

Physical Activity



Intent Statement

Physical activity is important to children's health and development. Our program encourages all children to participate in physical activity opportunities that are appropriate for their age, fun and offer variety.

Procedure and Practice

Recommendations are specified by age group as children of different ages have different abilities and developmental needs. Program practices are inclusive and offer access for children with disabilities to participate in physical activities with nondisabled peers.

See *attachment*: Physical Activity Guidelines for Children from Birth to Age 5

Infants

Activities are planned to support developmental milestones (self-supporting head and neck, rolling, reaching, sitting, kicking, crawling, standing and walking).

Tummy Time

Infants are provided "tummy time" (time spent lying on their stomach) at least twice a day for 15 minutes to strengthen the neck, back and shoulders. As the infant gets older, placing toys just out of reach will encourage reaching and crawling. Infants are monitored at all times during tummy time.

Outdoor Time

Infants are provided daily outdoor time, weather and air quality permitting.

- Infants can go outside when temperatures are above 15° F and below 90° F
- Outdoor time should be limited to 20 to 30 minutes when temperatures are between 16° and 32° F
- Outdoor time is in safe settings supervised by adults

Confining Equipment

To support development, confining equipment (e.g., swings, bouncy chairs, exercise saucers, car seats and strollers) is limited to less than 30 minutes while infants are awake. Exercise saucers should be locked or immobilized to prevent side to side rotation that has been known to cause accidental oblique distal femoral metaphyseal fracture.

Children (toddlers, preschoolers, school-age children)

Toddlers (ages 1 to 2) are provided with at least 30 minutes of structured activity and at least 60 minutes and up to several hours of unstructured physical activity daily.

Preschoolers (ages 3 to 5) are provided with at least 60 minutes of structured activity and at least 60 and minutes up to several hours of unstructured physical activity daily.

Children are not sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time except when sleeping.

School-age children (ages 6 and older) are provided with at least 60 minutes of daily physical activity that includes aerobic and age-appropriate muscle and bone strengthening activities.

Outdoor Time

All children are provided with outdoor time at least twice a day, weather and air quality permitting.

- Children can go outside with temperatures are above 15° F and below 90° F
- Children should be dressed in appropriate clothing for the weather
- Outdoor time should be limited to 20 to 30 minutes when temperatures are between 16° and 32° F
- Outdoor time is in safe settings supervised by adults

Staff members lead and participate in active play during outdoor time and other times devoted to physical activity.

Structured Physical Activity

Structured physical activity is organized and planned. It involves children in specific activities in which they are expected to achieve certain results.

Unstructured Physical Activity

This type of physical activity involves free choice on the part of children. Child care providers should interact naturally and informally with children by offering guidance and facilitating play.

Screen Time

Eliminate screen time for children younger than 2 years old. Limit screen time to less than one hour per day for children ages 2 and older. Ensure that screen time is used only for educational activities or programs that actively engage child movement. Require parental permission for any screen time.

Note:

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- The daily recommended amount of structured physical activity does not need to be provided all at once. Children can accumulate shorter periods of activity (e.g., 10 minutes) throughout the day to equal the recommended amount
 - Staff members do not restrict active play time as a consequence for misbehavior or use physical activity as punishment (e.g., running laps, doing push-ups)
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Applicable

This policy applies to all staff, substitute staff, parents and volunteers in the child care setting.

Communication

This policy will be reviewed with parents upon application and a summary copy will be included in the parent handbook. This policy will be reviewed with staff at orientation and annual staff training.

References

APHA & AAP (American Public Health Association & American Academy of Pediatrics). 1992. *Caring for our children-National health and safety performance: Guidelines for out-of-home child care programs*. Washington DC: APHA. <http://nrc.uchsc.edu>

Connecticut State Department of Education. June 2010. *Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies-Best Practices for Creating a Healthy Child Care Environment*. http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Student/NutritionEd/CCAG_ActionGuide.pdf

Femur Fracture in Infants: A Possible Accidental Etiology. *Pediatrics*. Vol. 108 No. 4 October 2001, pp. 1009-1011

The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE, 2009)
<http://www.movingandlearning.com/Resources/Articles39.htm>

Reviewed by:

Director/Owner

Board Member

CCHC/Health Professional

Staff Member

Parent/Guardian

Effective Date/Review Date

This policy is effective immediately. It will be reviewed yearly by the center director.

05-2011

Physical Activity Guidelines for Children from Birth to Age 5

Infants

1. Infants should interact with caregivers in daily physical activities that are dedicated to exploring movement and the environment.
2. Caregivers should place infants in settings that encourage and stimulate movement experiences and active play for short periods of time several times a day.
3. Infants' physical activity should promote skill development and movement.
4. Infants should be placed in an environment that meets or exceeds recommended safety standards for performing large-muscle activities.
5. Those in charge of infants' well-being are responsible for understanding the importance of physical activity and should promote movement skills by providing opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity.

Toddlers

1. Toddlers should engage in a total of at least 30 minutes of structured physical activity each day.
2. Toddlers should engage in at least 60 minutes (and up to several hours) per day of unstructured physical activity and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.
3. Toddlers should be given ample opportunities to develop movement skills that will serve as building blocks for future motor skillfulness and physical activity.
4. Toddlers should have access to indoor and outdoor areas that meet recommended safety standards for performing large-muscle activities.
5. Those in charge of toddlers' well-being are responsible for understanding the importance of physical activity and should promote movement skills by providing opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity and movement experiences.

Preschoolers

1. Preschoolers should accumulate at least 60 minutes of structured physical activity each day.
2. Preschoolers should engage in at least 60 minutes (and up to several hours) of unstructured physical activity each day, and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.
3. Preschoolers should be encouraged to develop competence in fundamental motor skills that will serve as the building block for future motor skillfulness and physical activity.
4. Preschoolers should have access to indoor and outdoor areas that meet recommended safety standards for performing large-muscle activities.
5. Caregivers and parents in charge of preschoolers' health and well-being are responsible for understanding the importance of physical activity and for promoting movement skills by providing opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity.