

Good for kids
good for life



**I Move
We Move
The Guide**

Contents

Acknowledgements	IV
Glossary	V
Section One: Introduction	
Good for Kids. Good For Life.	1.1
Benefits of physical activity and movement for young children	1.2
Physical activity recommendations for young children	1.2
Are young children meeting the recommendations?	1.3
Physical activity for young children in the early childhood education and care sector	1.4
What will I Move We Move cover?	1.5
How does I Move We Move support the Children's Services Regulation 2004?	1.5
Section Two: Whole of service approach	
Whole of service approach to encourage physical activity	2.1
Policy	2.1
Curriculum, teaching and learning experiences	2.3
Staff development and training	2.4
Partnerships with families	2.5
Supporting families with communication and education	2.5
Case study: Nurturing active children using provisions from home	2.7
Evaluation	2.8
Create a supportive environment for change	2.9
Ideas for generating interest and support	2.9
Build on your strengths	2.9
What is working and what is not?	2.9
Case study: Building on strengths, how it might work in practice	2.10
Resource 1: Physical activity policy checklist	2.11
Resource 2: Sample physical activity policy	2.12
Resource 3: Further information on physical activity	2.14
Resource 4: Newsletter Inserts	2.15
Section Three: Physical activity in Children's Services	
Supporting physical activity in the context of early childhood services	3.1
The nature of young children's physical activity	3.1
Developmental appropriateness	3.2
Safety	3.4

Section Four: I Move, We Move Every Day

Promoting physical activity throughout the day	4.1
Ideas to promote physical activity	4.1
Dramatic play	4.1
Music and movement	4.2
Water play	4.3
Transition activities	4.3
Active play in group time	4.4
Active play verbal prompts	4.4
Be an active role model	4.4
Physical activity no matter the weather	4.5
Case study: Wet weather creates unique opportunities for physical activity	4.6

Section Five: Learning how to move

Fundamental movement skills in early childhood	5.1
What are the fundamental movement skills?	5.1
Stages of fundamental movement skills development	5.2
Learning fundamental movement skills	5.3
Figure 5.3: What do the fundamental movement skills look like?	5.11
Monitoring progress	5.20

Section Six: Active early childhood environments

Active early childhood environments	6.1
Equipment	6.1
Equipment to promote physically active play	6.2
Make your own!	6.2
Equipment to encourage fundamental movement skills development	6.3
Setting up equipment to promote physical activity	6.4
Opportunities to explore physical activity outdoors	6.4
New opportunities to explore physical activity indoors	6.5
Risk management	6.6
Sun protection	6.7
Case Study: Trampoline Safety	6.8

Section Seven: I Move, We Move away from the TV

Small screen recreation	7.1
Why do we need to limit small screen recreation in the early childhood education and care sector?	7.1
What can early childhood services do?	7.1
Small screen learning experiences	7.3
Example scenarios	7.5

References R.1	R.1
-----------------------	------------

Disclaimer

Please note that in some photographs children appear with bare feet. *Good for Kids* supports appropriate footwear to be worn by children when outdoors, however some activities such as dancing, gymnastics and certain stability activities (e.g. balancing) are recommended to be performed in bare feet when the surface poses no risk. There is also benefit in the development of muscles in the feet and using the sense of touch as part of learning. Services are encouraged to conduct a safety check of outdoor areas before the children arrive and remove objects that may cause harm.

Photographs used in *The Guide* and *The Physical Activity Handbooks of I Move We Move* have signed permission from each child's parent or carer. Please note that the *Good for Kids* program supports the wearing of appropriate hats for sun protection, however in some photographs the child is either in the shade or the child's hat has been temporarily removed so that the child's face can be seen.

Acknowledgements

I Move We Move has been developed by Hunter New England Population Health, Hunter New England Area Health Service.

We would like to especially thank Jannelle Gallagher, Authorised Supervisor of Kurri Kurri and District Pre-School Kindergarten; Associate Professor Phillip Morgan, Faculty of Education and Arts, University of Newcastle and Genevieve Dwyer, Discipline of Physiotherapy, University of Sydney for their expertise and involvement in developing the resource.

Developed by:

- Lynda Davies, Danielle Stephenson, Meghan Finch, Luke Wolfenden, Nicole Pond and Maryann Falkiner, Hunter New England Population Health
- Kerith Duncanson and Alicia Norris, Forster Community Health Centre

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following people for reviewing the resource, namely:

- Tracey Kelty, University of Newcastle
- Peta Lucas, Centre for Health Advancement, NSW Health
- Corrinne Tattam, Denison Street Early Learning Centre
- Judy Skerritt, Hunter TAFE
- Adrienne Roberts, Hunter TAFE
- Marion Davies, Hunter TAFE and former co-owner and operator of Playful Parenting Mount Hutton
- Associate Professor Nadine McCrea, University of New England
- Lyn Connors, Hamilton Child Care Centre
- Rachel Sutherland, Scott Trindall and David Kelly, Hunter New England Population Health

Sections of *I Move We Move*, in particular The Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers and the Fundamental Movement Skills Game Cards – Preschoolers, are largely based on the Munch and Move Resource Manual developed by NSW Health. NSW Health has kindly granted permission to reproduce parts of this resource. *Good for Kids* would like to thank and acknowledge the work of the authors of this resource.

In developing this manual every effort has been made to acknowledge the original sources of information and to seek permission to reproduce published work.

Please note that within this resource, the term 'Aboriginal' is generally used in preference to 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander', in recognition that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of NSW.

This work is copyright. The *Good for Kids I Move We Move* Physical Activity Resource Kit may be reproduced in whole or in part for study or training purposes subject to the inclusion of an acknowledgement of the source and no commercial usage or sale. Requests and enquiries regarding reproduction rights should be directed to Hunter New England Population Health, Hunter New England Area Health Service.

© Hunter New England Area Health Service July 2009.

Glossary of symbols and terms

In *I Move We Move* there are symbols that refer you to:



Another section of
The Guide or The
Physical Activity
Handbooks



A specific resource
within The Guide or
any of The Physical
Activity Handbooks



A resource on
the accompanying
CD-Rom or DVD

In *I Move We Move* the following terms are frequently used:

Physical activity is defined as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles which results in energy being expended. Physical activity can occur during games, play, sports, and travel between places¹.

Fundamental movement skills are specific gross motor movements that involve different body parts such as feet, legs, trunk, hands, arms and head. They are the 'building blocks' or foundation movements for more complex and specialised skills required to play different games, sports and recreational activities offered during the school years and in the community².

Physically active play (otherwise referred to as free active play) is periods of time when children are free to choose their own activities and where the activities require a child to be physically active.

Planned, adult guided developmental movement activities are where adults extend children's learning opportunities with regards to developmental movement for babies. Through intentional teaching and guidance to assist them to discover their potentials and achieve their learning goals³.

Planned, adult guided fundamental movement skills learning experiences are where adults extend children's learning opportunities with regards to fundamental movement skills for toddlers and preschoolers through intentional teaching, and guidance to assist them to discover their potentials and achieve their learning goals³.

Sedentary behaviour is when a child is inactive, either lying or sitting down. In the early education and care setting this includes times that children are seated but not meal time or nap time, e.g. if a teacher puts table toys on a table and children are only allowed to sit at the table and play, circle or group time on floor, TV viewing, etc.

Small screen recreation is a specific type of sedentary behaviour where a child is using the computer or television (broadcast, videos, DVDs or electronic games) for recreational, not educational purposes⁴.



Section One

Introduction

I Move We Move – The Guide

Introduction

The purpose of this resource is to provide Children's Services with the tools and information to build on existing practices to facilitate fun and developmentally appropriate, physically active play based learning experiences. In doing so, services will be promoting physical activity and supporting the development of fundamental movement skills of children. This resource also supports Children's Services to develop and implement policies and practices to limit small screen recreation (watching of TV, computers and DVDs) and other sedentary behaviours.

I Move We Move has been developed as part of the *Good for Kids. Good for Life* program, with input and assistance from early childhood education professionals, TAFE Children's Services teachers, as well as academics and researchers in the fields of education and physical activity. Their contribution has been invaluable in ensuring that the content is appropriate to the early childhood education and care setting; consistent with existing licensing and accreditation requirements and based on the most recent research for promoting physical activity.

Good for Kids. Good for Life.

Good for Kids. Good for Life is about the people of the Hunter, New England and Lower Mid North Coast leading the way in the implementation of Australia's largest ever program promoting healthy eating and physical activity for kids.

The *Good for Kids* program is part of the NSW Government's Live Life Well campaign and focuses on children aged up to 15 years. While the program is working across a variety of settings, a key strategy is to develop programs for Children's Services that target policy development and learning experiences, as well as parent communication and engagement in the areas of nutrition and physical activity.

Benefits of physical activity and movement in young children

Children benefit greatly from being physically active, as it can:

- Promote healthy growth and development e.g. bones and muscles, flexibility, balance, posture and cardiovascular fitness
- Help establish connections between different parts of the brain that develop memory and language
- Help achieve and maintain a healthy weight
- Help relaxation
- Improve concentration
- Improve confidence and self-esteem
- Provide opportunities to develop social skills and to make friends⁵

Physical activity recommendations for young children

Being active is important for all children as they grow and develop. Young children in particular should be given plenty of opportunities to move throughout the day and should not be sedentary (i.e. sitting) for long periods of time.

Draft National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0 to 5 years*⁶ have recently been developed (* the recommendations are draft and subject to endorsement by the Australian Health Ministers' Conference). These recommendations focus on the amount and type of physical activity rather than intensity. The recommendations state:

- *"For healthy development in infants (birth to 1 year), physical activity – particularly supervised floor-based play in safe environments – should be encouraged from birth*
- *Toddlers (1 to 3 years of age) and pre-schoolers (3 to 5 years of age) should be physically active every day for at least three hours, spread throughout the day*
- *Infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers should not be sedentary, restrained, or kept inactive, for more than one hour at a time, with the exception of sleeping".**

The recommendations also address limiting the time that children spend sedentary through small screen recreation i.e. using the computer or television (broadcast, videos, DVDs or electronic games). For small screen recreation, the recommendations state:

- *"Children younger than 2 years of age should not spend any time watching television or using other electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games)*
- *For children 2 to 5 years of age, sitting and watching television and the use of other electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games) should be limited to less than one hour per day"**

Are young children meeting the recommendations?

Research suggests that young children are missing out on all the physical, developmental and social benefits of physical activity; with time spent in small screen recreation displacing time available for physical activity. Children who spend more than two hours each day in small screen recreation are less likely to participate in physical activity⁷. The reasons for this may include:

- Changes in parenting styles
- Technological advancements in game consoles and computers
- Smaller backyards with limited spaces to play
- Reduction of easily accessible parks and the removal of equipment
- Time constraints
- Greater dependence on private car transportation
- Concerns around safety

Physical activity

Despite the many benefits of being active, research has shown that many young children are failing to meet the recommendations for physical activity. In the Hunter New England area, only 31.5% of boys and 41.9% of girls aged 2 to 5 years are getting up to two hours of physical activity each day, which is less than the physical activity recommendations for this age group⁸.

Small screen recreation

Sedentary behaviours and the use of small screen recreation have been increasing in recent years, even among young children. Recent studies have found that infants are watching between 30 to 60 minutes of television each day⁹. In the Hunter New England area, 52% of boys and 50% of girls aged 2 to 5 years spend more than two hours a day in small screen recreation¹⁰. In addition, 12% of 2 to 5 year olds in Hunter New England area have a television in their bedroom¹⁰.

