

HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS

Play: The business of childhood

Adapted from an APPLE Schools resource

HEALTH NOTE FACTS:

Provide your child with opportunity, time and lots of space to play. Playing is a necessary part of each child's day. Play promotes mental, physical and emotional health for our kids. Having time each day to play promotes healthy development by developing motor skills and providing opportunities to build social skills with peers and siblings. Outdoor play is especially important to develop running, balance and movement awareness.

Play allows children to develop problem solving skills and conflict management through turn taking and interacting with peers. Free, unorganized play allows children to follow their own interests and ideas without having to achieve specific tasks. It gives them a chance to choose their activities and helps them realize skills and limits. Children can also be offered games and activities as part of structured play which gives them a chance to learn rules, turn taking and cooperation.

Encourage your child(ren) to go outside today, to enjoy some free, unstructured time with friends and family!

RESOURCE LINKS:

- [24-Hour Movement Guidelines – 24-Hour Movement Guidelines](#)
- [What is Play? | Canadian Public Health Association](#)
- [Playgrounds and play spaces Unstructured outdoor play and risky play.](#)
- [As safe as necessary: Risky play for children](#)
- [Playtime poster](#)
- [As safe as necessary: A new approach to play.](#)
- [Active ways to play!](#)

Additional Tips:

- Aim for 60 minutes of active time each day for your child- walking the dog, getting the mail, biking to school.
- Encourage your child to play outside for 30 minutes each day. Team sports are also a great way to increase active time for kids.
- Visits parks, playgrounds and outdoor walking trails as a family.
- Explore the great outdoors! Splash in puddles, collect rocks, build forts, explore the forest.
- Make an activity plan to support being more active. Plan for after school and evening activities – a family game of hoops, tennis or baseball.
- Whatever the weather- build a snowman, fly a kite, rake leaves, shovel your driveway, plant some flowers, weed the garden.

