



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BEGINS AT HOME

FACTSHEET

The benefits of being active go beyond physical benefits. For example, walking and riding with your child helps develop street sense; and letting your child play team sports encourages them to form friendships and understand boundaries and rules.



Playing active games regularly with your child also allows you to set a good example and shows that being active is part of your family's daily routine.

Being active allows your child to grow and develop:

- social skills including learning how to interact with others
- language and communication skills
- movement skills
- good muscles, bones and heart
- balance and flexibility
- good posture
- self-esteem and self-confidence.

Others are about moving the body:

- balancing
- line or beam walking
- running
- hopping and jumping
- skipping.

Learning movement skills at an early age helps your child to be confident and capable of joining in games, sports and activities. Movement skills are an essential part of your child's growth and development, and help improve fitness, strength and self-esteem. The better your child's movement skills the more confidence they have.

What are movement skills?

Movement skills are the building blocks your child needs to participate in physical activities.

There are basic movement skills. Some are about controlling objects such as:

- catching
- throwing
- kicking
- batting.

Did you know?

It is impossible to play sport and be involved in physical activity without using at least one of the basic movement skills.

Did you know?

Children who have good movement skills are more likely to be involved in physical activities as teenagers and adults – and are more likely to be a healthy weight.

Did you know?

Teaching movement skills from a young age will benefit your child for a lifetime!

Every sport involves at least one, if not many, of these movement skills. For example:

- netball and basketball involve running, catching, throwing and jumping
- football involves catching, kicking, jumping, throwing and bouncing
- cricket involves running, batting, throwing and catching
- soccer involves running, kicking and rolling... the list goes on!

The pre-school years are the best time to start helping your child develop and practise their movement skills. This is the time when your child's movement patterns can be influenced and they enjoy being active and moving about. The skills encouraged in these early years will support your child throughout their life.

Each movement skill is divided into a number of steps. To help make learning new movement skills fun and enjoyable, try these 10 ideas.

10 IDEAS

Putting it into practice!

Think of being active as an opportunity to improve your child's health and have fun together.

1

Try lots of different activities in different places – in the garden, at the park and on the beach.

2

Vary the length of each session as children's attention spans vary.

6

Have fun! Keep it lighthearted and be patient.

5

Encourage development in all skills not just those your child is good at.

4

Encourage your child to swap sides of their body (for example, hop on their left foot and then swap and hop on their right foot).

3

Start with simple skills like rolling a ball on the ground before going on to catching.

7

Praise and encourage your child's efforts.

8

Include activities you know your child can do – success is a great reward.

9

Include activities that your child suggests.

10

Encourage development in all skills not just those your child is good at.