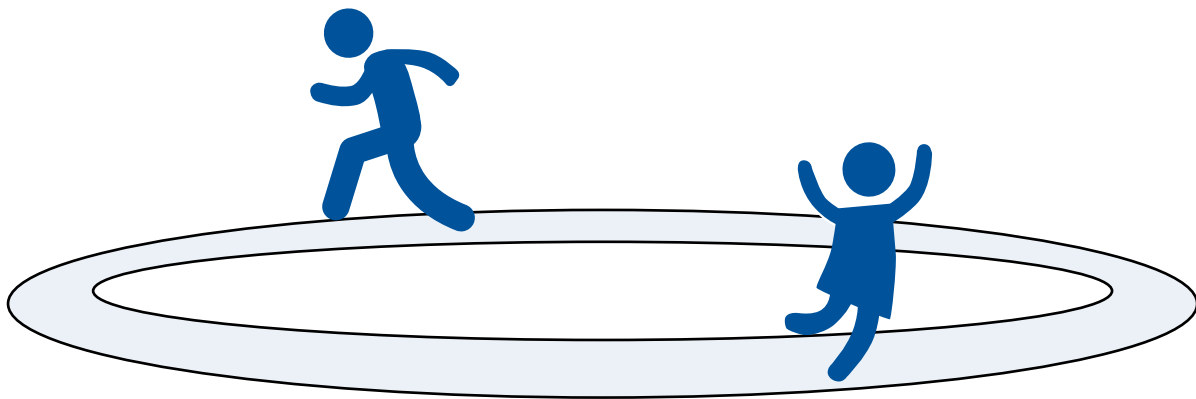
1. Set equipment on the floor to create a racetrack. Equipment should border each side of the track, so that children are moving on the floor of the home (pillows are the grass lining the race car track, or the pebbles on the sides of the dirt road).
2. Explain that children must stay on the track at all times. If you wish, touching the equipment can lead to a restart, having to do a silly task, or can simply serve as a reminder of the task for children.
3. Children run around the track doing various activities.
4. Example tasks:
Children do three laps running
Children do three laps jumping, hopping, or skipping
Crabwalk, bear walk, skipping, skating, hopping on one leg, driving a car

Adapted by Healthy Beginnings 2-5



Try this way:

- Vary the design and complexity of the track to match your home and child. Try tighter corners, snake-like designs or long straight stretches.
- Running is not required. Hopping, bear walking, crab crawling or pretending to be an airplane are all great choices.
- Having a starting or finishing point is optional. The course can be a loop and laps can be counted.
- If playing with more than one child, have them start at various points of the track.
- Play music to match the tempo or theme of the activity. With some space music, you can be asteroids in the solar system, or with some dance music, you can be fashion models.





Coloured Flashlights

This game is great for chilly or rainy days.

Physical activity links Muscular control, motor planning, spatial awareness, co-operation, focusing, physical endurance, running skills, locomotion patterns, physical fitness

Language/literacy links Listening skills, pretending, vocabulary

Equipment Pillows
mats (from the bathroom, bedroom, door)
comforters/blankets
sleeping bags
towels

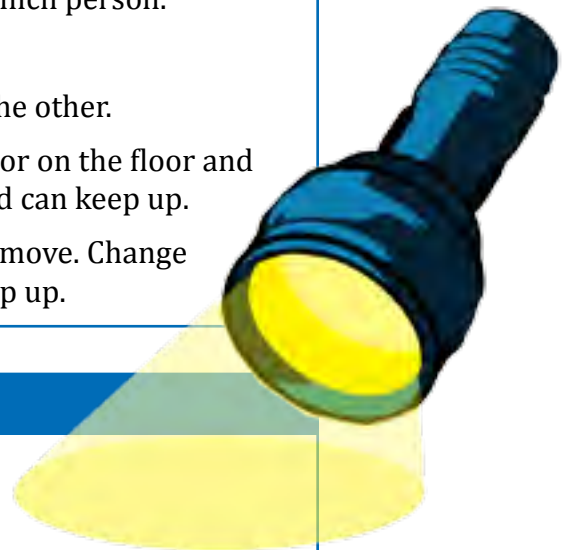
Where Outdoors (with different equipment, such as baseball bats, hockey sticks, or sand castle moulds) or indoors

Let's play:

1. Get children to shine their flashlights on the roof and walls. Encourage them to recognize which beam of light belongs to which person.
2. Various activities can follow:
3. Play flashlight chase or tag, with one light chasing the other.
4. Shine flashlight on the wall and get kids to touch it, or on the floor and get them to jump on it. Move as quickly as your child can keep up.
5. Try to keep the beams of light together as you both move. Change pace and direction to match how your child can keep up.

