



**Eating right
and being active...
It's as easy as**



54321 Go! ★

1

hour or more of physical activity a day

Why should my child participate in physical activity?

Physical activity promotes kids physical, mental, and emotional health. Some of the benefits of regular physical activity include:

- Better sleep
- Weight control
- Self-confidence
- Sense of accomplishment
- Healthy bones and muscles
- Fewer feelings of depression
- Prevention of chronic diseases

Toys to promote physical activity

Having the right tools-I mean, toys-can help your child be more active in daily life. If you don't already have these, consider them as great birthday or holiday gifts.

- Jump rope
- Frisbee
- Beanbags
- Hula hoop
- Sidewalk chalk (for making impromptu hopscotch or four-square patterns)
- Balls-soft or bouncy balls for young children, sports balls balls for older children
- Tricycle or bike (depending on child's age)

House/Yard tasks = Activity

Some routine household and yard maintenance tasks can be a great source of physical activity-and oftentimes kids are very excited to get to help out. Get your kids some child-sized tools, turn on some music, and dance around.

- Raking leaves
- Washing the car
- Working in the garden
- Vacuuming
- Sweeping
- Dusting
- Walking the dog

Do you remember these games from your childhood?

- Capture the flag
- Duck, duck, goose (or "Drop the hankie")
- Four-square
- Hopscotch
- Jump rope rhymes
- Kick the can
- Kickball
- London bridge
- Marco Polo
- Mother May I
- Red light, green light
- Red Rover
- Tag variations (freeze, shadow, etc.)

Teach your kids a favorite from your childhood - or find a book for even more physically active games to play together.



Indoor activities for bad weather

When it starts getting cold and snowy or rainy, we start spending more time indoors-often in sedentary pursuits. Here a few indoor activities you can participate in when the weather gets bad.

- Make an indoor obstacle course for kids to go over, under, and through.
- Toss or roll a soft ball about.
- Blow up a balloon and have fun trying to keep it off the ground.
- Put on some music and dance around.
- Have jumping jack, push-up, or sit-up contests during commercial breaks.
- Go to an indoor recreation center and shoot some hoops or play ping-pong.



Be safe while you're being active

Keep your kids safe from the sun by encouraging them to wear sunscreen when playing outside. Bicyclists, rollerbladers, and skateboarders need to take additional precautions. Kids should wear an approved helmet every time they get on the bike or board; and skaters need elbow- and knee-pads, and wrist guards. Don't let an unexpected injury keep your kid out of the game.

SPORTS FOR KIDS: According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, most children aren't ready for organized sports until at least age 6 and contact sports like football should be avoided until at least age 8.

Activities for your pre-school child

Your preschooler needs a chance for unstructured play, building skills in a low stress environment, and opportunities for cooperative play. The following activities are some a 2-5 year old child might enjoy:

- Playing catch with beanbags or scarves
- Rolling, bouncing, kicking, or tossing a ball
- Running, hopping, galloping, and skipping
- Walking forward, backward, and sideways
- Riding a tricycle or pedaling a bike
- Walking a low balance beam
- Pretend activities like pretending to be different kinds of animals
- Cooperative games like Ring around the Rosie, London Bridge, or Follow the Leader
- Simple tumbling or gymnastics

Activities for your school-age child

School-aged children have developed some skills, but they're still in the "fun and games" phase. Some activities school-aged children might enjoy include:

- Wheeled activities like bicycle riding, scooter riding, rollerblading, and skateboarding
- Water activities like swimming and diving
- Learning sports skills like shooting hoops, catch with a softball or football, basic soccer, and running foot races
- Martial arts or gymnastics
- Walking to school makes sure your child is getting the recommended daily amount of physical activity incorporated into their day. Check out the safe routes Nebraska website at www.saferoutesne.com/ for more information.
- Find an activity that is fun for your child and Be Active as a Family!



Teach a Kid
to Fish

Creating community solutions for children's health