

LEAPS

learning eating active play sleep



Benefits of Physical Activity

The Get Up & Grow Guidelines suggest that children between the ages of 1 and 5 need to be physically active for at least three hours per day, and for this activity to be spread throughout the day. All children benefit from physical activity as it provides a range of physical, social, cognitive and emotional benefits. Regular engagement in physical activity provides:

- An environment where children can build and develop social skills like turn taking, patience, cooperation, and teamwork
- The opportunity to build basic physical fitness dimensions including muscle strength and endurance, cardiovascular endurance, flexibility, balance, coordination, and agility
- Increased self-esteem, self-confidence and sense of self-competence
- Improved body composition (the ratio of fat to muscle in a child's body)
- An increased sense of belonging and acceptance in a group
- Decreased risk of health complications such as obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes in later life
- Improvement in behaviour, attention span and brain development
- An outlet for excess energy
- A mechanism to assist children to cope with stress and anxiety
- An improved quality of sleep
- An opportunity to interact with others and make new friends
- A source of enjoyable, healthy entertainment, children have fun when they are active!

The importance of physical activity is recognised throughout the National Quality Standard and the Early Years Learning Framework. You can see examples of evidence of EYLF learning outcomes related to physical activity and active play in the "Evidence of Early Years Learning Framework learning outcomes" factsheet.

Links to the National Quality Standard (NQS) and the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)

NQS Quality Area 2:
Children's health
and safety

NQS Standard 2.2:
Healthy eating
and physical
activity are
embedded in the
program for
children

NQS Element 2.2.2:
Physical activity is
promoted through
planned and
spontaneous
experiences and is
appropriate for each
child

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Benefits of Physical Activity

EYLF Practice:

Holistic approaches

EYLF Practice:

Learning environments

EYLF Practice:

Learning through play

EYLF Practice:

Continuity of learning and transitions

EYLF Learning

Outcome 1:

Children have a strong sense of identity

Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency

EYLF Learning

Outcome 3:

Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

EYLF Learning

Outcome 4:

Children are confident and involved learners

Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity

References:

Department of Health and Ageing. (2013). Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 years. Retrieved from <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-pubhlth-strateg-phys-act-guidelines#npa05>

Government of Western Australia: Department of Sport and Recreation. (2013). Active Parent Education Kit: Fact Sheet 1 - Benefits of physical activity for your children. Retrieved from <http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au/assets/files/Parents/APEK%20Sheet%201.pdf>

Healthy Kids. (2013). Physical Activity: Why is physical activity important in early childhood services for infants and young children? Retrieved from <http://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/teachers-childcare/physical-activity.aspx>

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2013). *Guide to the National Quality Standard*. Retrieved from: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/the-national-quality-standard>

Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (2009). *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. Retrieved from: <https://www.education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework>