

Active Solutions



Benefits of Physical Activity

Daily physical activity is a great way to have fun with the children you care about ...it's good for you too!

Physical activity involves moving the body and includes a wide range of activities such as active play, dance, exercise and sports. When children are physically active their heart rate and breathing increases which benefits children socially and emotionally, physically, intellectually and spiritually.

Only 13% of children in Saskatchewan are physically active enough for health benefits.

Parents, caregivers and educators must work together to ensure the children they care about are physically active in order to reap the benefits.



Physical benefits:

- Builds healthy, strong muscles
- Improves cardio-respiratory fitness
- Maintains healthy body weight



Intellectual benefits:

- Improves the power of knowing, reasoning, understanding and wellbeing
- Improves competence in thinking, language and learning
- Enhances creativity and imagination

Social and emotional benefits:

- Provides opportunities for children to learn different aspects of the social world such as cooperation and sharing
- Develops positive lifelong attitudes toward physical activity
- Encourages healthy family engagement
- Reduces anxiety and stress
- Increases self esteem
- Provides opportunities for developing friendships

Ensure the children you care about reap the benefits of physical activity:

- Access available resources to incorporate physical activity into the experiences you provide to children.
- Participate in workshops that help to foster physically active approaches to learn and play.
- Offer a minimum of 90 minutes of daily active play time, indoors and outdoors, unstructured and structured.
- Look for ways to create spaces that allow children to be more physically active. Include access to a playground, an outdoor space with toys and equipment, and an indoor space that is open to movement. Include developmentally and age appropriate toys, equipment and dance music.
- Encourage parents to be active with their children. Visit www.Jumpin.ca for more ideas for encouraging parents to be active with their children. Or download these tip sheets: www.beststart.org/haveaballtogether/resources/resource_cards.pdf
- Be sure the environment is safe when physical activity is taking place indoors or out.
- Make physical activity part of the daily routine, just like lunch and nap time.



The importance of being a role model for physical activity:

- If children see adult role models being active and enjoying active play, they will begin to develop a positive association with physical activity.
- Research indicates that a caregivers own physical activity levels, enjoyment of physical activity, and beliefs about their ability to facilitate physical activity plays an important role in modeling and reinforcing children's physical activity levels.

Spiritual benefits:

- Enhances sense of accomplishment
- Encourages feelings of success
- Observes beauty in what they see, hear, and do in their surroundings

SUPPORTING LINKS:

- Active Start – Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to Five Years of Age: www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200605/NASPEGuidelinesBTJ.pdf
- Active Healthy Kids Canada: www.activehealthykids.ca
- Saskatchewan In Motion: www.saskatchewaninmotion.ca

