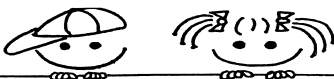




Parenting Corner: *Fitness*



IUSD Early Childhood Learning Center

Early Start • Head Start • Montessori International • School Readiness • Special Education Preschool

(949) 936-5870



Obesity and Children

Childhood obesity is a growing concern in our society. Obesity in children has tripled over the past 30 years. More than 1 in 4 children are overweight and close to 40% are not physically active. Children today spend more time watching TV, snacking and playing video games than they do exercising. According to researchers, children should be involved with physical activity 2-3 times per week for about 60 minutes. Help your child stay active and healthy by encouraging them to spend time outside jumping rope, running and playing games. Don't forget, children learn by example! So be a positive role model by becoming active yourself.



Helpful Hints – Alternatives to TV

Indoor: Reading aloud, building with blocks, dress up, imaginative play, puzzles, listening to music.

Outdoor: Games like "Duck, Duck, Goose!", sandbox digging, water play, ball games, riding bikes, climbing.

Fast Facts

Turn off the TV!

- Children receive 60% of their information from TV.
- Children watch an average of 27 hours of television per week.
- Sixth graders have seen 8,000 murders and 100,000 acts of violence.
- By age 18 the American child has seen 350,000 commercials and spend more time watching television than any other single activity.

Healthy Habits Quiz – Answer "Yes" (+2), "Sometimes" (+1) or "No" (+0) to the following questions.

Do you and your family...

- ___ Have regularly scheduled mealtimes at home?
- ___ Eat meals together at least once a day?
- ___ Plan snacks?
- ___ Tailor portion sizes to each person's needs?
- ___ Eat three meals every day?
- ___ Try to make mealtimes enjoyable?
- ___ Avoid using food to punish or reward?
- ___ Make meals last more than fifteen minutes?
- ___ Eat only in designated areas of the house?
- ___ Avoid making everyone eat everything on their plate?
- ___ Enjoy physical activities together once or twice a week?



If your total score is:

20-22—Your family is on the right track. Keep up the good work!

13-19—Your family is doing well, but could work on areas where you answered "no" & "sometimes."

12 or lower—It is important to incorporate healthier eating habits and more physical activity into your family's daily routine.

Physical Activity



Physical activity is a great way for children to have fun with friends and family, while giving them more energy and helping maintain a healthy body weight. Parents can help their children live a physically active lifestyle by providing encouragement and opportunities for physical activity. Parents can plan outings and events that allow and encourage everyone in the family to be active.

Adults need recess too! With a little creativity and planning, even the person with the busiest schedule can make room for physical activity. For many

folks, before or after work or meals is often an available time to cycle, walk, or play. Think about your weekly or daily schedule and look for or make opportunities to be more active. Every little bit helps.

Here are a variety of fun and low-cost activities:

- Walk, bike or jog with your children.
- Run around at the park or the beach.
- Plant a fruit or vegetable garden with your kids, this activity promotes fitness and healthy eating habits!
- Turn on some music and dance around the living room.
- Park farther away from your destination and walk.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.
- Have children help you with small home repair activities. Safety first!
- Make a Saturday morning walk a family tradition.
- Practice at a batting cages.
- Look for a new class offered by local parks, recreation department, community center, or gym.
- Go play miniature golf, bowling, basketball, kickball, or softball with your kids.
- Visit a water slide park.
- Take your children canoeing.
- Take them ice-skating.
- Fly a kite; play tag, hopscotch, catch or Frisbee at the park or in the back yard.
- Inside the house you can play games such as "Simon Says" or "Follow the Leader".

