



## Active Play

Active Play is a vigorous form of play using large muscle movements. It is the term used to describe physical activity for young children.

### Active Play

- Promotes healthy growth and development
- Strengthens muscles, bones and joints
- Decreases obesity risk
- Impacts brain development
- Allows for the acquisition of fundamental movement skills
- Leads to a lifetime of physical activity

### Active Play can also

- improve cooperation, self-control, attention span and self esteem
- decrease anxiety, aggression and depression
- enhance learning and may improve academic achievement

Young children (3-5 years old) need a **minimum of 180 minutes daily** of moderately to vigorous activity daily (WHO Guidelines).

### Fundamental Movement Skills

- Locomotor skills involve moving one's body from place to place. Examples are running, jumping, hopping and sliding.
- Object Control is contacting an object with an implement. Examples are throwing, catching, kicking and striking.
- Stability is balancing/moving in place. Examples are reaching, stretching, bending, turning and balancing.

## Modifications to ensure that children with and without disabilities play together

- Modify the task to meet the child's needs and abilities
- Modify the environment to help the child be successful
- Give concise, clear instructions and provide clear boundaries
- Offer physical prompts and physical assistance if needed
- Check for the child's understanding
- Adapt the activity and rules to ensure all can participate
- Emphasize cooperation and minimize competition
- Maintain structure and routine to provide security
- Provide calming activities to help all children refocus after vigorous play
- Calming activities can be especially useful with children on the autism spectrum or with challenging behaviors.

## Parents as play partners

- Explain the benefits of active play to parents
- Encourage parents to play with their child
- Remember that play does not come naturally to all adults
- Give adults permission to play
- Offer examples of simple activities families can do
- During remote learning, encourage parents to lead practice in fundamental movement skills

## What can you do to promote active play?

- Provide encouragement
- Be a good role model for staff and parents
- Be enthusiastic
- Encourage adults to play along
- Ensure adequate active play time
- **MAKE IT FUN!!!**