Physical activity for young children in the early childhood education and care setting

There is growing evidence about the importance of physical activity and the development of fundamental movement skills in young children. Learning about healthy and active lifestyles and the significance of physical, emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing is integral to developing children's self confidence, and is therefore an essential part of early childhood programs.

Even though physical activity and fundamental movement skills for children is not new for early childhood educators, for many reasons the time is right to take a fresh look at current practices and update resources, to extend and refresh ideas.

Children's Services are a great place for children to develop long lasting physical activity habits, which are crucial for their healthy development. Habits developed in the preschool age are more likely to continue long term, contributing to ongoing health and well being. Also preschoolers are strongly influenced by role-models in the early education and care setting (peers, early childhood professionals, parents and carers), in relation to physical activity. Other important influences include adult guidance and time for development of fundamental movement skills, the physical environment of the service and provision of sufficient opportunities for children to be physically active. With many parents being time-poor, the time children are in care may be the best chance they have during the day to be supported to be physically active and practice fundamental movement skills.

Early childhood settings are also an ideal place for families to access support, information, advice and ideas on child physical activity and recommendations for small screen recreation. Through regular interactions with families, services also have the opportunity to work in partnership with families to make physical activity a priority for children both inside and outside the home.

For these reasons, early childhood settings are in an excellent position to promote the health, wellbeing and development of children in their care through the adoption of policies and programs that support children to be active.

What will *I Move We Move* cover?

The *I Move We Move Physical Activity Resource Kit* focuses on the *Good for Kids* key message of 'Get active, get out and play'. *I Move We Move* complements the *Good for Kids* Nutrition Resource Package and nutrition training for Children's Services in provided in 2007 and 2008. Together, nutrition and physical activity form an integral part of a healthy lifestyle that can be supported by Children's Services.

I Move We Move has been developed in partnership with early childhood and infant movement specialists. This resource aims to support early childhood staff to encourage and promote fun and developmentally appropriate physically active play experiences and to support the development of fundamental movement skills of children in their care. This resource also supports early childhood services to develop and implement policies and practices to limit small screen recreation (watching of TV, computers and DVDs) and sedentary behaviours.

I Move We Move provides early education and care services with practical information and fresh ideas to promote physical activity including:

- Policy and teaching and learning practices (Section Two)
- Engaging and communicating with families on physical activity (Section Two)
- Information on considerations specific to supporting physical activity and movement skills development in the early childhood education and care setting (Section Three)
- Supporting and promoting physically active play throughout the day (Section Four)
- Assisting children to develop fundamental movement skills (Section Five)
- Extending your active early childhood environment (Section Six)
- Considering limits on children's sedentary small screen time through the adoption of policies and practices (Section Seven)

How does *I Move We Move* support the Children's Services Regulation 2004?

The Children's Services Regulation 2004¹¹ is in place to ensure that children who attend centre-based services are safe, provided with appropriate care and exposed to an appropriate educational environment. *I Move We Move* helps to support your service to meet aspects of the Regulation concerned with physical development and small screen recreation.

I Move We Move will do this by providing Children's Services with:

- Practical physical activity and small screen recreation learning experiences and ideas that can be included in the daily program
- Information on developing physical activity and small screen recreation policies to support early childhood services

The Regulation is currently under review with a new regulation expected to take effect during 2010¹². Although *I Move We Move* has been developed under the current Regulation, if necessary the *Good for Kids* program will adapt our strategy to continue to support physical activity in Children's Services in a manner that is consistent with the new Regulation.



Section Two

Whole of Service Approach

I Move We Move – The Guide

Whole of service approach to encourage physical activity

A whole of service approach to physical activity is recommended to support and sustain the promotion of physical activity in your service and involves ensuring that physical activity is a focus area of:

- Policy
- Curriculum, teaching and learning experiences
- Staff development and training
- Equipment, resources and physical environment
- Partnerships with families
- Monitoring and evaluation

Adopting a whole of service approach to physical activity will act to reinforce the importance of physical activity in your service and create a culture which values and is supportive of children's physical activity.

Policy

A physical activity policy ensures that physical activity is highlighted as a priority for your service. A physical activity policy will ensure that practices around physical activity are in line with current recommendations, are of high quality and also consistent. Having a physical activity policy enables both staff and families to be aware of the service's policies and practices. Informing new staff and families of your physical activity policy will make them aware of the expectations of your service regarding physical activity of children whilst in care.

What should we include in the policy?

Your physical activity policy should state the aim of the service in relation to children's physical activity and outline the strategies that will enable the aim of your policy to be met.

Your physical activity policy should describe how your service will:

- Ensure children have adequate opportunities to be physically active in a manner that:
 - Is in line with current recommendations for young children
 - Supports both adult guided activities and free active play
 - Supports development of fundamental movement skills
 - Is appropriate to their stage of development
 - Is in a physical environment that is challenging yet safe
- Limit small screen recreation and sedentary behaviours
- Ensure that all staff members have appropriate knowledge and skills in the area of physical activity
- Provide learning experiences for children about physical activity both opportunistically and through programming
- Inform families of the service's physical activity policies and practices
- Engage families in developing, implementing and evaluating physical activity policies and practices
- Educate families about physical activity, both opportunistically and through programming
- Evaluate and review your service's practices in the area of physical activity

The strategies to support these goals will differ between services.



See Resource 1 (page 2.11) for a physical activity policy checklist

See Resource 2 (page 2.12) for a sample physical activity policy outlining goals and strategies that can be adapted to your service's needs

See Resource 3 (page 2.14) for further reading which may assist when developing your policy

Curriculum, teaching and learning experiences

Physical activity in early childhood is important as it provides an ideal opportunity to set a strong foundation for active habits into adolescence and adulthood and also develop lifelong skills. Children's Services can maximise opportunities for children to be active through incorporation of physical activities into the curriculum, active play and learning experiences. The learning experiences should be integrated throughout the day. They can also provide opportunities for developing other skills in the following key areas:

- Physical development (sensory, fine and gross motor skills)
- Social development (interacting with adults and other children, ability to work as part of a team and controlling behaviour)
- Science and mathematics (the environment, gardening, counting and numbers)
- Language and communication (listening, talking, reading, using pictures)
- Art and creativity (painting, dramatic play, dance)

For example, to link stability skills learning experiences to other areas of the curriculum you could ask preschoolers to think of what their body looks like when they stretch, bend, twist or balance then demonstrate and draw it. The drawings could then be made into prompt cards for these activities. Your children may like to create their own set of cards using their ideas.



Legs apart, arm stretched up to the sky

The integration of physical activity learning experiences throughout the day should involve:

- Opportunistic learning
- Programmed learning experiences
- Linking the learning experiences with the home

The promotion of healthy physical activity habits is part of the National Childcare Accreditation Council's Quality Improvement and Accreditation System. By providing learning experiences that encourage physical activity, accreditation requirements will also be met¹³.

Learning experiences should be based on children's individual interests, their age, their prior knowledge and include the basic principles of each fundamental movement skill for the particular age group. The **I Move We Move** Physical Activity Handbooks provide examples of learning experiences for physical activity and small screen recreation to integrate into your service's everyday programs and practices. It also provides ideas to develop additional learning experiences. These experiences can be adapted and extended as required to better suit individual children and services.

Staff development and training

It is important that staff have adequate skills and knowledge in the area of physical activity and fundamental movement skill development to ensure that staff practices around physical activity are high quality, sustainable, uniform and also safe. Services should look to provide staff with ongoing professional development in this area. This will also help to meet the requirements of the Children's Services Regulation 2004¹¹. **I Move We Move** supports those aspects of the Regulation concerned with physical development and small screen recreation in the following ways:

- Provides early childhood staff with practical physical activity and small screen recreation learning experiences and ideas that can be included in the daily program
- Provides information on developing physical activity and small screen recreation policies to support early childhood services

Services can develop the skills of their staff to better encourage children to be active and ensure appropriate movement skills development through:

- Supporting staff to attend physical activity professional development activities
- Inviting expert speakers to provide professional development to staff
- Using **I Move We Move** as a basis for training for staff

Partnerships with Families

Staff in Children's Services form close relationships with parents, carers and the whole family, which are built on respect and trust. Having good partnerships with families provides an opportunity for your service to discuss ways to maximise the health and well-being of their child in an open, non-judgemental and respectful way that supports families in making lifestyle changes. Successful partnerships with families around physical activity will be facilitated if Children's Services can communicate effectively with parents/carers and educate them about ways to encourage making positive changes to physical activity behaviours and engage them in the provision of physical activity opportunities for children.

Supporting families with communication and education

Communicating effectively with families about physical activity will involve recognising and appreciating their existing knowledge, experience and also circumstances of the family, and encouraging them to share their point of view. When providing information to families in relation to physical activity, you should ensure that it is both relevant to the family and their child and also realistic by taking into account any challenges that they may face.

Attempts to ensure children develop healthy lifestyle habits are more effective using the whole of family approach rather than a child centred approach. Therefore, sharing information and working together with families is a key factor in promoting physical activity in Children's Services.

Communicating with families about physical activity should occur in the same way your service communicates with families about other aspects of their child's experience at your service. Use a variety of methods and tools to assist you communicate with families, such as information in newsletters, on notice boards or during discussion with parents when they come to pick their child up. You could include information on children's daily participation in physical activity and small screen recreation in an activity chart or your day book.



See Resource 4 (page 2.15) for some newsletter inserts for families

The types of information you communicate to families might include the:

- Service's physical activity policy
- Types of opportunities for physical activity (including fundamental movement skill development experiences) that are being provided for children
- Physical activity learning experiences occurring at the service
- Policy and practices in regards to small screen recreation
- Ideas for families to provide appropriate physical activity experiences at home, including fundamental movement skills development and incorporating physical activity into daily routines at home
- Ideas for families on how to limit small screen recreation at home

The emergent curriculum provides Children's Services with a specific opportunity to involve families in the programming activities in your service¹⁴. Families bring with them experiences, interests and skills which they are only too happy to share. There are a multitude of ways that family members can be involved with physical activity policies and practices of your service. These may include encouraging parents/carers to be involved in and contribute to:

- Development, implementation or review of the service's physical activity policy
- Awareness raising and action on physical activity by playing the role of family advocate for physical activity on the service's parent committee (this may be a new for your committee)
- Physical activity learning experiences



Nurturing active children using provisions from home

Resources brought in from home can help support children's learning and also assist in building self esteem. Children will feel that they are valuable contributors to the emerging curriculum.

A family hobby can spark great interest within the child care setting. This family favourite past time is water skiing and biskitting. As the children happily demonstrate their water skiing ability and discuss their hobby, they impart valuable information to their peers. The topics covered in their discussions include balance, strength, turn taking, vocabulary extension, safety and much more. This builds their self esteem and confidence.

This simple display enables staff to experience the child in a family context while it gives the parents and children an opportunity to contribute to the emerging curriculum.



