

Sample physical activity and small screen time policy

(Insert early childhood service name) recognises the importance of physical activity for young children.

Aim

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children in care are supported and encouraged to engage in active play, develop fundamental movement skills and limit small screen recreation time in line with current recommendations.

Rationale

Adequate physical activity promotes bone health, is protective against obesity and is beneficial for child social, psychological and fundamental movement skill development. Through active movement a child becomes stronger, coordinated and can explore the capabilities of their body. For babies, providing opportunities to move freely helps to develop their senses, develop good posture, strength and balance, and teaches them about their bodies and the world around them. The time children are at the service may be their best opportunity for active play each day. Limiting time spent in front of the TV, computer or video games also means that children will have more hours available for active, creative or outdoor play.

Fundamental movement skills are the building blocks for more complex and specialised skills that children need throughout their lives so they can competently and confidently play different games, sports and recreational activities. Fundamental movement skills include running, catching, jumping, kicking, galloping, leaping, hopping, dribbling a ball, side-stepping, striking a ball, underarm rolling and over arm throwing.

Relevant standards and recommendations

The National Quality Standards

Standard 2.2: *Healthy Eating and Physical Activity are embedded into the program for children*

Element 2.2.2:

Physical Activity is promoted through planned and spontaneous experiences and is appropriate for each child

Standard 3.2: *The environment is inclusive, promotes competence, independent exploration and learning through play.*

Element 3.2.1 Outdoor and indoor spaces are designed and organised to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.

ECS National Regulations

Part 4.3 Sections 107, 108, 113

National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 years

Commonwealth of Australia 2009

http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-publth-strateg-phys-act-guidelines#rec_0_5

Get Up and Grow healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood Directors

Handbook, Commonwealth of Australia 2009.

[http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/EA1E1000D846F0AFCA257BF0001DADB3/\\$File/HEPA%20-%20A4%20Book%20-%20Directors%20Book%20-%20LR.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/EA1E1000D846F0AFCA257BF0001DADB3/$File/HEPA%20-%20A4%20Book%20-%20Directors%20Book%20-%20LR.pdf)

Strategies

1. Promote physical activity and skill development

The service will:

- Aim to provide educator led play time/ and or child-initiated play for at least 25% of daily opening hours
- Provide babies (0-12months) with supervised floor based learning daily. This includes “tummy time”.
- Aim to provide structured, educator- led Fundamental Movement Skills development daily. The exploration of fundamental movement skills will include educator demonstration of correct FMS technique and the provision of appropriate feedback in a fun and supportive manner.
- Ensure staff role model and join in active play time
- Ensure staff provide verbal prompts to provide children with encouragement and positive reinforcement to participate in active play
- Adopt a participatory approach, emphasising fun and participation rather than competition
- Ensure inclusive practices for all children including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and those with special needs
- Ensure that staff routinely identify opportunities to engage children, educate and promote appropriate physical activity skills and active play

2. Limit Small Screen Recreation and time children spend being sedentary

The service will:

- Ensure that babies and toddlers up to the age of 2 years do not view small screen recreation during their time in care
- Aim to minimise time that toddlers and preschoolers (aged 2-5 years) spend in small screen recreation during their time in care
- Avoid children participating in small screen recreation during times when they can engage in more active pursuits
- Aim to limit time children spend being seated or inactive (other than during meal or nap time) during their time in care

3. Ensure all staff members have appropriate knowledge and skills in the area of physical activity

The service will:

- Support regular physical activity education for primary contact staff
- Include information on the physical activity policy as part of staff orientation

4. Provide a physical environment that promotes physical activity and skill development

The service will:

- Ensure that the indoor and outdoor physical environments provide adequate space and resources to facilitate active play and allow children to practice fundamental movement skills
- Outdoor spaces provide opportunities for children to explore and experience the natural environment
- Provide space, time and resources to support children to create their own opportunities for physical activity
- Follow safety procedures and risk management strategies when implementing physical activity

5. Ensure communication with families regarding physical activity, skill development and limiting small screen recreation

The service will:

- Routinely consult and inform parents and carers of physical activity practices and policies when undergoing development or review
- Have the physical activity and small screen time policy available for families and invite them to read the policy

- Communicate regularly with parents and provide information and advice on active play, fundamental movement skill development and limiting small screen recreation. For example newsletters, orientation days, information sessions and informal discussions
- Invite families to attend and participate in physical activity experiences with their children where appropriate

6. Monitoring and review

The service will:

- Record and monitor children's physical activity progress as part of routine observations of children's development. This will include time spent in active play, sedentary activities and progress with fundamental movement skills
- Report on physical activity and small screen goals and achievements in the services Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) where appropriate, annual reports or management committee meetings.
- Include physical activity as a standing item on the staff meeting agenda.
- Review the physical activity and small screen time policy every (insert timeframe for review)