

UNDERSTANDING THE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Bodies are designed to move and children and youth need to be moving more. According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, children and youth should do at least 60 minutes each day of moderate to vigorous activity.

Types of activity: aerobic and strength

Physical activity should include vigorous intensity activity at least 3 days each week and strengthening activities 3 days a week.

Vigorous activity is when the heart rate is increased and one cannot speak more than a few words at a time without taking a breath. These would include activities like running, basketball, soccer and cross-country skiing.

Strengthening activities are for muscle and bone strength. Children can build muscle by climbing and swinging on playground equipment. Youth can do push-ups and curl-ups to build their muscle strength. Bones need to be strengthened through activities like running and jumping rope where the muscles push against the bones to make them stronger.

What is moderate to vigorous activity?

On a scale of 0 to 10 (0 is completely at rest, 10 in absolute maximum effort)

Moderate activity is 5-6
Vigorous activity is 7-8

Adults need at least 2.5 hours of physical activity each week for health benefits and should focus on moderate to vigorous intensity activities. Parents who are active tend to have children who enjoy being active. If you and your family are not meeting these guidelines, begin slowly and gradually increase the amount of time you spend being active as you become accustomed to it. Ideally, find a fun activity that the whole family can do together.

For more information contact:

- ♦ Physical Activity Guidelines www.csep.ca
- ♦ www.activehealthykids.ca
- ♦ Public Health Agency of Canada www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/index.html
- ♦ Healthlink BC www.healthlinkbc.ca/kb/content/special/aba5595.html#aba5596