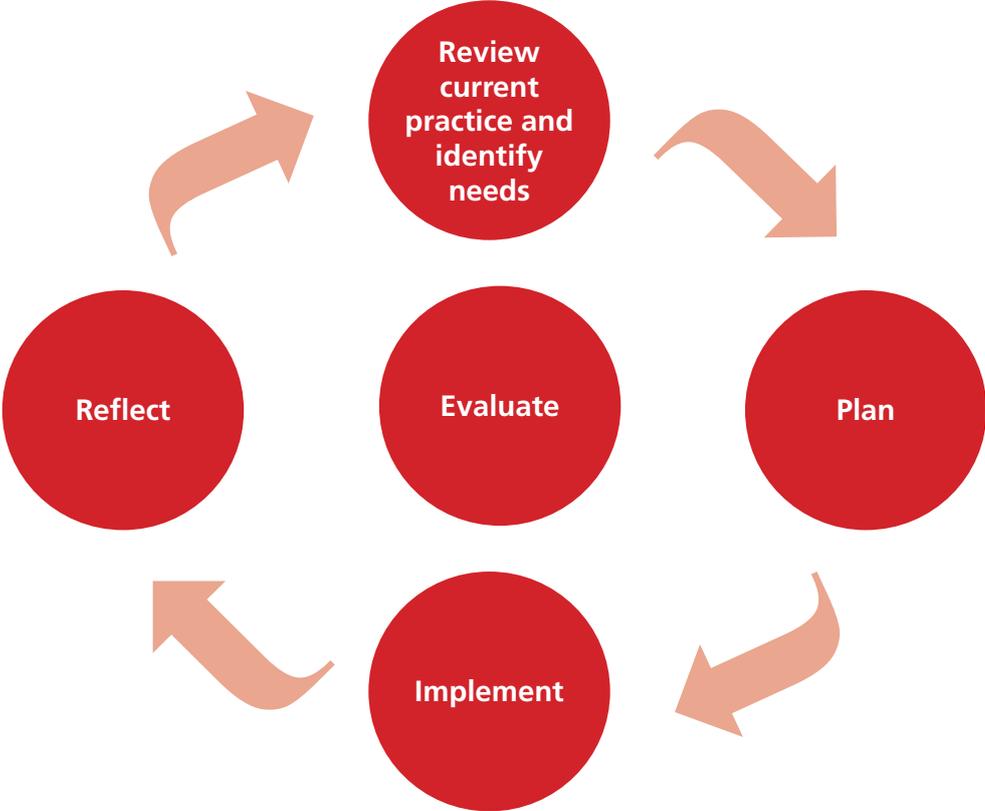
Evaluation

Evaluating your policies and practices is important to allow you to find out if they are having the intended effect, if they are having any unintended effects (good or bad) and to provide you with information to further refine or improve them. As shown in the diagram below, evaluation is an ongoing process aimed at ongoing service improvement. The National Childcare Accreditation Council states that programs should be evaluated regularly to meet accreditation standards¹³.

When evaluating your service's physical activity policies and practices, you can gather information about how they are working and how they could be improved through:

- Staff feedback
- Parent feedback
- Child feedback and/or observation (see Section Three for ways on how to monitor)
- Whether the practice had the intended effect (e.g. have children's fundamental movement skills improved?)

The process for developing or reviewing your physical activity policy and practice is shown below. This diagram shows that evaluation is integral to the process and should occur when necessary throughout the process.



Create a supportive environment for change

Create an understanding amongst your staff and families of “why” physical activity and movement skills are important for your service to consider.

Ideas for generating interest and support

- Put up some newspaper snippets on the walls
- Display key facts and attention grabbing information around the centre or include in newsletters

Build on your strengths

- Identify what you are already doing, what would be easiest to start doing and what things you might tackle in the future
- Decide with staff and families, which things are the most important (it may not be possible for you to make all the changes required at once)
- You might like to start with something that is familiar and easy

What is working and what is not?

- Work out what changes are working for your service and if they are effective
- Ask yourself whether the changes meeting your service's needs. Are families, children and staff satisfied and happy with the changes?
- Don't be afraid to tweak what you are doing based on your reflections, feedback and any changing circumstances
- The appropriateness of the information and suggestions regarding how you might use this for your service will depend on your service's philosophy, staff, facilities, and the needs of your children and families

Case Study



Building on strengths, how it might work in practice

You might like to start with the area of limiting small screen recreation and other sedentary behaviour. For many services this is likely to be an area where there are already restrictions or guidelines in place.

Policy

- Develop up a policy on small screen recreation and add in some information on limiting time that children spend seated or inactive
- Display and promote the new policy

Staff practice

- Conduct an in-service to staff on policy
- Implement practice change to monitor children's participation in small screen recreation and time spent seated or inactive, particularly if it is during to free active play

Families

- Seek their feedback on the policy during its development
- Send information home to parents on policy and small screen recreation
- Encourage families to have a "Power Down" night at home where they don't participate in any small screen recreation or conduct a "Power Down Challenge" as a fundraiser

Environment

- Remove the television and DVD player from the view of children



Resource 1: Physical activity policy checklist

Use this checklist to develop or review your physical activity policy. Aim to get a tick in every box to have a best practice physical activity policy.

Policy Introduction

- Includes an overall aim of the service in terms of physical activity
- Includes specific goals that support the aim of the policy
- Includes a list of strategies which enable the goal to be met

Limiting Small Screen Recreation and Time Spent Being Sedentary

- Includes how the service will limit small screen recreation and sedentary behaviours in line with current recommendations

Physical Activity Environments

- Includes a statement on how the indoor and outdoor environment is designed to accommodate active play and fundamental movement skill development
- Includes a statement on how the physical environment is designed to encourage children to create their own opportunities for physical activity
- Includes information on the service's safety and risk management procedures relevant to physical activity

Monitoring and Review

- Includes information on how the service will monitor children's physical activity progress in regards to active play, sedentary activities and fundamental movement skills
- Includes information on how and when the service will evaluate their physical activity policies and practices. Include time frames for review.

Learning Experiences

- Includes a statement on providing planned physical activity learning experiences
- Includes a statement on identifying opportunistic physical activity learning experiences
- Includes a statement on assisting with fundamental movement skill development through appropriate instruction and guidance
- Includes a statement on educational strategies for limiting small screen recreation

Staff Knowledge and Skills

- Includes a statement outlining how relevant staff will be trained in physical activity and how knowledge and skills will be maintained

Promoting Physical Activity and Skill Development

- Includes how the service will encourage children to meet their physical activity requirements
- Includes a statement on ensuring this is done in a manner that is developmentally appropriate
- Includes a statement on the importance to staff role-modelling positive physical activity behaviours
- Includes a statement that supports development of children's fundamental movement skills in a physical environment that is challenging yet safe

Partnerships with families

- Includes a statement regarding consulting families during the development and review of physical activity policies and procedures
- Includes information on the service's physical activity communication strategies with parents

Resource 2: Sample physical activity policy

(Insert early childhood service name) recognises the importance of physical activity for young children. Implementation of appropriate physical activity practices in Children's Services supports the health and development of children in care, as well as assisting in establishing positive lifestyle habits for the future.

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 draft recommendations.

The *National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 years*^{*6} are:

- *“For healthy development in infants (birth to 1 year), physical activity – particularly supervised floor-based play in safe environments – should be encouraged from birth;*
- *Toddlers (1 to 3 years of age) and pre-schoolers (3 to 5 years of age) should be physically active every day for at least three hours, spread throughout the day;*
- *Infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers should not be sedentary, restrained, or kept inactive, for more than one hour at a time, with the exception of sleeping”.**
- *“Children younger than 2 years of age should not spend any time watching television or using other electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games)*
- *For children 2 to 5 years of age, sitting and watching television and the use of other electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games) should be limited to less than one hour per day”**

* These recommendations are draft and subject to endorsement by the Australian Health Ministers' Conference.

Strategies

1. Promote physical activity and skill development

The service will:

- Aim to encourage toddler and preschoolers to accumulate at least _____ hours of physical activity during their time in care
- Ensure staff provide daily opportunities for both adult guided skill development activities and physically active free play indoors and outdoors
- Ensure staff role model and join in active play time
- Ensure staff use 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

2. Provide physical activity based learning experiences for children both opportunistically and throughout the program

The service will:

- Ensure physical activity learning experiences are planned consistently throughout the program and the curriculum
- Ensure that staff routinely identify opportunities to engage children, educate and promote appropriate physical activity skills and active play
- Discuss with children the role of small screen time in their lives and support them in making healthy choices about their use of small screen recreation for both education and recreation

3. 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 viewing 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 the time children spend being seated or inactive (other than during meal or nap times) during their time in care

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

The service will:

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

5. 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
- 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

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

The service will:

- Routinely consult and inform parent and carers of physical activity practices and policies when undergoing development or review
- 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

7. Monitoring and review

The service will:

- Record and monitor children's physical activity progress as part of routine observation of children's development. This will include time spent in active play, sedentary activities and progress with fundamental movement skills.
- Review the physical activity policy every (insert timeframe for review)

Resource 3: Further information on physical activity

1. Koringa Hihiko Active Movement program Sport and Recreation New Zealand Resources include:
 - A booklet summarising the research about the crucial role movement plays in human development, written specifically for people involved with children in their early years – educationalists, recreation providers and parents/caregivers
 - A series of brochures containing ideas and information on how to get infants, toddlers and young children moving
 - A series of videos showing activities for children in the different age groups under 5
<http://www.sparc.org.nz/education/active-movement/overview>
2. Fundamental Movement Skills Teacher Resource (Kit) – preparing children for an active lifestyle. Western Australian Minister for Education, Steps Professional Development Perth (Edith Cowan Uni – Dr Beth Hands, Marie Martin, Philippa Lynch) 2004 Western Australian Minister for Education, Steps Professional Development Perth (Edith Cowan Uni). Includes:
 - Book 1 – Fundamental Movement Skills; Learning, Teaching and Assessment
 - Book 2 – Fundamental Movement Skills; The Tools for Learning, Teaching and Assessment
3. Early childhood physical activity programs Department of Sport and Recreation Queensland. Resources available include:
 - Move Baby Move – a booklet for parents that includes appropriate activities for babies as they develop
 - Active Alphabet – consists of two booklets – one for parents and carers; and one for toddlers
 - Let's Get Moving – a booklet for parents, teachers and early childhood carers that includes games and activities to help preschoolers get active
<http://www.sportrec.qld.gov.au/CommunityPrograms/Schoolcommunity/Earlychildhoodprograms.aspx>
4. Yulunga: Traditional Indigenous Games resource, Australian Sports Commission Indigenous Program
 - Games suitable for 4–6 years
http://www.ausport.gov.au/participating/indigenous/games/traditional_games
5. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Advisory Group Inc (ATSIECSAG)
 - Poopajyn Boori Norta Norta Boola "Little Children Learning Together" – allows Indigenous and non-Indigenous children a chance to receive appropriate education about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures
www.aecssu.org.au
6. NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service
 - Play is all about learning – A guide to play for parents of children 0–2½ years
 - Play is all about learning – A guide to play for parents of Children 2½ – 5 years
 - How to get children moving
 - Healthy food + happy lifestyle = happy life for my family
 - Happy Playtime makes happy children
www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au
7. Putting Children First, the magazine of the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) Issue 30 June 2009
 - Supporting children's development: Gross motor skills (Pages 3 – 5)
 - Including Aboriginal Australia in your service (Pages 9 – 11)
 - Using television in child care (Pages 22 – 23)
http://www.ncac.gov.au/resources/pcf_index.asp
8. The Good for Kids. Good for Life website of Hunter New England Health
www.goodforkids.nsw.gov.au
9. The Healthy Kids website – a joint initiative of NSW Health, The Heart Foundation, NSW Department of Sport and Recreation and NSW Department of Education and Training
www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au

Resource 4: Newsletter Inserts

The newsletter inserts cover the following topics:

