

Tips and advice for encouraging young children to keep active

- Expose children to a variety of physical activities. You want to support children in finding joy in being active so letting them experience a variety of activities will help them find what they like (and dislike). To help children lead physically active lifestyles, they need to understand what barriers they may face so that they can work to overcome these. Children may not like the idea of a walk but adding in a bike, scooter, roller skates changes it all. For the days when no one wants to head outdoors try inventing games to keep the children active.
- Check out your local area. There may be organised activities or just simple nature walks. To make nature walks more interesting, you can make it a scavenger hunt using object/nature that you will come across. For example, certain animals or items that are a certain colour/size. Going on walks with children also allow them that social exposure and they may be able to open-up to you about how they are feeling.
- Make wellbeing part of your daily routine. This does not always have to be physical activities, but also time to be social, reflect, relax. Schedule it the same as any other classwork you have or find time at the beginning / end of the day.
- Get outside daily, regardless of the weather. That old saying – there is no such thing as bad weather, only poor clothing. If children are cooped up indoors trying to learn at home and parents are also trying to work at home, it's even more important that we get outside every day. Just 30 minutes is enough to re-focus.
- Remember that simply moving more and sitting less is a positive so just incorporating more movement into their everyday routine will be beneficial.
- Invent fun and easy games (more ideas below) such as setting up targets and throwing balled up socks e.g. plates around the room with scores on them (more points for more difficult throws). This means they can use their number skills to keep score.
- Set up ten pin bowls with household items like kitchen roll tubes and roll soft sponge balls.
- Tennis tournaments with 2 racquets/bats and balloons (move breakables)
- Fun and cheap accessories such as juggling balls, these are simple but require determination to master – start with 2 balls and build to 3.
- Turn your hallway into a catwalk and ask your children to parade their favourite outfits up and down the hall.
- Create a mini disco and encourage dancing around the room.
- Making dens can be a fun way to keep moving and to encourage creativity.

Article information credit -

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