

Physical Literacy

Physical Literacy includes movement skills that allow your child to move competently and confidently in a wide range of physical activities including sports.

The Elements of Physical Literacy:

1. Fundamental movement skills

- Running, balancing, hopping, skipping, jumping, throwing, catching, kicking, striking

2. Physical literacy is important

- Without physical literacy, children may withdraw from physical activity and sports as they become older, limiting their range of choices during their leisure time.

3. It is more than just the individual

- Physical literacy is developed further through the relationship between you and your child, their peers, their community and the world around them

4. It is more than just being physical

- Physical literacy also includes the ability to read what is going on in the environment around them and respond appropriately



Child striking a ball

Physical Activity

Physical Activity is defined as any body movement that works your muscles and uses more energy than you use when you are resting (ex. riding a tricycle or digging in the garden). It does not include activities such as puzzles or drawing.

Practical ways to encourage physical activity:

1. **Play with your child:** Joining in connects you with your child. While you have fun, you are also helping your child develop in many different ways. As a bonus, playing with your child is a great way for you to be active.

2. **Play actively every day:** Children need at least two hours of active movement every day. They shouldn't be inactive for more than an hour at a time, except when sleeping.



3. **Play vigorously:** Children need opportunities every day to use up energy. Running, jumping, and skipping are great because they use the large muscles in the legs and trunk and burn energy. Healthy body weight, bone strength, cardiovascular fitness, and muscle strength come from large muscle activity.

4. **Develop movement skills:** Children need many opportunities to practice and gain confidence in basic movement skills. These skills are the building blocks of more complex movement patterns and include:

- Skills to manipulate objects such as throwing a bean bag, catching a scarf, and kicking a ball. Manipulative skills are also called “eye-hand” and “eye-foot” coordination activities
- Locomotion skills are the basic ways to move, such as hopping, jumping and skipping
- Body control skills such as balancing and making different body shapes
- Body awareness skills such as moving in a space and timing of movement

5. **Build physical activity into your day:** A healthy lifestyle includes choosing active options when you can. For example, walking to drop off children at school or taking the stairs instead of an escalator. Young children learn from what they see us do.





- 6. Use physical activity to support learning and social development:** Play time is when your child can actively explore the environment, practice cooperating, sharing, and dealing with conflict. Play strengthens thinking skills, language and literacy development.
- 7. Promote creativity and self-expression:** Children need opportunities to express themselves through movement and imaginary play. Play that allows children to create new ideas and solutions helps to develop their thinking and social skills.

**For more information, contact your Recreation Therapist by email
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