Why is physical activity important for young children?	2.17
Children greatly benefit from being physically active	2.18
How much physical activity do young children need?	2.19
What can I do to help my children be active?	2.20
Young children and TV	2.21
What can I do to help my children have less small screen time?	2.22

The content of these newsletter inserts has been adapted from:

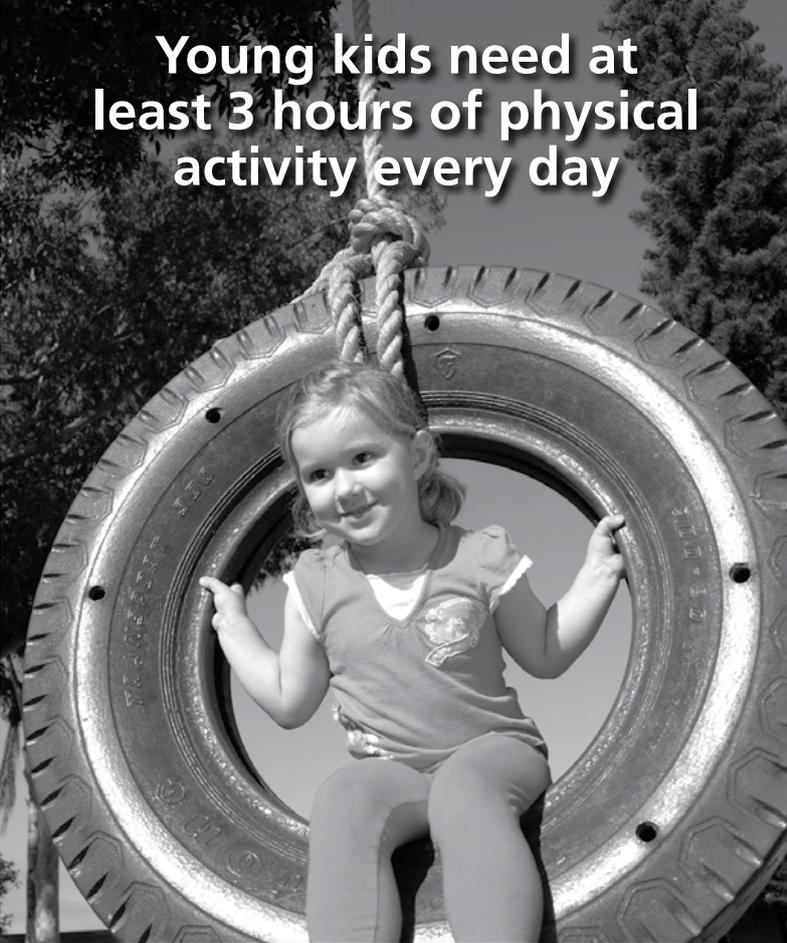
- Munch and Move Resource Manual. NSW Health, June 2008⁴
- National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 years* (these recommendations are draft and subject to endorsement by the Australian Health Ministers' Conference). Federal Department of Health and Ageing, 2009⁶
- Moving to learn: an essential guide for all parents, carers and educators. Crowe and Connell, 2003¹⁵
- Australia's Physical Activity Recommendations for 5-12 year olds. Federal Department of Health and Ageing, 2004⁵
- Young Media Australia factsheets <http://www.youngmedia.org.au/>
- Australian Institute of Family Studies. Growing Up in Australia: The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children: 2004 Annual Report. Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2005⁹

Why is physical activity important for young children?

Regular physical activity is important for children as they grow and develop. Making physical activity a priority and encouraging good habits in young children (from birth to five years old) can help them to develop the skills (like jumping, catching and kicking) they need to continue being active throughout their lives.

Children that are not physically active enough will not have the chance to adequately develop these skills and good habits and so are at increased risk of becoming overweight or obese. This makes it even harder for them to be active and keep up with others, either in sport or in play.

Long term, being overweight or obese can contribute to conditions such as high blood pressure and cholesterol, Type II diabetes and liver disease. Recent research has shown that warning signs for these conditions can be present in overweight teenagers as young as fifteen.



Young kids need at least 3 hours of physical activity every day

Find out more www.goodforkids.nsw.gov.au

Good for kids
good for life

LIVE LIFE WELL | NSW@HEALTH
HUNTER NEW ENGLAND
AREA HEALTH SERVICE

Children greatly benefit from being physically active

Being active and eating healthy foods is good for life as it helps kids to:

- Grow and develop healthily
- Build strong bones and muscles
- Improve their concentration
- Improve their balance, coordination and strength
- Develop skills like jumping, catching and kicking
- Maintain and develop flexibility
- Achieve and maintain a healthy weight
- Improve cardiovascular fitness
- Relax
- Improve posture
- Make friends
- Improve self-esteem

Young kids need at least 3 hours of physical activity everyday.



To find out more www.goodforkids.nsw.gov.au

Live Life well

NSW HEALTH
 HUNTER NEW ENGLAND
 AREA HEALTH SERVICE

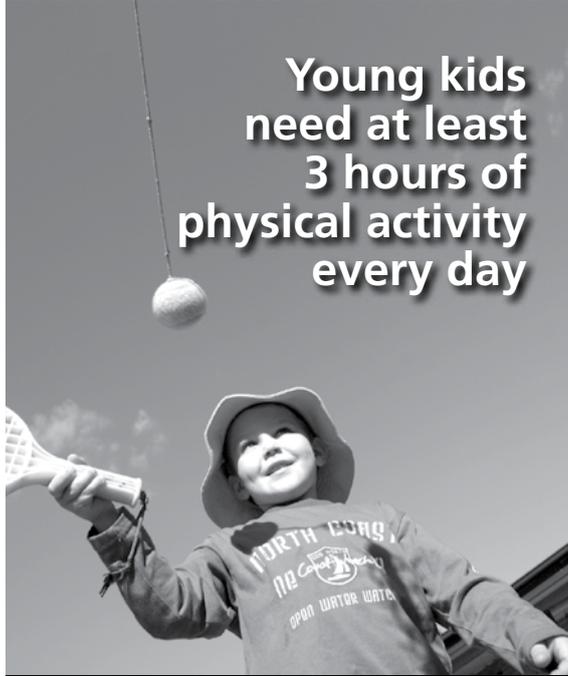
Good for kids
 good for life

How much physical activity do young children need?

For healthy growth and development, it is best for young children to be physically active every day in as many ways as they can and not be inactive for long periods of time. The more time children spend sitting the less time they have for playing and being active.

There are *National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 years* (these recommendations are draft and subject to endorsement by the Australian Health Ministers' Conference). To support and guide parents and carers of young children in working towards meeting these new recommendations, *Good for Kids* encourages that:

- Babies (from birth to 1 year old) are placed on the floor in a safe spot for supervised play time (e.g. on their tummy with soft toys), whenever they are awake. Start with 10 seconds each time, building up to 10 minutes or as long as baby is enjoying it
- Toddlers and preschoolers (1 to 5 years) participate in at least 3 hours of physical activity each day. This can be done in short blocks of time spread throughout the day. This can include active playtime, walking or riding for transport and leisure activities
- All young children avoid being sedentary or inactive for more than 1 hour at a time unless they are sleeping
- All young children limit the amount of time spent sitting still in front of 'small screens' (television or computer) for fun. Let's call this small screen time. Less small screen time gives children more time for other important things like active play time and reading time (with you or by themselves) that help develop their body and brain
- Children under 2 years old avoid any small screen time
- Children aged 2 to 5 years keep small screen time to no more than 1 hour a day



**Young kids
need at least
3 hours of
physical activity
every day**

Find out more www.goodforkids.nsw.gov.au

Good for kids
good for life

LIVE LIFE WELL | NSW@HEALTH
HUNTER NEW ENGLAND
AREA HEALTH SERVICE

What can I do to help my children be active?

- Be an active role model and have a positive attitude to being active. If your children see you enjoying physical activity and having fun it can encourage them to participate
- Encourage active play in the backyard, going for a fast walk, dancing to music, riding a bike or more vigorous activities like running and swimming
- Make time to be active as a family – walk with your children to a local park, go bike riding or walk the dog
- Help your children 'play active' by buying gifts that encourage physical activity such as balls, bats, skipping ropes and other equipment. This will be a fun way to help your children develop and practice their skills
- Park further away from your destination, whether it's childcare, sport or the shops and walk the rest of the way
- Keep it interesting. If you can, let your child try a variety of activities so that they can find one or more of these that they enjoy and want to continue with
- The benefits of physical activity for young children build up over time. Start slowly and increase the amount of activity your children do over time, particularly if they are not currently active
- Limit the amount of small screen recreation time (time spent in front of the TV or computer for fun, not education) your children are allowed and encourage active alternatives

DON'T FORGET...

- Children should wear appropriate footwear such as well-fitted and supportive sandals or joggers. Thongs are not suitable for active play as they do not give the foot any support
- Hats and SPF 30+ sunscreen help protect skin of all ages from sunburn and skin cancer
- Encourage children to drink plenty of water when they are being active or playing outdoors
- Match an active lifestyle for your child with a healthy diet – remembering to limit foods that are high in saturated fat, sugar or salt



Young children and TV

Did you know?

- Small screen recreation time (time spent sitting still in front of the television or computer for fun, not education) is linked to becoming overweight or obese
- Children who watch TV (and the large number of ads for 'sometimes' foods) for more than two hours each day are more likely to have an unhealthy diet, less likely to eat fruit and less likely to participate in physical activity
- 89% of four to five year olds spend more than two hours watching television, videos or DVD's each day
- It is more likely that children will snack on foods that are high in sugar, salt or saturated fat when watching television
- Children that spend more time watching television in their first two years of life have poorer brain development including language skills and short-term memory skills
- Violence on television or in movies can impact on children's behaviour and self-esteem, as they can not distinguish between fantasy and reality



What can I do to help my children have less small screen recreation time?

The next time you switch on the TV, computer or games console for your child, stop and think. Is it daytime or night?

Could they do this when it is dark, when it's not possible for them to be outside playing?

You could try:

- Setting a limit for time spent sitting still in front of 'small screens' such as the television or computer. The recommended limit for small screen time is 1 hour per day for children aged 2 to 5 years and none for children less than 2 years old
- Helping your children choose how they will spend their small screen recreation time. Will it be all spent on watching TV or split up between TV, computer and electronic games?
- Being choosy about what TV programs your children watch and when – leave the TV off unless there is a specific program that your child wants to watch, then turn the TV off once it is finished or record it and let your child watch it at a more suitable time
- Keeping TV's and computers out of your child's bedroom – if they are in a common area of the house you can monitor use and save money. More computers and TVs means higher electricity bills
- Finding active indoor and outdoor alternatives for your children at the times when they are more likely to watch TV or play on the computer. Your children may enjoy helping you with everyday tasks if you make a game of it e.g. involve them in sorting the washing "Can you find two red socks?" "See if you can throw these socks into the washing basket like me". Put on some music to dance to. Play action games or sing songs with actions. Build an indoor cubby house or obstacle course – crawl under chairs, roll over pillows etc. Encourage active play in the backyard





Section Three

Physical Activity in Children's Services

I Move We Move – The Guide

Supporting physical activity in the context of early childhood services

Through your unique interactions with children, early childhood staff have the opportunity to guide choices towards establishing a physically active lifestyle supporting development, learning and movement. Physical activity, like any other skill or ability fostered through early childhood education, requires consideration of early childhood teaching principles and the individual philosophy of your service. Other important considerations specific to supporting physical activity and movement skills development in the early childhood setting are outlined in this section and have also been integrated throughout both The Guide and The Physical Activity Handbooks.

