



Have a ball... together!
Raising Healthy Kids is Child's Play

Backgrounder
www.haveaballtogether.ca

One of the most important things we can do to raise healthy kids to get them active from an early age so that physical activity becomes part of their everyday life. We all have a role in this whether you are a parent, caregiver, educator, community member or a decision maker. Children are not active enough, despite the perception that all kids are active!

Did you know?

- Around 90% of Canadian youth from aged five to nineteen do not meet Canadian physical activity guidelines.
- Children spend less time being active after the age of three.
- Girls of all ages are less active than boys.
- Increasing numbers of children between the ages of two and five are overweight or obese.
- Preschoolers are watching close to two hours of TV per day and it increases for older children to an average of six hours a day in front of screens.
- The Canadian Pediatric Society recommends no more than one hour of TV per day for preschoolers

What are the benefits of being physically active?

- Important for physical, mental and emotional development
- Makes the heart, lungs, muscles and bones stronger
- Improves energy, stamina, flexibility and coordination
- Helps improve sleeping and eating habits
- Helps maintain a healthy weight
- Helps children feel good about themselves and reduces anxiety and stress
- Provides opportunities to improve physical and social skills and make friends
- Helps develop lifelong attitudes

What can we do to keep kids more active?

- Provide both structured (directed) and unstructured (free play) physical activity opportunities for a minimum of one hour each per day
- Activities should be fun, non-competitive, safe and age and weather appropriate
- Provide basic movement skills such as running, climbing, throwing, catching and kicking.
- Hang up pictures of children being active – make it the norm
- Be a role model, do activities as a family
- For ideas on what to do with your children visit www.haveaballtogether.ca