

# Physical Activity Guidance

## Guidance

**Toddlers** have short attention spans and naturally need to move often. Limit sitting or stationary activities to less than 15-minute increments. Toddlers should be able to move around the room freely with time for exploration and discovery.

**Preschoolers** have longer attention spans than toddlers and can stay engaged in sedentary and seated activities for up to 20 minutes. Break up structured learning times with short bursts of gross motor movement designed to enhance curriculum concepts.

Early Head Start	Preschool
<p><b>Babies 0-12 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infants should be in the least restrictive environment during most of wakeful time.</li> <li>• Provide supervised floor time when babies are awake with an engaged adult.</li> <li>• Place baby on the tummy to promote development of large muscle control such as pushing up with hands and head movements. They form the foundation for rolling over, scooting, crawling, and sitting. Allow the baby to determine the length of time on tummy or other preferred position - side or back.</li> <li>• Provide floor time at least 4 times a day in an open area with safe play surface so babies can move around freely to reach, grab objects, roll over, scoot and crawl.</li> <li>• Address cultural beliefs and practices that may be in conflict with floor time. Attentive tummy placement on a lap will allow for large muscle control too.</li> <li>• Babies in full day care should be taken outside twice a day in strollers and other safe baby carriers protected from the sun by keeping them in the shade and using sunscreen ONLY on babies over 6 months old.</li> <li>• No screen time for children under 2.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers plan, lead and participate in active play during outdoor and indoor time. Short periods of age and developmentally appropriate teacher led activities help children acquire physical skills.</li> <li>• Teachers encourage *Fundamental Movement Skills by providing objects and prompts about how to use them. Provide foam balls, scarves, jumping ropes, hula hoops, etc. Staff demonstrate new skills, safe play and appropriate use of materials or equipment.</li> <li>• Allow children to choose their own physical activities indoors and outdoors under adult supervision.</li> <li>• Children need outdoor play at least once in part day programs and at least twice in full day programs. Outdoor play allows the most opportunity for vigorous movement that benefits health.</li> <li>• Computer time for children should be limited to 15 minute sessions for educational purposes.</li> <li>• Screen time used to support learning by teaching staff should be limited to a half hour a week. Programs should be educational or encourage physical activity and staff should be present and participating.</li> <li>• When outdoors, always use sunscreen on children between May and September.</li> </ul>

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Early Head Start	Preschool
<p><b>EHS Home Visitors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage and support parent engagement time with babies and toddlers that involve games and active play.</li> <li>• Stress the importance of adult supervision when babies are placed on the floor.</li> <li>• Provide parents with ideas for age appropriate indoor and outdoor physical activities.</li> <li>• Address cultural beliefs and practices that may prevent babies from getting floor or outdoor time.</li> <li>• Discuss the importance of using sunscreen on children over 6 months of age and keeping infants out of the sun.</li> </ul>	
<p>*Fundamental Movement Skills are the basic skills that children develop in the early years through active play. Skills include travelling activities (hopping, jumping, skipping, galloping, etc.) non-locomotor (balance, stretching) and manipulative (throwing, catching, kicking) <i>Active for Life – Fun Physical Activities for Young Children, Diane Craft, 2009,</i></p>	