The nature of young children's physical activity

Young children's physical activity patterns are characterised by short intense bursts of activity intermixed with periods of rest or lower intensity activity. These short bursts need to be frequent enough throughout the day to meet children's physical activity requirements. The type of physical activity should be based around having fun and predominantly play-based through exploration; adult guided activities and unstructured play. Children aren't developmentally ready for organised activities like sports until they are six years old. Exceptions to this are developmentally appropriate organised activities such as learn-to-swim, gym fun or kindy gym and dancing taught by qualified instructors¹⁶.



See Section One, Introduction (page 1.2) for the National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0 to 5 years (NB these recommendations are draft and subject to endorsement by the Australian Health Ministers' Conference)⁶.

Developmental appropriateness

To ensure that opportunities for children to be physically active and acquire movement skills are developmentally appropriate, consideration need to be given to the age of the child, their cultural background and also the appropriateness of your guidance or instruction².

Age appropriate

As is the case for other learning areas in early childhood education, physical activity and movement skills should be considered according to the children's age².

Babies (birth to 1 year of age)

Babies should be encouraged to be as active as possible in a safe, supervised, minimally structured and nurturing play environment. For younger babies; who haven't yet learnt how to roll or crawl, physical activity can be encouraged via independent movements such as reaching and grasping, pulling and pushing, movement of their head, body and limbs during daily routines, and participation in supervised floor-play, including tummy time⁶. As babies learn to control their neck and head first, tummy time is important as it gives baby the opportunity to explore and strengthen what their bodies can do^{15,17}.

Being gently moved through space or watching stimuli that are in motion activates their senses and helps them learn about movement¹⁵. Examples include baby watching bubbles in the air or being laid across an adult's lap and held as the adult slowly moves their legs to move baby in various directions^{15,18}.

Once a baby is mobile, the type of physical activity expands to include creeping and crawling. Creeping and crawling are movements where baby crosses the midline of the body. This is where an eye, hand or foot of one side of the body is used in the space of the other eye, hand or foot. It encourages brain development through communication between the two hemispheres of the brain^{15,17}.

Adult guided developmental movement activities for babies will mostly be one on one interactions e.g. as a focus child experience or during care giving. However, for babies that are crawling, the room could be set-up to encourage and extend them to move and explore. For example place cushions, toys and/or chairs around their room for babies to crawl over, around, through or under.

Toddlers and preschoolers

Children aged 1 to 5 years old should be physically active every day for at least three hours in short bursts spread throughout the day⁶. How much time children spend being physically active at their early childhood service will depend on the unique characteristics of the children, families, staff and the context in which your service operates (e.g. number of daylight hours children are in attendance).

Physical activity for these age groups should occur primarily through physically active play but also as part of games, transportation, leisure, and planned activities⁶. Adult guided fundamental movement skills learning experiences could involve participation by children in large groups, small groups, pairs or as an individual activity.

For toddlers (1 to 3 years of age) learning to cross the midline of the body is extended from crawling to walking and climbing stairs, and some initial exploration of throwing, catching, striking and kicking of balls is appropriate.

For preschoolers (3 to 5 years of age) eye-hand and eye-foot movements such as throwing, catching and kicking balls which involve crossing the midline are further developed in this age group, as well as locomotor skills such as hopping, jumping and skipping. Exploring these and other fundamental movement skills continues to enhance brain development.



For more information and ideas see Sections Four and Five of The Guide and The Physical Activity Handbooks.

Individually appropriate

For physical activity, apply the same ideas to ensure that activities are individually appropriate, as you would for other contexts. Consider how to provide an environment that encourages and supports children's contributions, demonstrates value and respect and supports care for themselves and their peers while still being recognised and valued as individuals. For babies this includes responding to their verbal and non verbal communication; as to whether they are ready for the activity at that time (e.g. not too tired) and also developmentally.

Within any age group, there will be variation in the ability of children to participate in age appropriate physical activity across the spectrum of skill accomplishment from delayed to accelerated².

This variation may be due to the level of exposure to opportunities for skill development, where providing assistance or extension to individual children is appropriate. Also for children with a disability there may be some modifications needed to enhance the accessibility and inclusiveness of programs and the environment. All children have the right to be included in every aspect of an early childhood program. Legally there is a responsibility under the Disability Services Act 1993¹⁹ to ensure that this occurs.

There is a diverse range of equipment that you can use to assist in achieving this goal. These include communication facilitators such as jelly bean switches, boardmaker and pictorial exchange systems; as well as mobility devices and aids to assist in holding or using equipment.

Small changes and modifications can make a world of difference in supporting total inclusion. Strategies include:

- Ensure all staff are well trained and knowledgeable about any disability
- Look closely at OH&S issues and the implications for staff surrounding the facilitation of movement. How can these barriers be overcome?
- Talk to other professionals working with the child about how they can assist
- Talk to the child's family. They may have already solved the problem

Instructionally appropriate

To ensure an activity engages children and encourages them to continue practicing a skill (physical or otherwise); children need to succeed at the activity about 80% of the time². Supporting children to experience success will give them confidence to further explore and participate in physical activity. Feelings of success are important for children to develop strong perceptions of physical competence and self-esteem¹⁷.

Considering each child's developmental level will help you to present activities to young children in an appropriate way that facilitates success and ensures that skills are developed. One way of facilitating this success is to adjust an activity to make it harder or easier as required for each child's ability level. Another way is to ensure children's active participation. This can be achieved by having enough equipment per child for the activity (e.g. run a number of activities at once that use different equipment), minimising time that children spent waiting their turn and avoiding activities where children are eliminated from the game if they are tagged or drop the ball etc². It is also important that staff participate by joining in with children's active play and physical activity learning experiences, using verbal prompts and other appropriate teaching strategies to encourage and guide children's efforts.



For more information see Section Four I Move We Move Every Day and Section Five Learning How To Move (pages 5.3–10). For ideas on activities see The Physical Activity Handbooks.

Culturally appropriate

Physical activity settings offer excellent opportunities for children to learn to recognise differences and similarities, working with others, and to understand that different customs or cultural practices. Ensuring cultural appropriateness includes respecting differences and providing opportunities for active play and learning experiences appropriate and relevant to children from a variety of cultural backgrounds. There may be significant differences in the physical activity culture of families, even in fairly homogeneous groups².

It is important to invite and engage families and the wider community to participate in physical activity. Families sharing knowledge, games and activities which are unique to their culture or heritage can help develop a sense of identity and unity between families. To develop understanding and respect for Aboriginal cultures and promote stronger links with local Aboriginal communities; services can seek advice from parents and community members on familiar words (e.g. play) and traditional children's games and dances that would be appropriate for use in your service. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Sector Advisory Group (ATSIECSAG) website is a useful reference (see Section Two of the Guide, page 2.14).

Co-creating provocations for physical activity that are reflective of each child's unique social and cultural influences can assist in ensuring that the provocations are relevant, meaningful and inclusive.

Safety

It is important to check with families for any health issues that would need to be taken into account for children's participation in physical activity. For example a latex allergy in relation to use of balloons; breathing problems that may be triggered by exertion or materials used (such as feathers); or any joint or muscular problems that impact on the type of physical activity or the way that they can be undertaken.

The physical environment is also another important consideration, and should comply with licensing and accreditation requirements and risks avoided or managed as appropriate. As with any other important issue, safety for physical activity needs to be covered in your policies.



See Section Six, Active Early Childhood Environments (pages 6.6) for information on risk management.



See Section Two, Whole of Service Approach (page 2.12) for an example of a physical activity policy.



Section Four

I Move We Move Every Day

I Move We Move – The Guide

Promoting physical activity throughout the day

This section aims to provide ideas to encourage staff to actively create and make use of opportunities to support and promote physical activity throughout the day. It also aims to make physical activity fun and enjoyable so that all children will want to participate, by focusing on play-based activities. Whether it is the way music and movement is explored, the props provided for dramatic play, how transitions are experienced, the use of active play during group time or water play; the early childhood setting is alive with opportunities for children to be active.

Ideas to promote physical activity



See the Physical Activity Handbook – Babies (Table 1, page B.2), the Physical Activity Handbook – Toddlers (Table 1, page T.2), the Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers (Table 1, page P.2) for activities that can be done opportunistically throughout the day to promote physical activity.

Read on for other ideas that incorporate props, music or water or that can be done during transitions and group time.

Dramatic play

With appropriate props, dramatic play can contribute to incidental physical activity. Dramatic play has many developmental benefits for older toddlers and preschoolers including creativity, imagination, expression, spontaneity. It can also provide opportunities for children to deal with or work through various emotions. Here are some ideas:

- Use props both indoors and outdoors
- Provide dramatic props that encourage active play such as hobby horses for galloping and boxes that children can design as cars
- Fixed playground equipment can be transformed into a tent, cubby, cave, or outdoor shelter
- Provide a selection of the 'home corner' equipment outside such as clotheslines, wheelie washing baskets and shopping trolleys. These can extend children's symbolic and imaginative play into a more active context



Some other ideas for dramatic play can be seen in the Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers (Table 2, page P.5).

Music and movement

Songs and music are always great movement motivators. Children will often move spontaneously to music, so build it into each day. Movement can be encouraged through the use of action songs, circle games, musical instruments or singing; and music of different types including jazz, rap, classical or popular children’s groups on CD or DVD.

Take into account the developmental appropriateness of songs, rhymes and actions used to encourage movement. There are two age groups for this, children under 3 years old and children over 3 years old²⁰. Here are some examples for both age groups:

Appropriate for children under 3 years	Appropriate for children over 3 years <small>Note – these are not appropriate for under 3 year olds</small>
Large arm & hand movements	Crossing of midline
Simple repetitive language	Intricate fine finger movements e.g. “Incy, Wincy Spider”
Short repetitive songs or rhymes with actions	Songs that count backwards from 5 or 10
Linking to things that are familiar to them	Songs that use a number of different ideas in a short space of time e.g. “Head, shoulders, knees and toes”

Here are some ideas to promote physical activity and movement to music:

- Sing or play music when children are climbing, running, hopping etc. to extend and encourage participation
- Provide streamers, ribbons and scarves to encourage arm movements
- Pots and pans will encourage arm movements. Have a collection of saucepans, wooden and metal spoons, plastic bowls, saucepan lids and make a kitchen band
- Put bells on children’s wrists or ankles



See the Physical Activity Handbook – Babies (Table 2, page B.4), the Physical Activity Handbook – Toddlers (Table 2, page T.3), the Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers (Table 3, page P.6) for more music and movement ideas.

Water play

Children often have a natural interest in water. Water play can therefore be a great way to engage children in physical activity. Child safety should be ensured with any games or activities involving children and of course it is important to never leave young children alone near water or in the bath. With a few simple toys or props, water can be used in a variety of ways to encourage children to be active. Here are some ideas:

- Have a collection of water toys
- Preschoolers can wash equipment like bikes, cars, plastic plates and cups
- Children can help to water plants using a watering can. They can use the hose too!
- Small buckets with water and a paint brush is always fun. Toddlers can walk around “painting” the cement path, the shed, fence etc...
- Adding water to other materials like dirt and sand allows for creative messy play. Have some cooking equipment and utensils available such as small saucepans, spoons, patty cake tins, or even some trucks. Don't forget spades and buckets!!!
- Have soapy water and warm water to heighten sensory awareness or add fragrant oils to water e.g. lavender

Transition activities

With ideas and imagination, transitions can become a simple way to contribute to physically active fun for preschoolers. Whether the transition involves moving between rooms, washing up for meals, toileting or heading outdoors, each provides an opportunity to contribute to incidental play-based physical activity. These activities can also provide children a chance to be creative and suggest ways they can be physically active as they transition. Activities can be modified to support children who want to participate but aren't quite ready to make movement suggestions. As they observe other children's ideas and you support their contributions, their participation will emerge.

