

## Physical Activity Prescription for Children, (Ages 6-11)

Physical activity is important for children’s growth and good health. It helps them develop a healthy heart, lungs, and immune system to fight off illness, as well as strong bones and muscles, and balance and coordination. Physical activity also helps relieve stress and provides an opportunity to have fun.

If kids are not physically active, as adults they may lack physical endurance, strength, coordination and the ability to do physical tasks. These problems can increase the risk of chronic illnesses and lower self-esteem.

### Types of Activities

To help be healthy and fit, it is important to regularly do three different types of activities: aerobic; strengthening; and balance and coordination. Each type of activity provides particular benefits, but it is important to do all three types.

Not doing all three types is like trying to run a car without an engine. Just by keeping active, kids also will improve their flexibility.

- | <b>Aerobic</b>  | <b>Strengthening</b>  | <b>Balance &amp; Coordination</b>   |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotes endurance and heart health</li> <li>• Improves cardiovascular fitness</li> <li>• Helps control weight</li> <li>• Lowers blood pressure and cholesterol</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthens bones and muscle</li> <li>• Promoted stability for movement</li> <li>• Reduces risk of injury</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps to move around more efficiently</li> <li>• Improves awareness of body</li> <li>• Promotes self-confidence</li> </ul> |

\*For examples of activities within each type, see the other side of this sheet.

### Amount of Physical Activity

Target goal: One hour, six to seven days a week.

- Avoid sitting for more than two hours without getting up and moving around.
- Begin with goals that are easy to achieve and boost confidence with the success. For example, if your teen is active for 30 minutes a day now, each week increase activity by 10 minutes.

### Tips for Making Physical Activity Fun

To help young children enjoy being physically active and make it a lifetime habit, let them choose the activity. It may take them time to find what they like, but they will be more likely to make it a priority in their life for years to come. There are many choices to try and they will

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discover activities that are fun for them. Follow these tips to help keep your child motivated to move:

- Make sure the activity is age appropriate
- Involve the whole family
- Incorporate music
- Take a class or join a team
- Keep a variety of equipment on hand such as bikes and balls
- Encourage activities to do alone or with a friend

### Examples of Physical Activities for Youth (Ages 6-11 years)

<p><b>Aerobic</b> At Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dancing</li> <li>• Jumping jacks</li> <li>• Walking up and down stairs</li> <li>• Tennis, bowling and other sports video games such as Nintendo Wii</li> </ul>	<p><b>Aerobic</b> Outside of Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swimming, playing in the water</li> <li>• Playing sand tag on park equipment</li> <li>• Playing soccer</li> <li>• Skiing</li> <li>• Scooters</li> <li>• Obstacle courses for bikes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strengthening</b> At Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yoga</li> <li>• Pull ups</li> <li>• Carrying grocery bags in from the car</li> <li>• Pulling the garbage cans out to the curb for pickup</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strengthening</b> Outside of Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crossing monkey bars at the playground</li> <li>• Biking</li> <li>• Shooting baskets</li> <li>• Playing catch</li> <li>• Trampoline</li> </ul>
<p><b>Balance and Coordination</b> At Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crab walk</li> <li>• Standing on one leg</li> <li>• Trampoline</li> <li>• Pogo stick</li> <li>• Hula hoop</li> <li>• Dance video games such as Dance Dance Revolution</li> <li>• Hopscotch</li> </ul>	<p><b>Balance and Coordination</b> Outside of Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skateboarding</li> <li>• In-line skating</li> <li>• Ice skating</li> <li>• Jump rope games and tricks</li> </ul>

- Moderate intensity: Allows you to talk but not sing
- Vigorous intensity: Allows you to say only a few words without catching your breath.
- Note: Some activities can be classified as more than one type of activity.