Try this way:

- Give each participant more than one flashlight.
- Use the walls, floor and roof.
- Challenge children to keep their flashlight pointed at the floor/walls/roof while moving through different locomotion patterns, such as bear walking or crawling.





Ring the Bell

This activity can help to motivate kids who aren't as enthusiastic about physical activity to participate as they help to design and create the equipment.

Physical activity links Hand-eye coordination, visual skills, proprioceptive skills, muscular control, goal achievement, motor planning, spatial awareness, visual tracking, overhand and underhand throwing

Language/literacy links Goal setting, predicting

Equipment Large cardboard cutout with small bells tied to strings hanging off the bottom. This cutout can be themed, shaped, and coloured by children. At least one projectile (ball, stuffed animal, scarf) per child



Where Outdoors or indoors



Let's play:

1. Create cardboard cutout. Attach bells to strings and hang from bottom.
2. Adult holds cutout appropriate distance from child.
3. Child tries to 'ring the bell' by throwing projectile to hit the bells.

Try this way:

- Vary types of projectile – teddy bears fly differently than tennis balls. Allow children to pick and discuss which works better.
- Add cutout windows with bells within the shape to increase difficulty.
- Vary the distance between the child and the bells.

Adapted by Healthy Beginnings 2-5



Touch That

Touch That is a great back-pocket game for parents, as it involves no equipment.

Physical activity links Muscular control, motor planning, spatial awareness

Language/literacy links Listening skills, co-operation, colour identification, body part knowledge

Equipment None. Best played in a room where touching the surroundings is allowed.

Where Outdoors or indoors



Let's play:

1. Parents call out "Touch something (name a colour)"
2. When this is called out, children have to locate this colour around the room (or designated outdoor space) and touch it with their finger. They will then freeze until a new colour is called.
3. Once all children have touched the colour and have frozen while touching the colour, a new colour will be announced.

Try this way:

- Increase the difficulty by getting the children to touch a certain colour with a certain body part (e.g. touch something yellow with your knee).
- The game can also be made more difficult by asking children to touch a colour that is a specific shape (e.g. "Touch an orange square").
- Different locomotion patterns can also be used, such as "Everybody crawl and touch something brown."
- Adapt this game to the seasons. For example, "touch a pumpkin" or "touch a green leaf."
- To create challenge, have your child balance in different poses between touching objects.

Adapted by Healthy Beginnings 2-5



Kite Flying

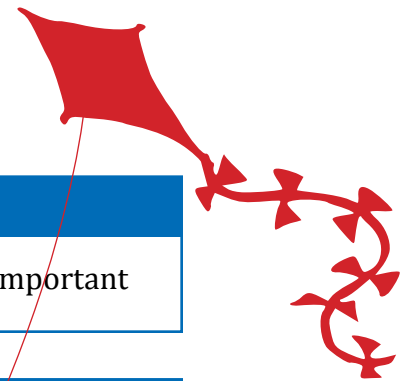
This activity incorporates creating kites, which can extend the duration and learning potential of the activity. See Lets Make Crafts for Physical Activity section of this manual for instructions on how to make kite with everyday household supplies.

Physical activity links Muscular control, motor planning, spatial awareness, kinesthetic awareness

Language/literacy links Learning about gravity and wind, trial and error, predicting

Equipment Homemade kites

Where Outdoors



1. After the kites are built, try and fly them. Running starts are important

Try this way:

- How seriously you approach kite building is up to you. Letting children freely create anything they want to try as a kite provides a valuable learning opportunity, and they will run around a lot trying to get it into the air.
- Try creating more than one kite, or modifying the kite
- Try different ways of launching the kite, such as running really fast or running up a hill

Adapted by Healthy Beginnings 2-5





Herding Sheep

This game is best played on a hardwood floor or around a kitchen table. Carpet is less effective.

