



Spring

INTO ACTION

Children Ages 6–17

Children and adolescents should get at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day

This may sound like a lot, but don't worry! You'll soon discover all the easy and enjoyable ways to get your child moving. Encourage your child to participate in activities that are age-appropriate, fun and offer variety! Just make sure your child is doing three types of physical activity:

Aerobic Activity

Aerobic activity should make up most of your child's physical activity. This can include moderate-intensity aerobic activity, such as brisk walking, or vigorous-intensity activity, such as running. Be sure to include vigorous-intensity aerobic activity at least three days per week.

Muscle Strengthening

Include muscle-strengthening activities, such as gymnastics or push-ups, at least three days per week.

Bone Strengthening

Include bone-strengthening activities, such as jumping rope or running, at least three days per week.

How do I know if my child's aerobic activity is moderate or vigorous?

1. On a scale of zero to 10, where sitting is zero and the highest level of activity is 10, moderate-intensity activity is a 5 or 6. When your son does moderate-intensity activity, his heart will beat faster than normal and he will breathe harder than normal. Vigorous activity is a level 7 or 8. When your son does vigorous activity, his heart will beat much faster than normal, and he will breathe much harder than normal.
2. Another way to judge intensity is to think about the activity your child is doing and compare it to the average child. What amount of intensity would the average child use? For example, when your daughter walks to school each morning, she's probably doing moderate-intensity activity. But when she plays tag during recess, she's probably doing vigorous activity.

What do you mean by "age-appropriate"?

Some physical activity is better suited for children than adolescents. For example, children do not need formal muscle-strengthening programs, such as lifting weights. Younger children usually strengthen their muscles when they do gymnastics, play on a jungle gym or climb trees. As children grow older, they may start structured weight programs. For example, they may do these types of programs along with their soccer or basketball practice.

