

National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) Guidelines for Physical Activity

All children from birth to age five should engage daily physical activity. Regular physical activity helps infants, toddlers, and preschoolers develop the proper movement skills and coordination they need for adolescence and adulthood.

NASPE Guidelines for Infants

Guideline 1. Infants should interact with parents and/or caregivers in daily physical activities that are dedicated to promoting the exploration of their environment.

What can you do?

- Hold, rock, and carry the baby to new environments so, they can kick, reach, and roll in various settings.

Guideline 2. Infants should be placed in safe settings that facilitate physical activity and do not restrict movement for long periods.

What can you do?

- Create a safe place that is designated for physical activity.
- Decrease time spent in swings, walkers, carseats, and cribs (unless sleeping).

Guideline 3. Infants' physical activity should promote the development of movement skills.

What can you do?

- Encourage gross motor skills by placing toys just out of the babies reach so they have to attempt to roll over, reach or crawl to grab it.
- Place a stuffed toy near an infants feet and encourage them to kick the stuffed toy by lightly ticking their feet with the toy.

Guideline 4. Infants should have an environment that meets or exceeds safety standards for performing large muscle activities.

What can you do?

- Consult the “resources section” in you packet for more information regarding safety standards.

Guideline 5. Individuals responsible for the well-being of infants should be aware of the importance of physical activity and facilitate the child's movement skills.

What can you do?

- Initiate active play
- Plan and schedule time for active play
- Decrease or eliminate screen time

NASPE Guidelines for Toddlers and Preschoolers

Guideline 1. Toddlers should accumulate at least 30 minutes daily of structured physical activity; preschoolers at least 60 minutes.

What can you do?

- Plan and schedule time for planned activities (e.g. body puzzles, Follow the leader, occupational charades, etc.)

Guideline 2. Toddlers and preschoolers should engage in at least 60 minutes and up to several hours per day of daily, unstructured physical activity and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time except when sleeping.

What can you do?

- Designate safe places for indoor/outdoor play.
 - Outdoor equipment should be well maintained and free of foreign objects.
 - This indoor area could include and is not limited to the following:
 - Pillows
 - “Nerf” balls
 - Tumbling Mats

Guideline 3. Toddlers should develop movement skills that are building blocks for more complex movement tasks; preschoolers should develop competence in movement skills that are building blocks for more complex movement tasks.

What can you do?

- Caregivers should encourage and assist with a variety of movements such as catching, throwing, and climbing stairs so mature motor patterns can arise naturally.

Guideline 4. Toddlers and preschoolers should have indoor and outdoor areas that meet or exceed recommended safety standards for performing large muscle activities.

What can you do?

- Consult the resource section in your packet for more information regarding safety standards.

Guideline 5. Individuals responsible for the well-being of toddlers and preschoolers should be aware of the importance of physical activity and facilitate the child's movement skills.

What can you do?

- Initiate active play
- Plan and schedule time for active play
- Decrease or eliminate screen time

Physical Activity Resources

Websites:

Maine Nutrition Network: <http://www.maine-nutrition.org>

National Association for Sports and Physical Education (NASPE)
<http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/>

Kids in Action

<http://fitness.gov/funfit/Kidsinactionbook.pdf>

Iowa Department of Education's "Physical Fun for the Little Ones"
http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/cfcs/physical_fun.pdf#search='doing%20physical%20activities%20with%20children'

National Child Care Information Center

<http://www.nccic.org/>

Kids Source Safety Page:

<http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/pages/safety.html>

National Safety Commission Playground Safety Checklist

<http://www.nsc.org/library/facts/plgrdgen.htm>

Related Books:

Cheatum B. & Hammond A. (2000). *Physical Activities for Improving Children's Learning and Behavior: A Guide to Sensory Motor Development*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Gallagher J. & Sayre, N. (1991). *Young Child and the Environment, The: Issues Related to Health, Nutrition, Safety, and Physical Activity* New York: Allyn & Bacon.

National Association of Sports and Physical Education (2002). *Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to Five Years*