

# Making Physical Activity a Part of a Child's Life

! COVID-19: How to Be Physically Active While Social Distancing

## What can I do to get – and keep – my child active?

As a parent, you can help shape your child's attitudes and behaviors regarding physical activity. Knowing the recommendations is a great place to start. Encourage your child to be physically active for 60 minutes or more each day, with activities ranging from informal, active play to organized sports. Here are some ways you can do this:



Find ways to add physical activity to your child's day with the [Move Your Way<sup>SM</sup> Activity Tool](#).

- Start early. Young children love to play and be active. Encouraging lots of safe and unstructured movement and play can help build a strong foundation for an active lifestyle.
- Set a positive example by leading an active lifestyle yourself.
- Make physical activity part of your family's daily routine by taking family walks or playing active games together.
- Give your children equipment that encourages physical activity.
- Take young people to places where they can be active, such as public parks, community baseball fields, or basketball courts.
- Be positive about the physical activities in which your child participates and encourage them to be interested in new activities.
- Make physical activity fun. Fun activities can be anything your child enjoys, either structured or non-structured. Activities can range from team or individual sports to recreational activities such as walking, running, skating, bicycling, swimming, playground activities, or free-time play.
- Instead of watching television after dinner, encourage your child to find fun activities to do on their own or with friends and family, such as walking, playing chase, or riding bikes.
- Be safe! Always provide protective equipment such as helmets, wrist pads, or knee pads for activities such as riding bicycles, or scooters, skateboarding, roller skating, rock-wall climbing, and other activities where there may be a high risk of injuries. Ensure also that activities are appropriate for the age of your child.

Get [more ideas](#) to help your child reach the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity.



## How is it possible for my school-aged child or adolescent to meet the recommended levels of physical activity?



Many physical activities fall under more than one [type of activity](#). This makes it possible for your child to do two or even three types of physical activity in one day! For example, if your daughter is on a basketball team and practices with her teammates every day, she is not only doing vigorous-intensity aerobic activity but also a bone-strengthening activity. Or, if your daughter takes gymnastics lessons, she is not only doing vigorous-intensity aerobic activity but also muscle- and bone-strengthening activities! It's easy to fit each type of activity into your child's schedule – all it takes is being familiar with the Guidelines and finding activities that your child enjoys.

School-based physical activity programs can also help children meet the recommended levels of daily physical activity. [Find out how.](#)

## What if my child has a disability?

Physical activity is important for all children. It's best to talk with a doctor before your child begins a physical activity routine. Try to get advice from a professional with experience in physical activity and disability. They can tell you more about the amounts and types of physical activity that are appropriate for your child's abilities. [Learn more](#)   [PDF-15.2MB] about special considerations for children and adolescents with disabilities.

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