Physical activity links Muscular control, motor planning, spatial awareness, oral motor skills

Language/literacy links Predicting, co-operation

Equipment Five to 10 cotton balls per participant
Paper bags (or small plastic containers)
Sticky tack or tape

Where Indoors



1. Sticky tack or tape one to three paper bags per child at the edges of the table or floor. If using plastic containers, tip them on their sides in the same places. Spread cotton balls around the table or floor.
2. Children must blow cotton balls into the paper bags (and herd their sheep into the pens). Explain that the sheep cannot be touched, only blown.
3. If playing on the floor, children can crawl on their bellies or squat. Encourage them to experiment with the best positions to blow from.

Try this way:

- Adding more or less cotton balls or paper bags changes the difficulty.
- Playing this game on the floor increases the physical activity demands.
- Adding a straw to blow through changes the complexity of the game, but should not be used if playing on the floor, as it is dangerous.

Adapted by Healthy Beginnings 2-5





Sample Newsletters

Sample Newsletter #1 - Physical activity intensities

How hard should I be working my body?

Dear (insert centre name) 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.



Chickens Bark

This game is modeled on Simon Says, and works well at home because it can be played with only one child and one adult. Try to pick active animals to act out, such as frogs hop, eagles flap their wings or horses gallop.

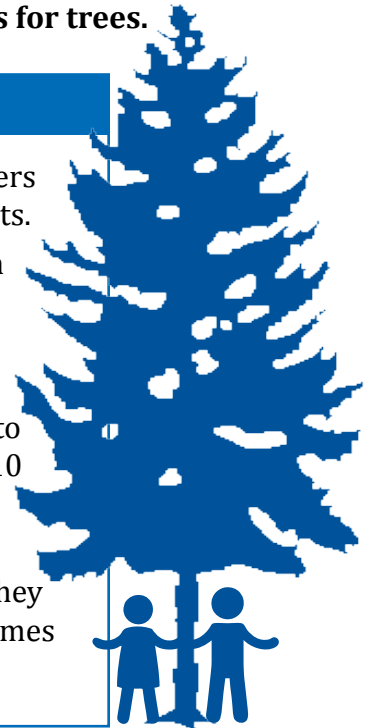
Let's play:

- Parent calls out an animal and an action such as cats meow and preschoolers will get on all fours and act like a cat meowing. Let them act it out for about 30 seconds, then call a new action.
- When the parent calls something the animal does not do, like 'turtles fly', if kids begin flapping their wings, then the parent tricked them.
- If preschoolers get tricked, they must perform a fitness task to their ability such as 10 big jumps, 10 one leg hops or 10 belly to the floor jump-ups.

Tree Huggers

This is a tag-based game, and can be played indoors or outdoors, with as little as two participants. If playing indoors, substitute chairs, windows or doors for trees.

- One parent or child will be designated as it. The rest of the players will spread out, and stand hugging a tree. The trees are safe spots.
- When the it player yells "tree huggers" all participants must run to a new tree. They can only be tagged when running from safe spot to safe spot
- If playing with two players, whoever 'wins' each round (if the tagger tags the runner or if the runner doesn't get tagged) gets to think of a fitness task for the other player to complete, such as 10 jumping jacks, 10 long distance hops or running in place for 30 seconds.
- If playing with more than two players, once a player is tagged, they must then help tag other players. The last player untagged becomes 'it' for the next round.



Adapted from www.csep.ca/CMFiles/Guidelines/CSEP-InfoSheets-adults-ENG.pdf and www.participation.com/get-informed/physical-activity-guidelines/guidelines-for-parents/guidelines-for-parents-children-5-11/



Sample Newsletter #2 - Fundamental motor skill development

Physical activity for my whole body: Learning about fundamental motor skill development

Dear (insert centre name) parents,

This week, in the Healthy Beginnings 2-5 program, your child has learned about the many different ways to be physically active. Variety in physical activity is important, as there are three basic movement skills that preschoolers should work on developing. The key messages this week were:

- Doing many different types of physical activity is important
- Running, jumping, catching, throwing, and balancing are fun and important skills for preschoolers to practice
- Learning these skills can help to set preschoolers up for trying more advanced physical activities, like soccer, tennis, hiking, and gymnastics
- Trying physical activity on different surfaces and using different equipment, such as swimming, ice or snow activities, and bike riding, is important

What are fundamental movement skills?

