

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, SMALL SCREEN RECREATION AND SEDENTARY BEHAVIOUR FOR CHILDREN AGED 0-5 YEARS

Being physically active every day is important for healthy growth and development of babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers, whatever their level of ability.

What physical activity does my baby need?

- **Recommendation: Babies (Birth to 1 year)** – For health development, physical activity (particularly supervised interactive floor-based play in safe environments) should be encouraged from birth.

How much physical activity does my toddler need?

- **Recommendation: Toddlers (1 to 2 years)** – Should be physically active every day for at least three hours, spread throughout the day. This should include energetic play.

How much physical activity does my preschooler need?

- **Recommendation: Preschoolers (3 to 5 years)** – Should be physically active for at least 3 hours. This includes at least 60 minutes of energetic play.

What about screens?

TVs, DVDs and computer games may be popular with children, but usually involve sitting for long periods of time. Regardless of how active your children may be at other times, it is still important to limit screen time.

- **Recommendation: children aged less than 2 years** – Children younger than 2 years of age should not spend any time watching television or using other electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games).
- **Recommendation: children aged 2 to 5 years** – sitting and watching television and the use of other electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games) should be limited to less than one hour per day.

What about time spent sitting or being inactive?

- **Recommendation: all children birth-5 years** – Babies, toddlers and preschoolers should not be sedentary, restrained, or kept inactive, for more than one hour at a time.

Remember:

- Doing any physical activity is better than doing none. Look for ways to add physical activity and to limit sedentary behaviour in your day and be a good role model for your children.
- Encouraging your children to be active every day establishes good habits that can stay with them throughout their lives.
- While it may seem like a challenge at times, there are lots of tips and ideas to help you include more activity in your child's day. For more information see the Healthy Kids website www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au

