

Active Solutions



Age Appropriate Activities for School-Aged Children in Child Care Settings



We all have a role to play in keeping kids active.

School-aged children, ages 5-12, need 60-90 minutes of physical activity each day. If child care facilities, families/caregivers and communities each provide 30 minutes, we are all doing our part to ensure children are getting the physical activity they need for health benefits. Examples of moderate activities are a brisk walk, a bike ride and active play.

Children who are school-aged:

- Often participate in mixed age groups
- Usually have more developed coordination
- Have developed a variety of movement skills, depending on age and ability
- Like to apply their skills in games – actual and invented
- Often require more space to participate in physical activity

School-aged children have most likely developed movement skills such as:

- Balancing, running, jumping, skipping
- Skating, sliding
- Swimming
- Cycling
- Throwing, kicking, striking
- Catching



School-aged children need the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities that are fun and suit their interests, skills and abilities. Variety will also offer the school-aged child a range of experiences and challenges, as well as health benefits.

Example of body awareness:

Invite children to try passing a balloon around with their knees, waist and neck (clockwise and counter-clockwise). Bet you can't keep a straight face through this activity!





» Children ages 5-12 should not spend more than two hours a day in front of a screen (eg. Wii, computer games, TV, or internet). Encourage and provide opportunities for children to spend time in the outdoors as much as possible.

More vigorous activities that make kids “huff and puff” include organized sports such as soccer and baseball, as well as activities such as dance, running and swimming. Children typically accumulate activity in bursts ranging from a few seconds to several minutes; therefore, any sort of active play will usually include some vigorous activity.



Things to remember:

- Provide choice – provide a variety of balls and equipment in various sizes and textures
- Set up the environment to encourage physical activity
- Encourage children to contribute their ideas (what would they like to play?)
- Plan for numerous outdoor experiences (ensure proper clothing in all seasons)
- Extend experiences by offering yoga, dance, gymnastics or bowling. Since children need variety, be creative and connect with parents or friends who can help lead new activities
- Set a good example for the children you care about by being physically active yourself
- Incorporate fun physical activities into outings, such as frisbee throwing, bushwalking or flying a kite
- Kids who are inactive need to be encouraged; talk to them and find out what interests them and see if there is something active you can do together



RESOURCES:

- For games and activities to keep children active while learning about the natural environment: www.projectwild.org/aboutus.htm
- For ideas that will help teachers get K-8 students moving in the classroom, visit www.saskatchewaninmotion.ca for a copy of the Daily Physical Activity Manual
- Visit www.sk.bluecross.ca/push2play/ for the Saskatchewan Blue Cross Push2Play free resource playbook!



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