

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

For Children 6 to 12 Years Old

Children aged 6 to 12 years old gain a lifetime of better health by being physically active. They need to do **aerobic, muscle-strengthening, and bone-strengthening** physical activities *every week*. Help children choose activities that they like and that are right for their age. Have them try lots of different activities. The following are the *minimum suggested guidelines* for the amount of each type of activity children should get each week.

Aerobic Activities (Exercise)

Children should do at least 1 hour (60 minutes) or more of **moderate to vigorous aerobic** physical activity **every day**.

Make sure that at least 3 days per week they do **vigorous-intensity** activity during their daily 60 minutes of activity.

- ◆ Aerobic activities like brisk walking, running, bicycling, and swimming make children breathe harder and their hearts beat faster.
- ◆ Children can add up their minutes throughout the day to reach the goal of one hour each day (for example, a 15 minute walk to school in the morning, 30 minutes play at recess, and 15 minutes of bike riding after school).



Muscle– and Bone- Strengthening Activities



At least 3 days per week, children need to do **muscle– AND bone-strengthening** exercises as part of their 60 or more minutes of daily physical activity.

- ◆ Muscle-strengthening activities make muscles do more work than usual during daily life, so muscles grow stronger.
- ◆ They can be part of playtime like when children swing on monkey bars, climb trees, or play tug-of-war.
- ◆ They can also be structured, like when doing sit-ups or working with resistance bands.
- ◆ Bone-strengthening activities put a force on bones when feet impact the ground. They help bones grow more and become stronger.
- ◆ Examples are running, gymnastics, jumping rope, basketball and hopscotch.

Other examples of physical activities

Any amount of activity, no matter how brief, counts for children:

Moderate-intensity aerobic activity

- ◆ Brisk walking
- ◆ Bicycle riding
- ◆ Hiking, skateboarding or rollerblading
- ◆ Baseball, softball, or volleyball
- ◆ Using a manual wheelchair



Vigorous-intensity aerobic activity

- ◆ Running and chasing like when playing tag
- ◆ Jumping rope
- ◆ Martial arts like karate or kung fu
- ◆ Running
- ◆ Basketball, field hockey, and soccer
- ◆ Vigorous Dancing
- ◆ Biking up hills



Muscle-strengthening

- ◆ Games such as tug-of-war
- ◆ Push-ups and pull-ups
- ◆ Rope or tree climbing
- ◆ Sit-ups
- ◆ Climbing or swinging on playground equipment/bars
- ◆ Resistance exercises using bodyweight or resistance

Bone-strengthening

- ◆ Games like hopscotch
- ◆ Hopping, skipping, jumping
- ◆ Jumping rope
- ◆ Running
- ◆ Sports like gymnastics, basketball, volleyball and tennis.