Funded by the Children and Families Commission of OC



Story Time



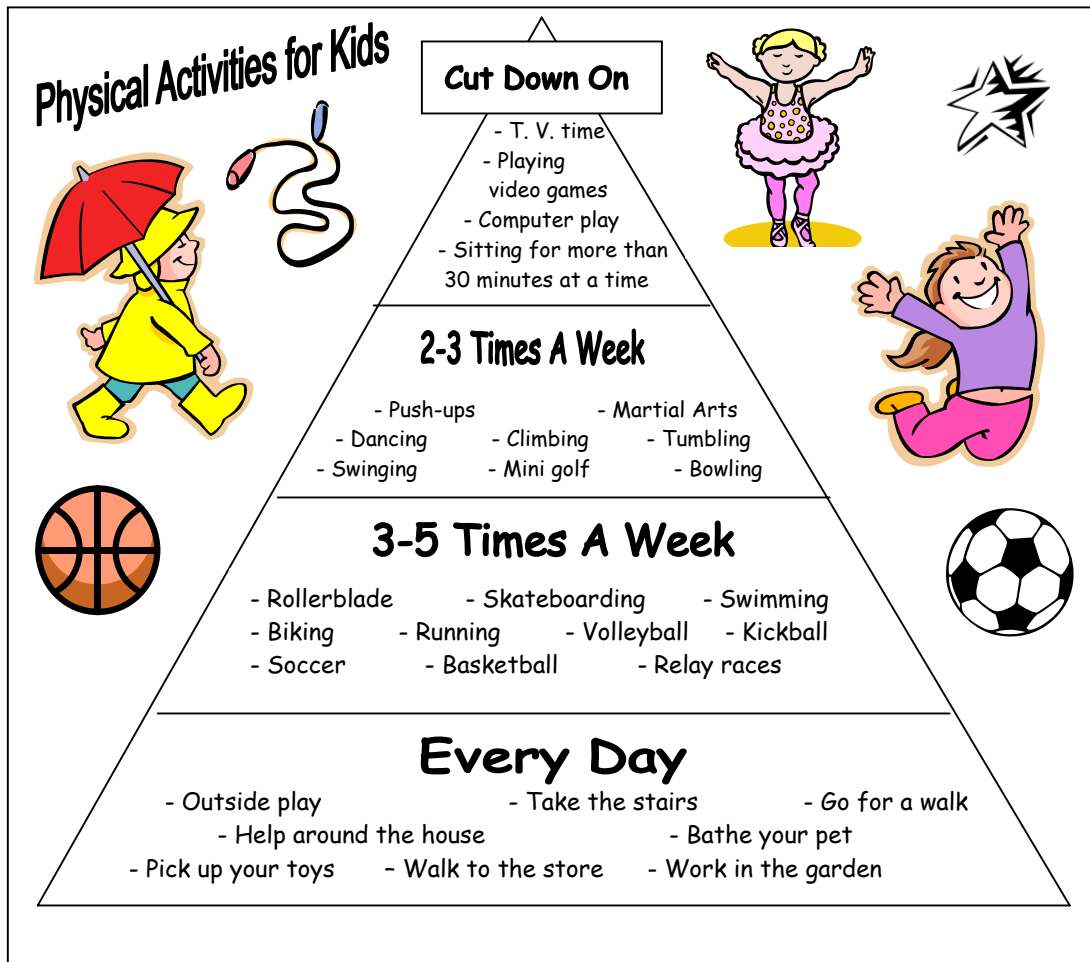
Through stories and illustrations, books open up new worlds for preschoolers. Here are a few books you can share with your child about movement. Don't be afraid to let your kids get up and move along with the stories!

From Head to Toe, written by Eric Carle

In this colorful movement book children encounter an assortment of animals that move their bodies in different ways. "I am an elephant and I stomp my foot. Can you do it?" Young children in the book imitate the movements and excitedly respond, "I can do it!" Your children will surely want to act out the story as you read along together.

Bearobics: A Hip-Hop Counting Story, written by Victoria Parker, and illustrated by Emily Bolam

In this counting book, a shaggy bear flips on his boom box in the woods and brings out many dancing animals to exercise with him. Parading around are kangaroos, gorillas, ostriches, tigers, snakes, penguins, bunnies, frogs, mice, and finally, a million ants. This is a great book to get kids moving, counting and rhyming!



Helpful Resources

Parents can find useful information about healthy eating habits and physical activity for the whole family at the following websites:

www2.bluecrossca.com
click on the [Healthy Living](#) link and then on [Healthy Habits for Healthy Kids](#)

www.pbs.org/parents/

www.familyeducation.com

<http://orange.cfbf.com>
click on [Farmers' Markets](#) to get hours and locations near you

For more information on the IUSD School Readiness Program visit:
www.iusd.org/ECLC

Time Together: Hula-Hooping

Materials: 4-6 hula-hoops (child size) and a large outdoor space.

First, allow children to use hula-hoops in any way that they like, making sure that the hoops are used safely. After the children have used the hula-hoops in their own way, parents can show them different ways to use the hula-hoops. For example:

- Make the hula-hoop go round and round on the ground
- Arrange hula-hoops on ground and jump over them
- Make the hula-hoop spin on your arm
- Spin hula-hoop around your waist

Challenge children by giving them even more specific directions:

- Move around the hula-hoops with out touching them by hopping, skipping, jumping, running, walking sideways or backwards.
- Put your hand in a hoop or put your foot in a hoop.
- Make it more complex by adding colors and numbers. For example, put one knee in a red hoop, put four fingers in a yellow hoop and so on.