



# RESOURCE MANUAL

Birth to Five years



**MAKE  
HEALTHY  
NORMAL**



## Acknowledgements

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In developing this manual, every effort has been made to acknowledge the original sources of information and to seek permission to reproduce published work.

## Disclaimer

Photographs used in this manual have a signed permission from each child's parent or carer. Please note that the *Munch & Move* program supports the wearing of appropriate hats for sun protection, however in some photographs the child is either in the shade, under a protective outdoor roof or the child's hat has been temporarily removed so that his/her face can be seen.

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## Monitor - Limiting screen time recreation

### What is screen time and why limit it?

Screen time is a type of sedentary behaviour that involves a person using a computer, playing electronic games or watching television (broadcast, DVDs or videos) for recreation - particularly when they are not doing anything that is physically active, eg dancing.

Screen time use can play a role in children's development, however it involves time spent sitting still and can displace time available for children to be physically active. Most children will have more than enough exposure to screen time at home, so screen time should be limited within the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) setting.

Additionally, children watching commercial television are exposed to food advertising. Much of this is for energy-dense, nutrient poor products with branding that is attractive to children. Children recall, enjoy and engage with this branding and it has been found to impact on their food preferences, the purchasing habits of parents and ultimately their consumption<sup>19</sup>. Studies have shown that children under eight years of age have difficulty in distinguishing between programs and advertisements<sup>20</sup>.

### National recommendations for screen time

The *Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (birth to 5 years): An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep*<sup>13</sup> address limiting the time children spend being sedentary through screen time.

Over a 24-Hour period the following hours of screen time are recommended for young children:

- **Infants (aged < 1 year)** - screen time is not recommended. When sedentary, engaging in pursuits such as reading, singing, puzzles and storytelling with a caregiver is encouraged.
- **Toddlers (aged 1-2 years)** - for those younger than 2 years, sedentary screen time is not recommended. For those aged 2 years, sedentary screen time should be no more than 1 hour; less is better. When sedentary, engaging in pursuits such as reading, singing, puzzles and storytelling with a caregiver is encouraged.
- **Pre-schoolers (aged 3-5 years)** - sedentary screen time should be no more than 1 hour; less is better. When sedentary, engaging in pursuits such as reading, singing, puzzles and storytelling with a caregiver is encouraged.

Tip: Getting the right amount of sleep, and replacing time spent sitting with more energetic play, can provide greater health benefits.



## The facts

Sedentary screen time is not recommended for babies and toddlers less than two years of age because it:

- reduces the time for active play
- reduces time for social contact with others
- reduces the opportunities for language development
- can impact on the development of the full range of eye movement and the length of time they can remain focused.

Screen-based activities for children less than two years of age have not been shown to lead to any health, intellectual or language improvements<sup>7</sup>.

Toddlers and preschool aged children who spend more than two hours each day engaged in screen time are more likely to:

- have unhealthy eating habits
- snack on food high in sugar, salt or saturated fat while watching television.
- be less physically active
- have poorer social skills
- have slower development of language skills and short-term memory
- have sub-optimal muscle and bone growth.

Behaviours associated with screen time during childhood have been shown to track into adulthood to leading an increased risk of overweight and obesity<sup>21</sup>.

## Sedentary behaviour

Sedentary behaviour is time spent engaged in physically inactive tasks that do not require much energy.

The *Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (birth to 5 years): An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep*<sup>13</sup> also specifically address limiting children's sedentary behaviour. The guidelines state:

*"Infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers should not be restrained for more than 1 hour at a time (eg in a stroller or car seat) or sit for extended periods."*

Sedentary behaviour can be grouped as either 'productive' or 'non-productive'<sup>7</sup>.

Non-productive sedentary behaviour:

- Watching television and DVDs for leisure.
- Playing screen games such as hand-held, video or computer games.
- Being restrained for long periods of time, such as in a car seat, high chair or stroller.



Productive sedentary behaviour:

- Reading, listening to stories and looking at books.
- Quiet play, such as art and craft activities, drawing and puzzles.
- Sleeping.

Children do need quiet 'down time' to balance out the times of physical activity. However, ECEC services need to consider the type of 'down time' that is actually being offered to children. Is it mainly 'productive sedentary behaviour' that is being planned for in your ECEC services or 'non-productive'?

Educators also need to be aware of how much sedentary behaviour children are engaged in at any one time, as the guideline states no more than one hour of sedentary behaviour (with the exception of sleeping).