Here are some ideas to encourage children to be active during transitions:

- Encourage each child to choose their own action movement style as they walk to the next activity, the children following can then copy or make up one of their own
- Encourage children to demonstrate their best animal movement such as hopping like frogs or stomping like a bear
- Use transport as a theme – let's see that bus, car, train, or truck arrive at their destination



See the Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers (Table 4, page P.8) for more ideas.

Active play in group time

Group time is a very important component of a child's day. It can be useful to help develop fundamental movement skills, as well as facilitate communication, team work and problem solving skills. Group times are great opportunities to encourage older toddlers and preschoolers to be physically active as there are a wide range of activities and games that staff can facilitate in small or large groups.

Here are some ideas to engage children in physical activity during group time:

- Musical chairs, limbo, "Simon Says", elastics and, "What's the time Mr Wolf?"
- Play charades – construct movement charade cards with the children
- Mirror games – children mirror the movement made by the adult, or the movement of another child (done in pairs)
- Play games such as 'I can see', 'What can you see?' e.g. 'I can see a plane flying high and low', . . . 'a tree swaying in the breeze' . . . 'a little boat on big waves'. The children perform what the adult calls out. The children can also take turns calling out 'I can see'



See The Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers (Table 5, page P.10) for more ideas.

Active play verbal prompts

This includes giving encouragement for children's physical activity efforts during free active play, for example 'Great try, have another go'. Also use prompts to challenge, extend activity and improve skills e.g. "Show me how fast you can run", or "What other things can you leap over?" You can also encourage movement through imitation of your movements by saying "See if you can balance/hop/jump like me." All of these types of verbal prompts are useful for encouraging physical activity during active play²³.



For more ideas on verbal prompts to support children being physically active see pages 5.5–7 of Section Five, Learning How To Move.

Be an active role model

To be physically active children need support and guidance from adults. Parents, carers and early childhood professionals play an important role in forming healthy habits in children. Children learn through role modelling. To be physically active, they need you to be.

It is important for staff to be active role models by participating in physical experiences such as games, dancing, action songs and outdoor play. Adult participation in any physical activity increases the participation rates of children, especially if staff demonstrate that they enjoy and value being active. This also maximises children's potential learning opportunities.

Physical activity no matter the weather

What do you do when you arrive at work and the weather seems unfavourable for outdoor play? It may be wet, windy, cold or hot.

Take a look at your resources within the centre:

- Do you have an undercover veranda? Could you utilise this? Of course you will need to ensure space requirements are met
- How can you make more space to accommodate physical activity indoors?
- What physical activity would be safe for this confined space?

Think about how existing equipment can be revamped, adapted or added to, in order to create a meaningful provocation which will support children to be physically active. Small parachutes, balls, bean bags, hoops, large foam blocks, gross motor mats suggesting movements, table tunnels, balance beams, targets etc... the list is enormous. Work with your colleagues, look through your equipment and be creative!



Have you thought about playing when it is wet?

Some considerations:

- BE PREPARED – Talk to parents about playing outdoors on wet days
- Work with staff and management to prepare policies which support wet weather play
- Have a supply of spare clothing for children and also ask parents to provide extra wet weather clothing as well as raincoats, rain boots and umbrellas
- Avoid play outdoors during very cold weather, very windy weather, hail storms or thunder storms
- Splashing in puddles is lots of fun for children, even when wet and not raining
- Monitor children closely as they have difficulty regulating their own body temperature
- How about adding some boats and oars?
- Pirates could even walk the plank! This also serves as a bridge for the children less eager to get wet!!!!

Case Study



Case study: Wet weather creates unique opportunities for physical activity

After a rain storm, an enormous puddle had developed. One of the boys had ridden his bike through the puddle and discovered he has made a wave. He asked others to help him create an even bigger wave. This interest continued for some time but was soon lost when another child spoke about the motor bike races that he saw where the riders got all muddy. The race had begun!!!!

“ Discuss with other staff how you may be able to incorporate some of the suggestions in this section of *I Move We Move*. At first this may appear a little daunting but together you will all reap the rewards. Children will be more involved and engaged. Their concentration will improve and as they master new skills their confidence and self esteem will increase. ”



Jannelle Gallagher
Authorised Supervisor, Kurri Kurri and District
Pre-School Kindergarten



Section Five

Learning How to Move

I Move We Move – The Guide

Fundamental movement skills in early childhood

This section of The Guide will help to familiarise you with fundamental movement skills and extend your knowledge and practice for facilitating the development of these skills for children in your care.

What are the fundamental movement skills?

Fundamental movement skills are specific gross motor movements that involve different body parts such as feet, legs, trunk, hands, arms and head. They are the alphabet or 'building blocks' for more complex and specialised skills that are required to play different games, sports and recreational activities offered in the school years and in the community.

Fundamental movement skills are categorised either as stability, locomotor and manipulative².



Stability skills – moving or standing still with one body part making contact with the ground or equipment, and moving around the vertical or horizontal axis of the body i.e. balancing, stretching, twisting, bending etc. These can also be called non-locomotor skills.



Locomotor skills – moving the body from one location to another i.e. walking, running, jumping, leaping, galloping, hopping, sidesliding.



Manipulative skills – imparting or receiving force from or to an object i.e. throwing, catching, striking, bouncing, kicking, underarm rolling or bowling. These can also be called object control skills.



See Figure 5.2 (page 5.11) for a detailed description and illustration of each skill.

Stages of fundamental movement skills development

Children do not naturally learn how to correctly perform fundamental movement skills as part of their normal growth and development. They need to be taught these skills and given opportunities to explore and practice them to become proficient.

Although proficiency in each fundamental movement skill is not expected until the end of primary school (i.e. Year 6), the earlier these skills are introduced through play experiences and exploration, the more likely children will be to engage in physical activity throughout their lives.

Children's acquisition of fundamental movement skills is characterised by a series of sequential levels as shown below in Figure 5.1.

If a child doesn't have the opportunity to go through the process of experiencing skill development in a sequential manner, proficiency in that skill is unlikely. Swimming and bicycle riding are classic examples; they are complex skills that require time, adult guidance, equipment and a suitable environment to develop and are much easier to master the earlier they are introduced².

Did you know?
 In 2004, proficiency in the sprint run, vertical jump, overarm throw, catch and kick by NSW children in Year 6 ranged from a low of 9.7% of girls for the overarm throw to a high of 49.3% of boys for the catch²¹



See Figure 4, page P.24 in The Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers for detailed information on the stages of fundamental movement skills acquisition.

Figure 5.1: Levels of fundamental movement skill proficiency²

Level	Pre-control or beginner lever → Control or advanced beginner level → Utilisation or intermediate level → Proficiency or advanced level							
Age group	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Most Toddlers and some Preschoolers</td> <td>→</td> <td>Most Preschoolers</td> <td>→</td> <td>Some Preschoolers Most Primary School age children in Kindergarten to Year 4</td> <td>→</td> <td>Most Primary School age children in Year 4 to Year 6</td> </tr> </table>	Most Toddlers and some Preschoolers	→	Most Preschoolers	→	Some Preschoolers Most Primary School age children in Kindergarten to Year 4	→	Most Primary School age children in Year 4 to Year 6
Most Toddlers and some Preschoolers	→	Most Preschoolers	→	Some Preschoolers Most Primary School age children in Kindergarten to Year 4	→	Most Primary School age children in Year 4 to Year 6		
Setting	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Need opportunities that encourage exploration and guided discovery at Children's Service and Home</td> <td>→</td> <td>Need opportunities that encourage exploration and guided discovery at Primary School and Home</td> </tr> </table>	Need opportunities that encourage exploration and guided discovery at Children's Service and Home	→	Need opportunities that encourage exploration and guided discovery at Primary School and Home				
Need opportunities that encourage exploration and guided discovery at Children's Service and Home	→	Need opportunities that encourage exploration and guided discovery at Primary School and Home						

This is the level that I Move We Move covers.

Learning fundamental movement skills

The importance of order of acquisition

The development of fundamental movement skills is age-related, however it is not age-dependent. Additionally the order in which children gain these movement skills is important, not the age they gain them²².



See Active Movement for Under Fives, Series One (babies and toddlers) and Fun Moves for Preschoolers; for video footage of gross motor development and fundamental movement skills for each developmental period.

There is an order in which each category of skills are developed – stability, locomotor then manipulative, and there is also an order within each category.



See Figure 5.3, pages 5.11 – 5.19 for the order of skills development within each category

There are three developmental periods in relation to gross motor development and the development of fundamental movement skills in young children (birth to five years old). The three developmental periods are from birth to 12 months, one to three years old and three to five years old. For individual children, these periods should be used as a guide only, as every child develops at a slightly different rate¹⁶.

As children's muscles develop from the head downwards and the centre of the chest outwards, physical activity or movement experiences should follow this development. An example of this in action for the fundamental movement skill of catching for each developmental period is:

- Baby tracking moving objects (bubbles, rolling ball) with his eyes when lying on his back, side and front
- Toddler being encouraged to pat and catch a large balloon
- Preschoolers playing catch in pairs across a waist height net using a balloon or light weight ball

“Throughout our busy daily schedules early childhood professionals are committed to supporting families and the children in their care. To achieve this we must be informed.

While services are very familiar with the current philosophy of Reggio and the 100 languages of children, it may be the case that we only really know 99 of these languages well and need to learn more about the language of physical activity. ”

Jannelle Gallagher

**Authorised Supervisor, Kurri Kurri
and District Pre-School Kindergarten**

A description of the three developmental periods and broadly what movement skills are important to develop in each period is provided below:

1. Babies (birth to 12 months)

Appropriate developmental movement helps babies to develop their muscles, inner ear and eyes in preparation for developing fundamental movement skills. This includes tummy time, where activities such as reaching for objects, turning of head or rolling toward a stimulus and movement of the arms and legs are encouraged¹⁶.

Development of locomotor skills occurs from about six months of age. These include crawling, using an object to pull themselves up to a standing position then continuing to use the object to support moving in an upright position, and finally walking¹⁶.

2. Toddlers (one to three years old)

Appropriate fundamental movement skills for toddlers to explore are:

- Stability – balancing, bending, stretching
- Locomotor – crawling and walking then run, jump, hop and gallop
- Manipulative – catching, throwing and kicking

Once children are walking well, development of other locomotor skills can be encouraged as well as stability and manipulative skills¹⁶. Children under two years of age are unlikely to have the hand-eye and foot-eye co-ordination required for manipulative skills, but encouraging experimentation will develop this co-ordination¹⁵. Nor will children less than two and a half to three years of age be likely to have an awareness of their preferred hand and foot for catching, throwing and kicking etc¹⁵. So, when encouraging toddlers to attempt catching, throwing and kicking it is important to let them choose which hand or foot to try first and then encourage them to have another go using the other hand or foot.



Did you know?
The awareness of preferred hand and foot, and hand-eye co-ordination developed through experimenting with manipulative skills is also important for other skills like reading and writing where there needs to be co-ordination of the child's preferred hand and eye¹⁵.

