



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN

Physical activity is an important part of staying healthy. The following information is largely adapted from the Department of Health and Human Services publication “Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans”.

The key guidelines from that publication are as follows:

- Preschool children (ages 3 through 5) should be physically active throughout the day to enhance growth and development. A reasonable target is 3 hours per day of activity.
- Children and adolescents (ages 6 through 17) should do 1 hour per day of moderate to vigorous physical activities. Activities can be categorized as follows:
 - Aerobic activity should represent most of the physical activity. Vigorous activity should be conducted at least 3 days per week
 - Muscle-strengthening activity should be part of the 60 minutes at least 3 days per week
 - Bone-strengthening activity should also be part of that 60 days, also at least 3 days per week

The following table, also adapted from the HHS publication, provides examples of the types of exercise in each category

Type of activity	Preschool Children	School-Aged Children	Adolescents
Aerobic	<p>Games such as tag or follow the leader</p> <p>Playing on a playground</p> <p>Tricycles or bicycle riding</p> <p>Walking, running, skipping, jumping, dancing</p> <p>Swimming</p> <p>Playing games that require catching, throwing and kicking</p> <p>Gymnastics or tumbling</p>	<p>Brisk walking</p> <p>Running</p> <p>Bicycle riding</p> <p>Active recreation such as hiking, riding a scooter, swimming</p> <p>Playing that require catching and throwing, such as baseball and softball</p> <p>Jumping rope</p> <p>Cross-country skiing</p> <p>Sports such as soccer, basketball, swimming, tennis</p> <p>Martial arts</p> <p>Vigorous dancing</p>	<p>Brisk walking</p> <p>Running</p> <p>Active recreation such as kayaking, hiking, swimming</p> <p>Playing that require catching and throwing, such as baseball and softball</p> <p>House and yard work, such as sweeping and pushing a lawn mower</p> <p>Some video games that require continuous movement</p> <p>Cross-country skiing</p> <p>Sports such as soccer, basketball, swimming, tennis</p> <p>Martial arts</p> <p>Vigorous dancing</p>

Type of activity	Preschool Children	School-Aged Children	Adolescents
Muscle strengthening	Games such as tug of war Climbing on playground equipment Gymnastics	Games such as tug of war Resistance exercises using body weight or resistance bands Rope or tree climbing Climbing on playground equipment Some forms of yoga	Games such as tug of war Resistance exercises using body weight, resistance bands, weight machines, hand-held weights Some forms of yoga
Bone strengthening	Hopping, skipping, jumping Jumping rope Running Gymnastics	Hopping, skipping, jumping Jumping rope Running Sports that involve jumping or rapid change in direction	Jumping rope Running Sports that involve jumping or rapid change in direction