



Let's Get Moving!

Introducing physical activity in the home environment for 0-5 year olds



Physical Activity for 0-5 years



It is well documented that higher levels of physical activity in childhood can lead to continued participation in later life. It is important to establish high levels of physical activity as early as possible to encourage children to stay active enough to benefit their health and to support continued interest and participation throughout adult life. Physical activity is as important to a child's education and development as numeracy and literacy.

Children can be encouraged and supported by parents / guardians / family members and each other to try a range of different physical activities. This will not only encourage children to learn to love being active but also help them achieve their daily physical activity requirements for health and wellbeing and benefit their wider development. In addition to the health benefits from participation there are secondary benefits related to improved learning and educational achievements.



Top Tip! The best place for young children to start being active is at home.

Benefits of being Physically Active

The benefits of young children being physically active go way beyond just the physical benefit.

Health

- ✓ Develop strong bones, muscles and heart
- ✓ Develop good motor skills including balance and coordination
- ✓ Helps to maintain a healthy weight
- ✓ Helps to enable a child to sleep well

Educational

- ✓ Develop important brain structures
- ✓ Helps to build self confidence
- ✓ Develop communication skills
- ✓ Helps to build attention span, concentration and alertness
- ✓ Supports the development of good social and emotional skills
- ✓ Develop problem solving and decision making

Physical Activity Guidelines



In 2011 the Chief Medical Officer released physical activity guidelines outlining the levels of activities people should be aiming to achieve. For under 5s the guidelines state:

For under 5s - not yet walking

Physical activity should be encouraged from birth, particularly through floor based play and water based activities in a safe environment.

For under 5s who are walking

Children of preschool age who are capable of walking unaided should be physically active daily for at least 180 minutes (3 hours), spread throughout the day.

Sedentary guideline

All under 5s should minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary (being restrained or sitting) for extended periods (except time spent sleeping).

What to limit/reduce



What to have more of



Top Tip! The 180 minutes doesn't have to be completed all in one go! It can be broken down into smaller bouts of activity.

Further information on the national guidelines can be found at www.lrspport.org/activelifestyles

Being Active in the Home Environment

Lots of different activities can count towards children's daily physical activity total and one of the best environments for children to be active is at home. It is important to remember that children are more likely to do physical activities if they see others doing so. You can encourage children to take part in activities by demonstrating and taking part yourself. Here are some suggestions for you to help create active environments and play sessions at home.



Top Tip! Keep giving lots of praise to boost their confidence and most importantly involve yourself in the activity.



0-3 months



Use sensory toys / objects:

- Move objects in front of a baby e.g. a rattle or noisy toy, blow bubbles

Balance and body awareness activities:

- Play peekaboo – hide your face behind hands or blanket and then show your face

Experience the outdoors:

- Take baby for a walk in the pram
- Place baby on a blanket under a tree to watch the leaves

3-6 months



Tummy Time:

- Place colourful, noise making toys in a circle and slightly out of reach to encourage reaching and moving and eventually to roll over

Singing action songs and nursery rhymes:

- Show the actions and encourage children to do these with your assistance e.g. clapping hands together, clapping or touching feet

Developing eye strength and tracking of objects:

- Demonstrate different actions and use language to describe what you are doing
- Read picture books, pointing out objects in the pictures

6-12 months



Floor Play:

- To help babies learn to move, place toys to the side of them to encourage reaching and balancing

Outdoor Play:

- Use natural materials for sensory exploration e.g. sand, soil, leaves, flowers, water

Playing with household items:

- Use a saucepan and wooden spoon to make a drum

Singing and Dancing Games:

- Play different types of music and dance with child in arms or wiggle or rock on the floor together

toddler (walking - 3 years approx)



Play with Me:

- Blow bubbles for children to chase and try to pop them with different body parts such as finger, hand, elbow and toes

Games we can play:

- Mirror Game – sit or stand opposite children for them to copy your movements e.g. hands above head
- Colour Jump – place different colour spots on the floor and get children to jump to the colour you call out. Also why not ask them to find associated coloured items in different rooms in the home e.g. can you find me a red cushion in the lounge

Move with Me:

- Catching a ball – stand facing with a small gap, ask the child to make a basket with their arms and gently throw the ball into their arms

pre-schoolers (3-5 years)



Outdoor and Adventure Activities:

- Plan a nature walk in the nearby area and let children look for and collect items such as twigs, leaves and pine cones
- Find some old pieces of material or duvet covers and build a den in the house or outside

Music, Movement & Dance:

- Put the radio on and move to the beat of the music
- Read a story and encourage children to carry out actions during the story

Everyday Activity:

- Encourage children to tidy up their toys and play equipment when they have finished. Tidying up can be seen as a good alternative to sitting still

equipment ideas



- Bubbles
- Toys that play music and make sounds
- Toys that move
- Nursery rhyme book / story books that encourage movement
- Different sized and textured balls
- Cushions / pillows / blankets
- Everyday household objects – saucepans, wooden spoons
- Natural objects – sand, water, leaves, twigs, pebbles
- Beanbags
- Outdoor play equipment e.g. slide, swing – always accompanied
- CD player and music
- Paper wands, streamers, ribbons
- Ball pool
- Skittles / hoops
- Wheeled vehicles – balance bikes, tricycles, scooters

For more ideas, view and download additional activity resource cards from www.lrsport.org/earlyyears



Top Tip! Be active with families and friends to ensure you are all moving more and sitting less.



Local Contacts

Leicester-Shire & Rutland Sport and its partners are here to help you and your family find a range of opportunities in your local area to take part in sport and physical activity at any age:

- Use the Get Active Search Engine to find local clubs, sessions, venues and events taking place near you www.lrspport.org/getactive
- Visit our Active Lifestyles pages to find local programmes and further information www.lrspport.org/activelifestyles
- Visit our dedicated Early Years pages for more information relating to the content in this leaflet www.lrspport.org/earlyyears
- For any additional enquiries, please get in touch using the contact details below.



Useful Websites

- www.lrspport.org
- www.leicestershirehealthy tots.org.uk
- www.leicestershire.gov.uk
- www.nhs.uk/start4life
- www.nhs.uk/change4life
- www.healthforkids.co.uk
- www.bhfactive.org.uk



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