Fundamental movement skills are the basic patterns of moving the body. These basic skills are involved in more complicated physical activities. Preschoolers who develop these skills can feel more confident to participate in more advanced physical activity and sporting activities as they grow up.

Fundamental motor development skills fit into three broad categories. Preschoolers should do activities and build skills from all categories:

Locomotion skills

- Skills that are involved in moving the body forward, backward, side to side, or up and down
- Running, jumping, hopping, skipping

Coordination skills

- Skills that use items you can catch and throw
- Throwing, catching, kicking, batting/striking objects

Balancing skills

- Skills that involve adjustments to hold the body upright or in one position
- Balance adjustment, changing body positions





What are some activities we can do at home to promote fundamental motor development?

Many games involve a combination of locomotion, coordination and balancing skills, so chances are your preschooler is already learning some of these skills. Try to pay attention to their play, there might be a certain category of skills left out of most of your games, such as manipulative or balancing skills, and try to incorporate these.

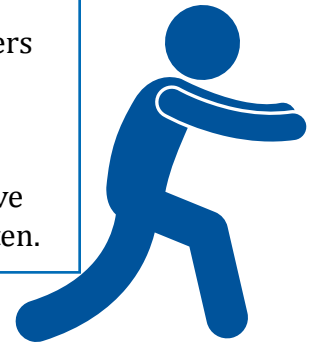
Here are some games that involve all three fundamental movement skills.

Roll Ball

Assemble all of the soft balls you have in your house, and play this game in an enclosed room. Children need to run from one side of the room to the other, without any of the rolling balls touching their feet.

Let's play:

- Designate one participant as a roller and the other as runner. Line all the balls up on one side of the room. Have the runner line up on the wall directly perpendicular to the wall with balls.
- On go, runners run from one end of the room to the other, with rollers rolling the balls into the middle of the room. Balls must stay on the ground at all times, and should be rolled gently. If a ball touches the runner, they become a roller.
- If playing with two participants, if the runner gets touched, they have to do a short fitness task such as 10 frog jumps. Rotate positions often.



Balloon-Minton

Swapping a birdie for a balloon helps to slow down the speed of badminton, while increasing the unpredictability of the projectile.

Here are some suggestions for Balloon-Minton games using hands as racquets:

- How many passes can you keep the balloon up for?
- From how far away can you pass the balloon?
- How many passes can you make while standing on one leg? While crouched? What if you have to reach up high or jump?
- Can you hit the balloon with both hands? With your feet?
- Can you pass the balloon with your belly? With your head?
- Here are some suggestions for Balloon-Minton games with racquets:
- How many touches can you keep the balloon up for by yourself? With a partner?
- How far can you hit the balloon?
- Can you hit the balloon when someone pitches it to you?
- Are there targets on the walls that you can aim your balloon at?

Adapted from www.canadiansportforlife.ca/active-start/physical-literacy-during-active-start-stage and canadiansportforlife.ca/sites/default/files/resources/FMS%20Tools%20for%20Schools.pdf



Sample Newsletter #3 - Physical activity and socialization skills

Learning about co-operation, imagination and self-esteem through physical activity

Dear (insert centre name) parents,

This week in the Healthy Beginnings 2-5 program your child has learned about co-operation, creativity and teamwork while they have been physically active. Physical activity can be an excellent way to promote positive social skills and emotional development for preschoolers. To facilitate this, the children have been working on collaborative active games this week. The key messages were:

- Physical activity can help to make your whole body healthy, including the physical, emotional and social parts. Preschoolers can learn more than just physical and fitness skills while active.
- Being active can help preschoolers feel more confident and proud of themselves, can teach co-operation skills, and can foster their imagination. Physical activity can also help to reduce stress for preschoolers .

Central non-physical skills and attributes that can be learned from physical activity participation include:

- Teamwork
- Cooperation
- Sharing
- Peer negotiation/mediation skills
- Tolerating failure
- Tolerating the unexpected
- Literacy skills
- Language skills
- Imagination/creativity
- Increased ability to focus
- Leadership Emotional regulation
- Self-motivation
- Self-expression skills
- Rule-following skills
- Managing anxiety and stress
- Managing aggression
- Sense of belonging
- Sense of achievement
- Self-confidence
- Self-esteem

Does physical activity automatically teach my preschooler these skills? What games can we play at home to facilitate positive socialization skill development?