3. Preschoolers (three to five years old)

Appropriate fundamental movement skills for preschoolers to explore are:

- Stability – balancing, bending, stretching, twisting
- Locomotor – crawling, walking, running, jumping, leaping, hopping, side-sliding, galloping
- Manipulative – catching, throwing, kicking, striking a stationary ball, stationary dribbling

This period involves building on early development of and experimentation with each of the locomotor, stability and manipulative skills that occurred in the toddler period. Having specific opportunities to practice these skills and to receive feedback and encouragement from parents and other significant adults is crucial during the preschooler period. This is what supports improvement in these skills, as it does not occur as part of normal growth and development¹⁶.

The importance of planned, adult guided activities

As children do not naturally learn to correctly perform fundamental movement skills as part of their normal growth and development, it is important that children experience guided opportunities to practice and develop each skill. Children's Services can best facilitate the development of fundamental movement skills in children by providing frequent learning experiences as well as encouraging their efforts through giving verbal prompts. Ideas to support these practices are provided in the following pages.

Adult guided developmental movement activities for babies

Adult guided developmental movement activities will mostly involve one on one interaction (e.g. as a focus child experience or during care giving) or setting up the room to encourage movement.

Frequency and Duration

Programming adult guided developmental movement activities into each day will enable all babies attending the service to experience these activities at least once a week. Baby will let you know if they are ready to participate in the activity, both at that time and also developmentally.

Verbal prompts

Talking or singing to babies about what is happening, what body parts are being touched and moved during these activities assists with increasing their awareness of the existence, dimensions and abilities of their body overall and the individual parts¹⁵.



See The Physical Activity Handbook – Babies (pages B.8-B.12) for examples of adult guided developmental movement activities.

Adult guided fundamental movement skills learning experiences for toddlers and preschoolers

Similar to babies, adult guided fundamental movement skills learning experiences for toddlers mostly involve one on one interaction with adults. For older toddlers this could occur in groups and for preschoolers, adult guided fundamental movement skills learning experiences could involve participation in large groups of children, small groups, pairs or as individuals.

Frequency and Duration

Programming adult guided fundamental movement skills experiences into each day will enable all children attending the service to have the opportunity to participate several times a week. When deciding on learning experiences consider how much physical activity time your service is aiming for each day and ensure there is an appropriate balance of adult guided fundamental movement skills learning experiences as well as free active play.

Did you know?
Preschool aged children need a balance of adult guided activities and free active play every day.

Verbal prompts

Providing appropriate verbal prompts and feedback will enhance children's experience of learning fundamental movement skills. Providing feedback to children on what they need to do to improve their skills greatly enhances their learning. Try to 'sandwich' corrective feedback with two positive comments e.g. "That was a great effort. This time let's put the other foot forward. Keep trying!"²³

There is also a specific type of verbal prompt that explains how to perform a skill, known as a teaching cue. Teaching cues can be a very powerful strategy to help young children understand how to perform a skill. They should use simple words and/or imagery to describe a skill component and act as the stimulus for skill execution. For any of the skills you can demonstrate the movement and ask children to talk about what they think it looks like. Children can then come up with the cues for these movements themselves²³.



See Table 1 (page 5.7) for some examples of teaching cues that use imagery and simple words.

Table 1: Example child friendly teaching cues^{2,23}

Action	Teaching cue
Balancing on one foot with arms held out for balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold out your arms.[∞] • Show me your aeroplane wings[§]
Maintaining stillness of head and trunk when balancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep still. Keep your eyes on the spot on the wall (or other target you nominate). Tighten your muscles.[∞] • 'Still as statues' or 'There is a bee on your nose – don't move!'[§]
Jumping, where both arms are stretched forcefully forward and upward reaching all the way above the head to create momentum. Arms are then thrust downward during landing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bend knees. Swing arms. Land on both feet at the same time.[∞] • Reach for the stars and pull them down[§]
Catching, where arms are stretched in front to reach for the ball as it arrives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch the ball. Hands out, fingers stretched wide. Reach. Pull it in.[∞] • Imagine you are a frog and your hands are the frog's tongue and the ball is a fly. Catch the fly with your tongue and bring it back into your mouth[§]
Stationary dribble, where the ball is pushed down to the ground with the fingertips without slapping the ball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Push softly down on the ball with your fingertips. Soft fingers.[∞] • Use your fingertips and hand to pat the puppy on the head[§]
Striking, where the bat is swung to hit the ball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step and swing.[∞] • Like a swinging gate[§]

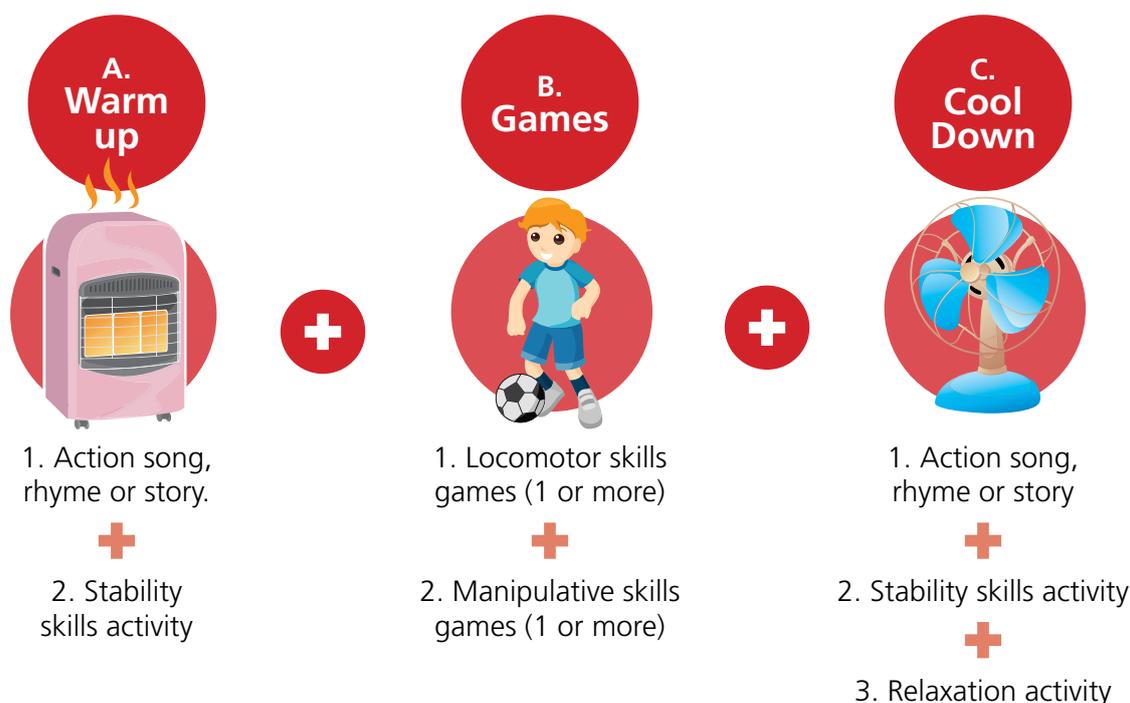
[∞] These teaching cues use simple words

[§] These teaching cues use imagery

Essential components of a fundamental movement skills learning experience for preschoolers

Fundamental movement skills learning experiences for preschoolers should include a skill specific warm up, a game or two targeting one or more fundamental movement skills and a cool down as shown in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2: Components of a fundamental movement skills learning experience for preschoolers



A. Warm up



The purpose of a warm up is to help establish good habits for future participation in active play, sports and other physical activity and to prepare children for the type of movement that is the focus of the learning experience. The warm up also increases core body temperature and gets the muscles and the brain ready to move. A warm up should last at least five minutes, starting with an action song or story, followed with an activity that uses stability skills (i.e. bending, twisting, stretching and balancing).

Stability skills are practised as part of warm ups and may involve stretching. Please ensure that stretching is gentle and slow, and only occurs to the point of tension or discomfort but never pain. Also ensure that alternate muscle groups are stretched. There are a number of movements that may be dangerous including movements that cause extension or flexion of a joint beyond its normal range (e.g. back arches, toe touches and deep knee bends), or involve sustained or held movements (e.g. held sit-up). Also repetitive movements, especially those that require twisting around a fixed base (e.g. trunk rotations) or excessive flexion (e.g. arm circling through a small range of movement activities, frog-jump repetitions), may be also be dangerous and should be avoided. If you are unsure about a stretch then please check with a doctor, physiotherapist or exercise physiologist²⁴.



See The Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers (page P.15) for more information and ideas for warm ups.

B. Games



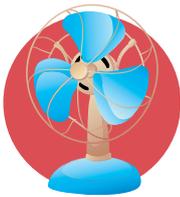
Games are where locomotor and manipulative skills are explored, experienced and practiced through play based activities. We provide ideas for games in The Fundamental Movement Skills Game Cards for Preschoolers. However, preschoolers will enjoy making up and playing their own games, particularly if you join in.

When playing games maximise 'doing' time by keeping time to a minimum between giving an explanation and allowing children to practice; it should only take seconds not minutes. The emphasis should always be on the process of performance and correct performance (not mistakes) rather than the product or outcome. This helps to ensure children experience success as does placing children in groups of similar ability and tailoring verbal prompts to individual skill level so the prompts assist or extend individual children as appropriate²³.



See The Fundamental Movement Skills Game Cards for Preschoolers for ideas for games.

C. Cool down



The cool down gives children time to calm down before moving onto other activities and may provide an opportunity to complete some slow stretching activities. Again, the major purpose of this stretching is to help establish good practices for future physical activity participation rather than the prevention of delayed muscle soreness.

The cool down should also be approximately five minutes in duration. A useful pattern is to start with an action song or story followed by a stability skills activity then a relaxation activity to help settle and relax the children. During the cool down, stretching should occur in the same manner as described for warm ups.



See The Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers (page P.20) for more information and ideas for cool downs.

Putting together a fundamental movement skills learning experience for preschoolers: A summary of the steps

In this section we have described the process of fundamental movement skills development and the importance of adults in facilitating this process. Specifically we have described the importance of daily, adult guided opportunities, of verbal prompts and the inclusion of a warm up, games and a cool down as part of an adult guided fundamental movement skills learning experience (see Figure 5.2, page 5.8). Below we outline a summary of the steps you may find useful when putting together a fundamental movement skills learning experience for preschoolers:

1. Get to know what each skill looks like (see Figure 5.3, page 5.11)
2. Plan and set-up the learning experience (time, space, equipment, content)
3. Engage children's interest in the learning experience (provocation)
4. Undertake a skill-specific warm up (see page 5.8 and The Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers, page P.15)
5. Provide a demonstration of the skill (see your fundamental movement skills lanyard) but don't verbally explain it. Keep the demonstration short and simple. If preferred, ask a competent child to demonstrate
6. Allow time for children to explore the skill and ask questions to guide their discovery. For example for the skill of kicking a ball, provide balls and ask the children to "Show me how many different ways you can use any part of your foot to kick the ball", prompting if needed – "your toes, the top of your foot/your shoelaces, each side, your heel"²³
7. Provide a demonstration focusing on key skill components and explain by providing or co-creating teaching cues with the children
8. Start the game or activity where children practice the skill
9. Allow some time for children to have a go first then, either as they are performing the skill or directly after; use verbal prompts to provide feedback
10. Extend and challenge by prompting children to use preferred/non-preferred hand/foot, increasing/decreasing distance, working to a time constraint
11. Undertake a cool down (see page 5.9 and The Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers, page P.20)

Figure 5.3: What do the fundamental movement skills look like?

A range of fundamental movement skills are outlined for each category i.e. stability, locomotor and manipulative, in the tables below.

