

SAFE EXERCISE FOR KIDS

Keep the following in mind to make sure your child has fun but stays safe while exercising.

HOW MUCH EXERCISE IS THE RIGHT AMOUNT?

The amount of exercise that is right for your child will depend on their age and interests.

Children aged 5 to 12 years need to do at least 60 minutes of physical activity (moderate to vigorous intensity) every day.

HOW TO PREVENT INJURIES

- Mix up the type of exercise (aerobic, muscle strengthening and weight bearing) and try different sports
- Watch for signs of burnout, especially when training for organised sport
- Don't let your child do organised sport for more than 1 hour per year of their age each week (for example, an 8-year-old should only train for 8 hours a week)
- Make sure they have one day of rest from organised sport per week (they can still play and be active in other ways)
- Ensure your child only does activities they are skilled and strong enough for
- Make sure they have proper safety gear, such as mouth guards, shin guards or a helmet
- Get the right treatment if your child has an injury

WARMING UP BEFORE EXERCISE

Warming up before exercise prevents injury by making the muscles softer and more supple. Before exercise, encourage your child to:

- Warm up the body with a slow jog, swim or cycle, or a quick walk
- Stretch all the muscles they're going to use (hold each stretch for 10-20 seconds, but never until it hurts)

COOLING DOWN AFTER EXERCISE

Cooling down after high intensity exercise is important to relax and soften the muscles and to eliminate toxins from the body. After exercise, encourage your child to:

- Gradually reduce the intensity (slow from a run to a slow walk – don't just stop)
- Stretch like they did in the warm up, but holding the stretches for longer
- Put on warm clothes so they cool down slowly

AVOID SUNBURN AND DEHYDRATION

In hot weather, your child should wear sunscreen and a hat. Make sure they drink water before, during and after playing.