While research on physical activity has shown that physically active children are more likely to experience the benefits and gain the skills, outlined above, this does not happen automatically. Rather, parental attitudes towards physical activity, the types of physical activity provided, and the overall physical activity environment surrounding your preschooler impact their ability to have a positive physical activity experience.



You can provide your preschooler with a positive physical activity environment by:

- Expressing your own positive attitude towards physical activity. Emphasize enjoyment, play, and creativity.
- Do not focus on competition.
- Participate with your preschooler. Praise them often.
- Focus on the processes, not outcomes, of physical activity. For example, when playing soccer, praise your preschooler for effort or increased competence with kicking skills. Congratulate them for goals, but do not emphasize this.
- If competition arises, promote positive competition. Emphasize the mutual participation of all players, as you need to co-operate to play. Allow your preschooler to negotiate cooperative requirements with their peers
- Set up games such that your child can achieve success, but do not make it so they always succeed immediately. Tolerating challenge, failure and the unexpected is important, as is eventual achievement

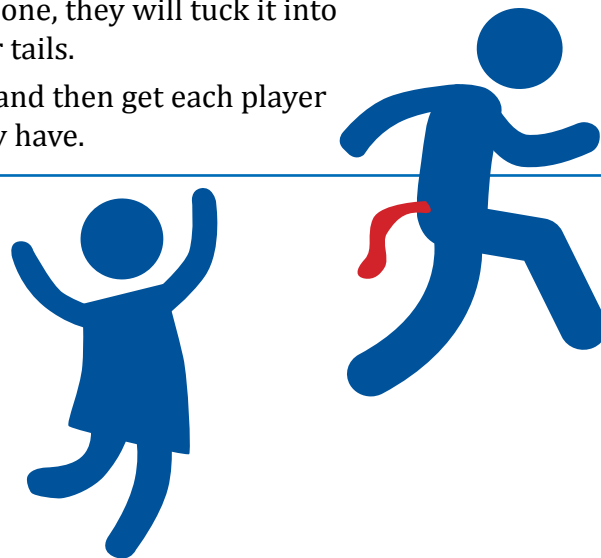
Here are two co-operative games that can be easily adjusted to match the challenge level of various participants.

Tail Tag

Use fabric scraps, mittens or socks as tails, and tuck them into the pocket or waistband of player's pants. Remind players that holding on to their tails, tying them to their pants, or hiding them are against the rules.

Let's play:

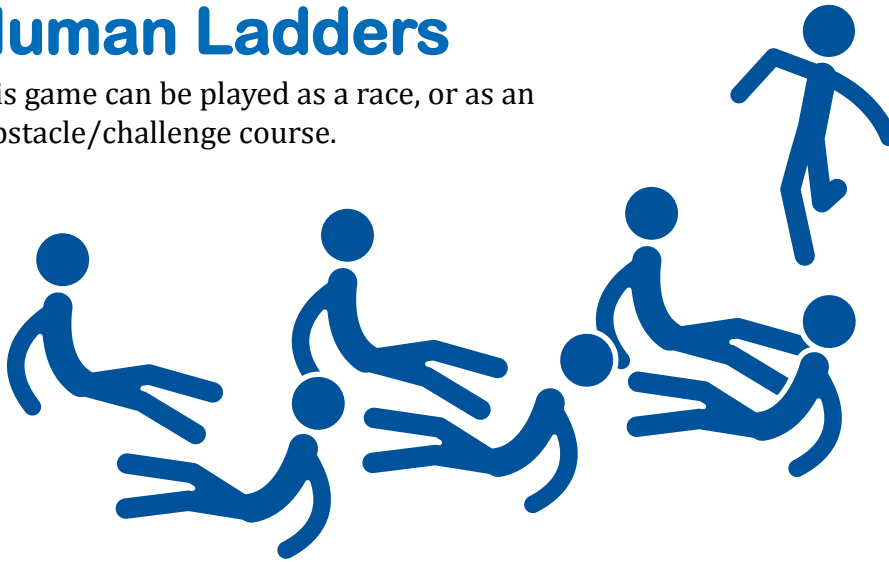
- On go all players will run around trying to snag tails from other players. Once they get one, they will tuck it into their pocket with their other tails.
- Play for about four minutes and then get each player to count how many tails they have.