## Key Message - Turn off the screen and get active

### How ECEC services can support this key message

- Integrate the 'turn off the screen and get active' key message within the everyday curriculum.
- Use *Monitor* learning experiences with preschool aged children.
- Have a clear policy on limiting screen time recreation within the ECEC service.
- Ensure that the program has minimal prolonged periods of inactivity and sitting time.
- On wet days, encourage *Move* experiences rather than screen activities.
- Only select screen time experiences that encourage children to move around and be active.
- Encourage children to stretch or be active after screen time.
- Designate certain days of the week as 'screen-free' days.
- Do not use screen time as a reward.
- Promote 'productive' experiences for 'down time' rather than 'non-productive' screen-based activities.
- Role model enjoyment of non-screen based activities.
- Cover the television to make sure it is not the centre of attention in the ECEC service.
- Turn off the television when children are engaged in other experiences, or are transitioning between experiences.
- Give children options of other interactive experiences if the television is on.
- Distribute the related *Munch & Move* fact sheet to families.
- Encourage families to limit screen time at home. Share information with families about:
  - the national guidelines
  - related research
  - how to limit screen time at home and encourage more physical activity
  - choice of screen activities (eg educational and those that promote movement)
  - 'productive' sedentary behaviour experiences for 'down time'.





## **Monitor learning experiences (suitable for preschool aged children)**

ECEC services can conduct screen learning experiences to help children learn how to use screen time responsibly. Most preschool aged children are developmentally ready for these learning experiences which will help them understand why it is important to turn off the television or computer and get active. These learning experiences can also help the children develop their ability to be a 'critical' rather than 'passive' consumer of media.

The learning experiences follow a three step process:

- 1. Introduce the concepts through a related experience.** Examples include:
  - Develop social stories and read books that reinforce the concept of 'turn off the screen and get active'.
  - Arrange for guest speakers who promote physical activity, (eg from sports clubs or dance studios) to visit the ECEC service to demonstrate and get the children involved in physical activity.
  - Scenarios that involve screen time (See page 157 for example scenarios).
  - Have a 'screen-free' week at the ECEC service. Staff can model this at home and share with the children what they did instead of watching television.
- 2. Explore these concepts through discussion.** Ask questions and explain key points (using child-friendly terms). Examples include:
  - *'What are your favourite television shows, computer games or DVDs?' 'Who are your favourite characters – do they have lots of energy?'* Discuss how they must do healthy things everyday like move and play, eat healthy foods, drink plenty of water and get enough sleep.
  - *'When do you watch television or DVDs and play computer games?'* (eg before or after attending the ECEC service, after breakfast time, etc.). Help children work out how much time they spend watching television or DVDs or playing computer games. Explain that these activities are called 'screen time'.
  - Discuss with children that we should only participate in no more than one hour of screen time per day (eg as long as it takes to watch a particular popular children's show on television or to watch a DVD). Explain that too much screen time means not enough time left to be physically active.
  - Explain that being active is important for all children as they grow and develop. It helps develop strong, healthy bodies that can run, jump and learn to play all sorts of fun, active games.
  - Explain that after 'screen time' there needs to be active time. Explore with children the types of indoor and outdoor experiences they can participate in instead of screen time.

- Brainstorm with children ways to decrease the amount of screen time currently occurring at the ECEC service. Some examples include using an egg timer or stop watch to monitor time on the computer or putting the television or computer 'to sleep' by covering it over with a blanket.
- 3. Record children's responses to the discussion.** For example, encourage:
- Drawing and/or using pictures from magazines - either as a whole group or individually.
  - Active dramatic play based around the ideas generated during discussion. Take photographs and put these around the ECEC service.
  - Ask children to do a pictorial diary of the physical activity they did each day for a week.
  - Display the children's responses as a poster or book for children to access later on as a reinforcing tool.



## Scenarios

Educators can provide guidance using the scenarios below that support this key message and meet the needs of the children. These can be used as discussion points. Two example scenarios include:

### Scenario 1 – Taking turns on the computer

#### Situation:

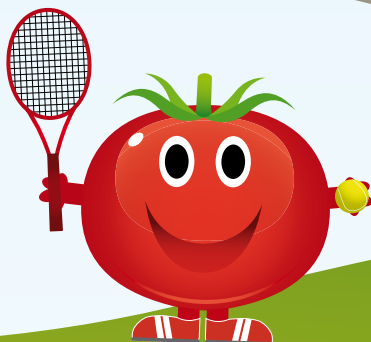
A child has been on the computer for a long time and refuses to let other children have a turn.

#### What can we do to fix it?

Ask the children questions like:

- *What happened?*
- *How would it make you feel if you were told you could not play with something?*
- *What can be done?, or What rules could we set so everyone gets their own turn?*
- *What could we use so we know our turn is finished and can time how long each person has for a turn?*

Agree on the rules and document them. Ask children to draw pictures about the rules. Put the rules on display in the computer area. Revisit as necessary.



## Scenario 2 – Watching television or playing outside

### Situation:

The children have just finished afternoon tea, it is a beautiful day and child 1 asks child 2 to play ball but there is a show child 2 would like to watch on television.

