

Being active is good for kids

Babies rock their bodies and kick their feet, and toddlers love to move around, dance, climb and jump. Many older kids enjoy organised sports as well as playground games and a bit of rough and tumble. All of this is not only great fun, and an important part of play and learning, it's also essential for healthy growth and development. Encouraging those kids who don't enjoy organised sport to take up some other form of everyday physical activity will help them stay healthy.

Physical activity provides your child with many lasting health benefits, including:

- strong bones and muscles
- healthy heart, lungs and arteries
- improved coordination, balance, posture and flexibility
- a reduced risk of becoming overweight or obese
- a reduced risk of later developing heart disease, cancer and diabetes (type 2 diabetes is increasingly being found in adolescents).

Active kids are also more likely to:

- be confident and have enhanced self-esteem
- be happy and relaxed
- sleep well
- concentrate at school
- get along with others and make friends easily
- share, take turns and cooperate
- feel like they belong.

Active children typically become active adults. By encouraging your child to be physically active, you're helping to establish a healthy lifelong habit.