Human Ladders

This game can be played as a race, or as an obstacle/challenge course.



- Everyone sits in two parallel lines, with their feet straight out in front of them, touching the feet of the person across from them. Their feet should be about shoulder width apart.
- On go the people at the end get up, walk through the feet (or hop/run), and sit down at the end.
- If someone is scared they may be stepped on, they can sit cross-legged and the other players have to run past them.

Adapted from www.dsr.wa.gov.au/benefits-of-physical-activity-for-your-children and www.canadiansportforlife.ca/active-start/physical-literacy-during-active-start-stage



Sample Newsletter #4 - Screen time

Less screen time for more fun time!

Dear (insert centre name) parents,

This week in the Healthy Beginnings 2-5 program your child has been learning about screen time. Screen time is any time that is spent in front of a TV, computer, video game, etc. The latest Canadian data indicates that children who watch more than one hours of screen time per day have double the incidence of being overweight or obese when compared to children who watch less than one hour per day.

Screen time takes the place of essential physical activity. Help minimize screen time for your child:

- Educate your preschooler and limit screen time to less than one hour per day and keep children physically active.
- Children should not be allowed to watch TV before two years of age and there should be no TV in the children's bedroom, no matter what the child's age.

Tips to reduce screen time:

Talk to your family

Explain to your kids that it's important to sit less and move more in order to be healthy. Tell them they'll also have more energy, and it will help them develop and/or gain new skills, such as riding a bike or shooting hoops, that could lead to more fun with friends. Tell them you'll do the same.

Set a good example

You need to be a good role model and limit your screen time to no more than two hours per day, too. If your kids see you following your own rules, then they'll be more likely to do the same.

Log screen time versus active time

Start tracking how much time your family spends in front of a screen, including activities such as TV and DVD watching, playing video games, and using the computer for something other than school or work. Then take a look at how much physical activity they get. That way you'll get a sense of what changes need to be made.

Make screen time, active time

When you do spend time in front of the screen, do something active. Stretch, do yoga and/or lift weights. Or, challenge the family to see who can do the most push-ups, jumping jacks or leg lifts during TV commercial breaks.



Set screen time limits

Create a house rule that limits screen time to no more than one hour daily. More importantly, **enforce** the rule.

Create Screen-free Bedrooms

Don't put a TV or computer in your child's bedroom. Children who have TVs in their room tend to watch about one and a half more hours of TV a day than those that don't. Plus, it keeps them in their room instead of spending time with the rest of the family.

Make meal time, family time

Turn off the TV during meals. Better yet, remove the TV from the eating area if you have one there. Family meals are a good time to talk to each other. Make eating together a priority and schedule family meals at least two to three times a week.

Don't use TV time as reward or punishment

Practices like this make TV seem even more important to children.

Get active instead!

Watching TV can become a habit, making it easy to forget what else is out there. Give your kids ideas and/or alternatives, such as playing outside, getting a new hobby or learning a sport. Get outside and play as a family!

Adapted from: www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/reduce-screen-time/tips-to-reduce-screen-time.htm

Here are some ideas for the whole family to take part in together rather than watching TV:

- Go on a walk or hike – pack a picnic dinner with some bottles of water and head out to explore local trails, beaches, parks, etc. This will get the whole family outdoors, spending time together and being active.
- Sign up for recreation activities in the evening, after school and work. Spend an evening or two at swimming, skating or sport lessons. Community centres often provide many programs at the same time – parents can drop children off that their class then spend some time in the gym for themselves.
- Make physical activities easy to access by setting up a badminton net, basketball hoop or soccer/hockey nets in the backyard. Having play equipment that is easily accessed increases the chances of use. Play games together as a family.
- When it is snowing, kids can head outside with parents to help shovel the snow. Shovel the snow into a big pile and use it to create a snow fort together. This will increase the whole family's cardiovascular fitness, plus you get to have fun playing and being creative together
- Be active with friends. Make plans with family friends to spend time together being active or trying something new. This builds in an obligation component to your active time because other people are depending on you as well. Go to the park together; take a family craft or cooking class. This also helps build social skills for your little ones, plus, you get some adult conversation as well!