### What can we do to fix it?

- Give each child a sticker. Put a piece of paper with a picture of a television on it. Put a piece of paper with a picture of a ball on it.
- Ask the children what they would do.
  - *Who would watch the television show?* Put your sticker on the piece of paper with a television on it.
  - *Who would go outside and play?* Put your sticker on the piece of paper with a ball on it.
  - Discuss.
- Ask the children what other fun, active things they could do when they are outside. Ask them to draw these fun things. Display these and the votes for the television watching and playing ball.



## Useful resources

### 'Jack's FUNtastic Day' Resources

Jack's *FUNtastic Day* storybook and supporting materials on active play have been developed to promote physical activity and reduce screen time recreation for children aged three to six years. They are available for use in ECEC services, primary schools Early Stage 1 and by families.

### Links and websites

- **ECA Learning Hub, *Live Wires*** brings together information and resources about young children and technology. *Live Wires* helps you explore the possibilities and challenges that new digital tools and technologies bring to Australian homes and early childhood settings. *Live Wires* makes it easy to stay up-to-date and find all your early childhood technology resources in one place: <http://learninghub.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/live-wires/>
- ***Tech and Play*** reveals the final report to a study which explores play and creativity in preschool aged children's use of apps. The report is available on the *Tech and Play* website and it can be viewed individually by early childhood educators, families, media and app developers, researchers and academics or it can be downloaded in full. There is also a research summary available for each audience. It can be viewed at: [www.techandplay.org](http://www.techandplay.org)





## Making it Happen: Practices, policies and partnerships

Welcome to the *Making it Happen* section of the *Munch & Move Resource Manual*. This section of the manual aims to support the:

- day-to-day healthy eating and physical activity practices in ECEC services,
- incorporation of the *Munch & Move* key messages into the ECEC service policies, and
- partnership building with families.

### Policy development

The *Making it Happen* section includes sample policy templates on healthy eating and physical activity and screen time. This will assist your ECEC service to incorporate the *Munch & Move* key messages into policy and practice and will also help to meet broader regulatory requirements (where applicable). The sample policy templates included within this section are the:

- Breastfeeding Policy
- Nutrition Policy
- Physical Activity and Screen Time Policy

Policy documents are important tools for ECEC services and can help set a consistent standard and approach to healthy eating and physical activity throughout the ECEC service. These standards can then be communicated to staff and families.

**A word version of the sample policies can be accessed from the *Munch & Move* resource page on the NSW *Healthy Kids* website ([www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au)). This provides each ECEC service with the opportunity to easily tailor the sample policies to reflect their individual ECEC service.**

In addition to the policy framework, the *Making it Happen* section outlines a number of key issues for consideration which will complement and support the safe and effective implementation of the *Munch & Move* program into ECEC services (ie sun protection and healthy fundraising).



## Partnerships with families

Educators form close relationships with families, built on respect and trust. Having a good relationship with each family provides an opportunity for educators to discuss ways to maximise the health and well-being of their children in an open, non-judgemental and respectful way that supports families to make lifestyle changes.

ECEC services should proactively engage families in the development of nutrition and physical activity policies and practices. Families can be invited to be part of a policy working group and draft policies can be circulated and/or displayed in the ECEC service to seek feedback from families.

Communicating effectively with families about physical activity and nutrition involves recognising and appreciating their existing knowledge, skills and experience and encouraging them to share their point of view. When providing information to families, you should ensure that it is both relevant and practical and takes account of the challenges families may face.

Use a variety of methods and tools to assist you to communicate effectively with families - such as information in newsletters, day books, communication books, on notice boards or during discussion with parents when they come to pick up their child. Include information on each child's daily food intake and participation in healthy eating learning experiences, physical activity and any screen time.

A range of *Munch & Move* fact sheets have been developed to support communication to families. Some of the fact sheets are available in a selection of other languages. To view, download or order copies of the fact sheets, visit the *Munch & Move* resource page on the *NSW Healthy Kids* website.

There is also a range of *Munch & Move* healthy eating and physical activity newsletter snippets on the *NSW Healthy Kids* website that could be included each week in your ECEC service newsletter.

The FMS are also available to download from the *Munch & Move* resource page on the *NSW Healthy Kids* website – families may find this resource useful to practice and reinforce the FMS at home. In addition, the website has information for families on simple, fun ways to get young children active each day.





## Monitoring progress

The *Munch & Move* training and resources provide a wealth of ideas and strategies for ECEC services to consider implementing in order to promote healthy eating and physical activity and to limit screen time. Some ECEC services will already have some of these strategies fully or partially in place, while for other ECEC services it will be quite new and will require careful planning to implement.

