

## Physical Activity for Health

**CHILDREN THRIVE** on plenty of physical activity in both indoor and outdoor settings and from any source: active play, physical education and sports. Parents and caregivers can encourage participation



and be good role models by being physically active on a regular basis.

When children get plenty of physical activity it helps them:

- Increase their self-confidence
- Feel less stressed
- Be ready to learn in school
- Improve academic performance
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Build healthy bones and muscles
- Improve coordination
- Sleep better at night
- Develop important social skills

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children have no more than two hours a day of sedentary screen time while children under two years of age should have none. Children love their electronic devices and may turn down an initial

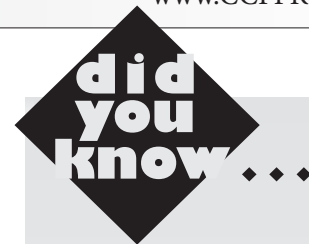
request to join in active play but don't give up! Set limits on screen time and get up and move with them. Once a child becomes engaged they end up having a great time.

### Guidelines for Infants

Even infants need physical activity! Place babies alternately on their back and stomach in a safe, open area so they have freedom to kick their legs, wiggle, stretch and wave their arms or push their body up. Giving babies plenty of time for free movement will encourage exploration and a progression to more purposeful movement.

- Infants should interact with caregivers in daily physical activities that are dedicated to exploring movement and the environment.
- Caregivers should place infants in settings that encourage and stimulate movement experiences and active play for short periods of time several times a day.
- Infants' physical activity should promote skill development in movement.
- Infants should be placed in an environment that meets or exceeds recommended safety standards for performing large-muscle activities.

(continued on page 2)



- ▶ October is Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Awareness month.
- ▶ SIDS rates in the United States have decreased by 50% since the start of the Safe to Sleep campaign in 1994.
- ▶ National Fire Prevention Week is October 9–16, 2016.
- ▶ On average, seven people die in U.S. home fires each day.
- ▶ Working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in reported home fires in half.
- ▶ Any equipment that confines, restrains or limits a baby's movement is a hindrance to development.
- ▶ All learning begins with the body and is linked to movement. Every move develops physical capabilities while building sensory perception and critical pathways in the brain.

Sources: *Babysleepsite.com*, *National Fire Protection Association*, *Aidtolife.org*, *A Moving Child is a Learning Child*

### Quotable Quotes

“We have the resources, we have the infrastructure, we have the food, everything to end hunger in this country except the political will.”

– Rep Jim McGovern (D-MA)

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- ◆ Food Funny

# Physical Activity for Health

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- Those in charge of infants' well-being are responsible for understanding the importance of physical activity and should promote movement skills by providing opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity.

## Guidelines for Toddlers

For toddlers, basic movement skills such as running, jumping, throwing and kicking do not just develop because a child grows older, but emerge from an interaction between hereditary potential and movement experience. These behaviors are also clearly influenced by the environment. For instance, a child who does not have access to stairs may be delayed in stair climbing and a child who is discouraged from bouncing and chasing balls may lag in hand-eye coordination.

- Toddlers should engage in a total of at least 30 minutes of structured physical activity each day.
- Toddlers should engage in at least 60 minutes and up to several hours a day of unstructured physical activity and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.
- Toddlers should be given ample opportunities to develop movement skills that will serve as the building blocks for future motor skillfulness and physical activity.
- Toddlers should have access to indoor and outdoor areas that meet or exceed recommended safety standards for performing large-muscle activities.
- Those in charge of toddlers' well-being are responsible for understanding the importance of physical activity and promoting movement skills by providing opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity and movement experiences.

## Guidelines for Preschoolers

Facilitate physical activities for preschoolers that promote specific movement skills, for example, crawling through a tunnel or jumping from a block and landing securely on two feet. Guide and support children in the development of gross-motor skills such as hopping, galloping, jumping running and marching.

- Preschoolers should accumulate at least 60 minutes of structured physical activity each day.
- Preschoolers should engage in at least 60 minutes and up to several hours of unstructured physical activity each day and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at

a time, except when sleeping.

- Preschoolers should be encouraged to develop competence in fundamental motor skills that will serve as the building blocks for future motor skillfulness and physical activity.
- Preschoolers should have access to indoor and outdoor areas that meet or exceed recommended safety standards for performing large-muscle activities.
- Caregivers and parents in charge of preschoolers' health and well-being are responsible for understanding the importance of physical activity and for promoting movement skills by providing opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity.

## Guidelines for School-age Children

School-age children participate in physical education in school but it may not be on a daily basis. School-age children gain valuable experiences while having fun when they participate in a team sport. Mastery of a set of skills promotes self-confidence and poise.

- Children should accumulate at least 60 minutes, up to several hours of age-appropriate physical activity on all or most days of the week. This daily accumulation should include moderate and vigorous physical activity with the majority of the time being spent in activity that is intermittent in nature.
- Children should participate in several bouts of physical activity lasting 15 minutes or more each day.
- Children should participate each day in a variety of age-appropriate physical activities designed to achieve optimal health, wellness, fitness and performance benefits.
- Extended periods of two or more hours of inactivity are discouraged for school-age children.

