



## 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)