To help you assess how well your ECEC service is progressing in relation to the *Munch & Move* key messages, work together with other educators at your ECEC service to complete the *Munch & Move* Reflective Practice document. You can access the Reflective Practice document from the NSW *Healthy Kids* website (go to *Munch & Move* and then click on the *Staff Development Kit* page. The Reflective Practice document is one of the files listed there).

The Reflective Practice document will help you to identify and prioritise a range of possible strategies that could be implemented at your ECEC service. To complete this planning process, ECEC services should then link the Reflective Practice document to their Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

## Healthy fundraising

Fundraising can be an enjoyable and interactive activity that brings children, families and staff together. Many ECEC services rely on fundraising activities to generate extra funds. Teaching children that fundraising activities can be healthy as well as fun is an important message to send from an early age.

Traditionally, fundraising activities such as chocolate drives and sausage sizzles have not supported healthy eating and have promoted foods high in saturated fat, added sugar and salt. By having healthy or non-food fundraising activities, your ECEC service can further support children’s learning about healthy eating, as well as reinforcing healthy habits at home.

A range of healthy and active fundraising ideas are outlined in the table below\*:

Healthy eating ideas	Physical activity ideas	‘Health neutral’ ideas
Apple slinky machine drive	Fun Runs	Trivia or quiz night
Smoothie day	Dance: Disco dance, bush dance	Aprons
Healthy BBQs	A-thons (walk, dance, obstacle course, etc)	Discount vouchers to movies
Soup days	Discount vouchers to ten-pin bowling, sports clubs, gyms, recreation centres	Personalised calendars, plates, mugs, tea towels
Healthy food hampers		Entertainment books
Boxes of fruit and vegetables		Toothbrushes
Mango drive		Sunscreen
Healthy recipe book		Raffles
		Spring bulbs or seedlings
		Family photos
		Trash and treasure sale
		Beauty treatment vouchers or hampers
		Second hand book stalls
		Jigsaw puzzles
		Service photos

\* Adapted from ‘Healthy Fundraising; Ideas to promote health while still making a profit’ booklet Cancer Council NSW. Available from:

[www.cancercouncil.com.au/html/schoolsandcommunities/communities/downloads/ResourcesCP\\_HealthyFundraising.pdf](http://www.cancercouncil.com.au/html/schoolsandcommunities/communities/downloads/ResourcesCP_HealthyFundraising.pdf)

## Sun protection

ECEC services have an important role to play in reducing young children's exposure to UV radiation and in helping to establish long-term sun-safe behaviour.

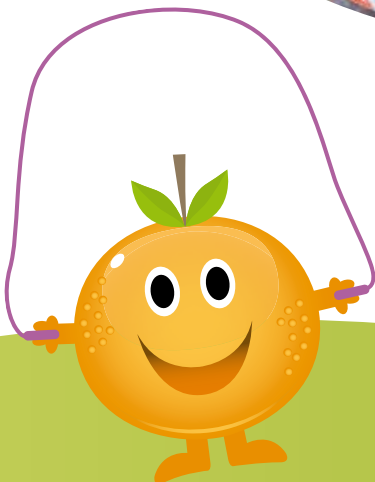
The *SunSmart Early Childhood Program* is a free program run by Cancer Council NSW. It supports ECEC services to develop and implement a sun protection policy that reduces children's exposure to UV radiation and reduces the risk of skin cancer. Being *SunSmart* sends a positive message to the community and can also help ECEC services meet National Quality Framework requirements.

For further information on the *SunSmart* program or sun safety in ECEC service contact the Cancer Council NSW on 9334 1761 or go to their website at:

[www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart](http://www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart)

## Conclusion

- Read and reflect on the information throughout the manual and explore *Munch & Move* on the NSW *Healthy Kids* website [www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au).
- Use the '*Staff Development Kit*' and the accompanying '*Reflective Practice Task*' documents to upskill colleagues in the *Munch & Move* key messages.
- Link the *Munch & Move Reflective Practice Task* documents to the ECEC service's QIP and provide the completed *Munch & Move Reflective Practice Task* documents as evidence of continuous improvement to the Assessment and Compliance Officer undertaking your assessment and ratings visit.
- Put *Munch & Move* on the staff meeting agenda – make *Munch & Move* a regular item – this will help achieve a 'whole of service' approach to embedding and sustaining the *Munch & Move* program at your ECEC service, as well as ensuring *Munch & Move* remains a priority.
- Add *Munch & Move* to staff orientation packages.
- Educate and inform families about the *Munch & Move* program, and promote the *Munch & Move* key messages to them.
- Start making changes in line with the *Munch & Move* key messages – eg, intentional FMS experiences, intentional *Munch* learning experiences, policies, etc.
- ENJOY *Munch & Move*! It's all about small steps in the right direction.



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