For all ages, splitting up the daily physical activities into shorter increments is fine and remember, more is better but some is better than none! Assess how much activity children are getting now and increase opportunities as you can. Keep in mind physical activity doesn't have to be strenuous to have a positive effect on our bodies, mood and brain function.

Guidelines provided by the National Association of Sports and Physical Education (NASPE)

— Catherine Stafford  
Child Health and Nutrition Supervisor  
Contra Costa Child Care Council

## KIDS' HEALTH & SAFETY

# Physical Activity Policy

To create a healthy activity environment, I have instituted the following policies in my child care program:

### Daily Physical Activity

- I provide all children with numerous opportunities for physical activity throughout the day.
- Preschoolers have at least 60 minutes of structured physical activity and at least 60 minutes of unstructured physical activity daily with several opportunities for “breathless” moderate to vigorous physically active (MVPA) play.
- All children are provided outdoor time at least twice daily, weather and air quality permitting.
- In the case of severe weather, similar activities are provided inside.
- I provide equipment and materials for active play and movement that support the development of gross motor skills appropriate for all children. During outdoor play, children practice gross motor skills with a variety of activities, such as running, skipping, kicking and throwing.
- Children with special needs have opportunities to participate in physical activity routinely with their peers.
- My facility is regularly inspected to ensure the safety of all children. I ensure the outdoor environment is safe by discarding broken materials, cleaning contaminated areas, sweeping/raking areas regularly and picking up large branches.
- I participate in physical activity with the children to increase child participation and model healthy levels of activity.
- Parents are asked to dress their children for safe outdoor playtime.
- Children should come to child care wearing sunscreen for morning outdoor play and sunscreen will be reapplied for afternoon outdoor activities with parent consent.

### Screen Time

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children under two years old do not engage in any screen time at all and older children watch no more than 1–2 hours per day. Because children watch television and play on the computer outside my care, I do not offer any screen time in my child care.

*Adapted from the Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity, Model Family Daycare Nutrition & Physical Activity Policies and Practices*





## Spookghetti and Eyeballs

- Ground turkey ..... 1 ¼ pound
- Pesto ..... ¼ cup
- Breadcrumbs ..... ¼ cup
- Salt ..... 1 tsp
- Pepper ..... ¼ tsp
- Marinara sauce ..... 2-3 cups
- Green or black olives, sliced ..... ¼ cup
- Spaghetti, whole grain, cooked ..... 8 ounces



1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Combine all ingredients, except marinara sauce, olives and pasta in a bowl and mix well.
2. Roll turkey mixture into walnut sized balls and press an olive slice on the top of each one. Pour the marinara sauce into a large shallow baking dish. Place the meatballs into the marinara sauce. Bake for 30 minutes.
3. Cook spaghetti according to package directions and top with “eyeballs” and sauce.

Yield: 8 servings

Meets requirement for grains/breads and protein/meat alternate

— [Lickthebowlgood.blogspot.com](http://Lickthebowlgood.blogspot.com)

## Pizza Ghost Crostini

- Ciabatta sandwich rolls ..... 4
- Pizza sauce ..... ½ cup
- Mozzarella cheese ball, fresh ..... 1 (8 ounce)
- Black olive, chopped ..... 2



1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a rimmed cookie sheet with foil.
2. Cut each roll in half crosswise and place on prepared pan cut side up. Spread each roll with a tablespoon of pizza sauce.
3. Slice mozzarella into 8 slices. Use a ghost cookie cutter, or just free hand cut a ghost shape from each slice of cheese. Top each roll with the cheese, and add black olives for eyes.
4. Bake until sauce is hot and cheese just begins to melt, about 7 minutes. Serve warm.

Yield: 4 servings

Meets requirement for grains/breads and protein/meat alternate

— *Parent’s Magazine*

## Activity Corner

### LESSONS FROM THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR

Talk, sing, and read with children from the beginning. Point to words as you read them, to show children that the print carries the story. Ask them to name things in the pictures and ask how the picture relates to the story.

- Teach children that apples, pears, plums, strawberries and oranges are fruits and good for the body. Can they name other fruits?
- When the caterpillar overeats, he gets a stomachache—so it is important to stop eating when you feel full.
- Talk about how some foods are “sometimes” foods—like cake and ice cream—and how it is not good to eat them all the time.
- After reading the page where the caterpillar eats the green leaf and feels better, talk to the children about how we eat green leaves like lettuce, spinach and cabbage. It is important to eat nutritious foods, so we can grow up healthy and active like a butterfly.

— [www.eric-carle.com](http://www.eric-carle.com)



This Nutrition Edition is brought to you by:

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**Contra Costa Child Care Council  
Child Health & Nutrition Program**

Phone: (925) 676-6117

Fax: (925) 676-5829

E-Mail: [nutrition@cocokids.org](mailto:nutrition@cocokids.org)

Website: [www.CoCoKids.org](http://www.CoCoKids.org)

Program Director ..... Paula James

Co-Editor ..... Donna Green, RD

Co-Editor ..... Catherine Stafford

**Food Q: What is a ghost’s favorite fruit?**  
**Funny A: Booberries!**