Stability skills

The order in which stability skills develop is stretch, bend, twist and balance²².

Stretch²²

Summary description

Extends the body, it's parts and one or several joints vertically, horizontally, or to any point in between.

Key points

- Arms, legs, torso and neck can all stretch
- Can be done while standing, sitting, kneeling or lying



Bend²²

Summary description

Uses body joints (ball and socket or hinge) to bring two adjacent parts of the body together, generally towards the centre of the body.

Key points

- The body as a whole as well as many body parts can bend e.g. arms, fingers, legs and neck
- Bending and stretching are natural partners as once a body part is bent, it must straighten again



Stability skills (continued)

The order in which stability skills develop is stretch, bend, twist and balance²².

Twist^{2,22}

Summary description

Rotation of part of the body around an axis.

Key points

- Neck, trunk, arms and legs twist most easily
- Wrists, ankles, shoulders and hips twist to a lesser extent
- If rotating the trunk then heel of one foot should lift off the ground in the direction of the rotation



Balance^{2,22}

Summary description

There is an even distribution of weight on each side of a vertical axis. Static balance (in place) develops before dynamic balance (while moving).

Key points

- The centre of gravity is over the base of support
- Uses a wide base of support
- If on one foot, arms are held out for balance



Locomotor skills

The order in which locomotor skills develop is crawl, walk, run, jump, leap, gallop, hop, side slide and then skip²².

Crawl²²

Summary description

It is the action of transferring weight from one opposing set of knee and hand (e.g. left knee and right hand) onto the other set. The support knee and hand remain in contact with the ground whilst the other knee and hand leave the ground to move forward.

Key points

- Body is raised off the ground by hands and knees
- Opposite arm, opposite leg action
- Movement is forward rather than backward



Walk²²

Summary description

It is the action of transferring weight from the balls and toes of one foot to the heel of the other foot. There is continual contact with the ground.

Key points

- Body is straight / posture is upright
- Toes pointed ahead
- Weight is evenly distributed over all five toes
- Feet are moved side by side, rather than in a wide legged stance
- Arms swing in opposition to legs



Locomotor skills (continued)

The order in which locomotor skills develop is crawl, walk, run, jump, leap, gallop, hop, side slide and then skip²².

Run⁴

Summary description

It is a rapid movement that involves transferring weight from one foot to the other with a brief loss of contact with the ground by both feet.

Key points

- There should be a brief period where both feet are off the ground
- There is a narrow foot placement landing on the heel or toe (rather than flat-footed)
- The non-support leg is bent to approximately 90 degrees



Jump⁴

Summary description

Is the action of pushing off with both feet and landing with both feet.

Key points

- Preparation involves bending the knees and pushing the arms forcefully behind.
- Both arms stretched forcefully forward and upward reaching all the way above the head to create momentum.
- Take off and land uses both feet simultaneously.
- Arms are thrust downward during landing



Locomotor skills (continued)

The order in which locomotor skills develop is crawl, walk, run, jump, leap, gallop, hop, side slide and then skip²².

Leap⁴

Summary description

It is a graceful long step so the body lifts off the ground to cover a distance or go over a low obstacle. A short run before a leap aids the momentum of the leap.

Key points

- Take off is on one foot and land is on the opposite one
- There is a brief period where both feet are off the ground
- The arm opposite the lead foot reaches forward during the leap



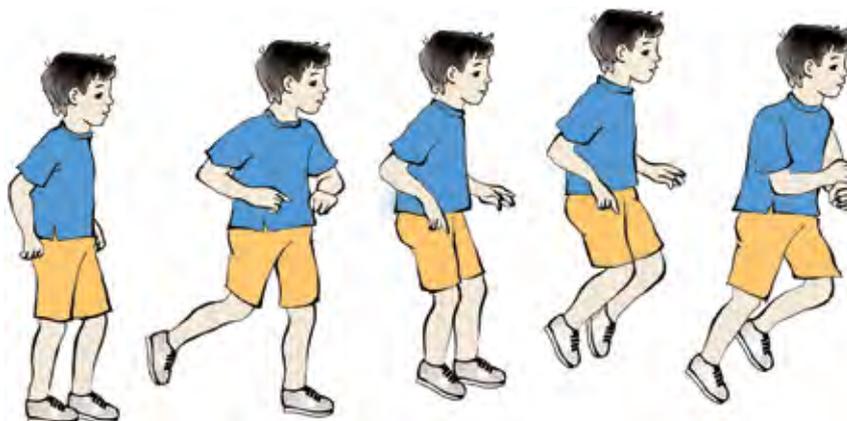
Gallop⁴

Summary description

It is stepping off one foot then sliding with the other foot in a forward direction. Weight is transferred from the front foot to the back foot with a small lift, before the front foot takes the next step. The stepping foot is always the front foot.

Key points

- Arms are bent and lifted to waist level at takeoff
- Step forward with the lead foot followed by a step with the trailing foot to a position next to or behind the lead foot
- There is a brief period where both feet are off the floor
- Can maintain a rhythmic pattern for at least four consecutive gallops



Locomotor skills (continued)

The order in which locomotor skills develop is crawl, walk, run, jump, leap, gallop, hop, side slide and then skip²².

Hop⁴

Summary description

It involves standing on one foot and lifting off the ground by leaning slightly on the hopping foot side and moving the bent arms out and in for balance.

Key points

- Starts with balancing on one leg and bending the non-support leg
- The non-support leg is swung forward like a pendulum to produce swing
- The non-support foot is kept behind the body
- Arms are bent and swung to produce the forward momentum
- Can take off and land at least four consecutive times on either foot



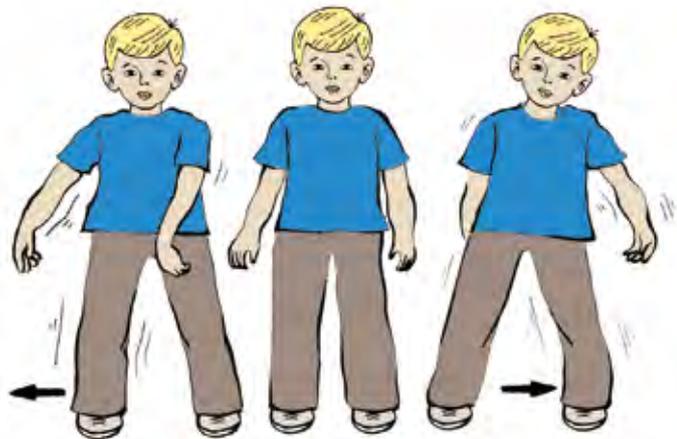
Side Slide⁴

Summary description

It is like a gallop but to the side and with minimal bounce.

Key points

- Body is sideways so the shoulders are aligned with the line on the floor
- Step sideways with the lead foot and then slide the trailing foot to a point next to the lead foot
- Can do four or more continuous step-slide cycles to the right then to the left



Manipulative skills

The order in which manipulative skills develop is throw (underarm, then overarm), kick, roll, dribble, catch and then strike^{2,22}.

Overarm throw⁴

Summary description

It is a manipulative skill that requires applying a pushing force to an object to propel it.

Key points

- Windup is initiated with a downward movement of the throwing hand/arm
- The child then rotates their hips and shoulders to a point where the non-throwing side faces the target
- The child's weight is then transferred by stepping onto the foot that is opposite the throwing hand.
- The throwing hand and arm then follow through beyond ball release in a diagonal movement across the body toward the non-throwing side



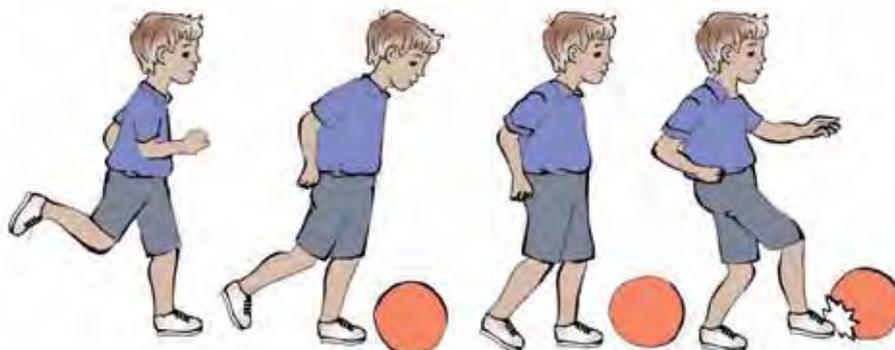
Kick⁴

Summary description

It is a manipulative skill that involves applying a pushing force to an object to propel it.

Key points

- Quick movement is made towards the ball
- Takes a long step or leap just before ball contact
- The non-kicking foot is placed even with or slightly behind the ball
- Kicks the ball with the shoelace area of the foot or the toe



Manipulative skills (continued)

The order in which manipulative skills develop is throw (underarm, then overarm), kick, roll, dribble, catch and then strike^{2,22}.

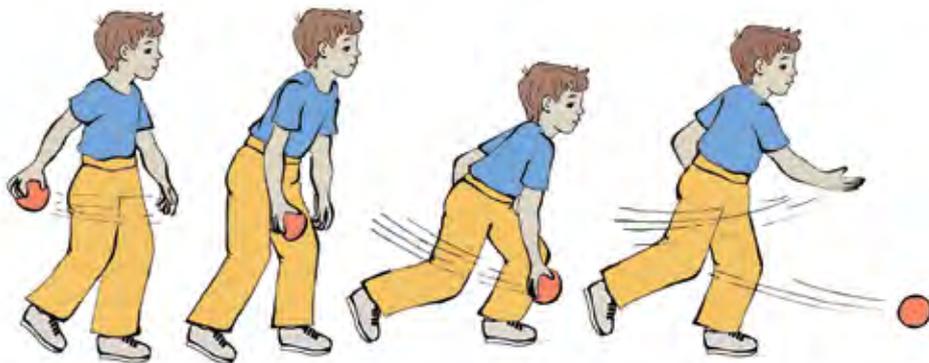
Underarm roll⁴

Summary description

It is a manipulative skill that involves applying a pushing force to an object to propel it along the ground.

Key points

- Swing the rolling hand back and down reaching behind the trunk while the chest and head faces forward
- Step forward with opposite foot to the rolling hand
- Bend the knees to lower the body
- Release the ball close to the floor so it does not bounce more than 10cm



Stationary dribble⁴

Summary description

It is a manipulative skill that involves applying a pushing force to an object and immediately receiving it again.

Key points

- Hold the ball with one hand at about belt level
- Push the ball down to the ground with the fingertips (do not slap the ball)
- Make sure the ball hits the floor in front of or outside the preferred foot
- Push the ball down again when it bounces to about belt level
- Try to do four or more bounces without having to move the feet to retrieve the ball



Manipulative skills (continued)

The order in which manipulative skills develop is throw (underarm, then overarm), kick, roll, dribble, catch and then strike^{2,22}.

Catch⁴

Summary description

It is a receptive manipulative skill that involves the receipt of an object. It is one of the more difficult fundamental skills.

Key points

- Preparation involves holding both hands in front of the body and elbows softly bent
- Arms are then stretched in front to reach for the ball as it arrives
- The ball is caught in the hands only, not the forearms



Strike a stationary ball⁴

Summary description

It is a manipulative skill that involves applying a pushing force with a bat to propel an object into the air. This is the most difficult fundamental movement skill to achieve.

Key points

- The dominant hand grips the bat above the non-dominant hand
- The non-preferred side of the body faces the imaginary bowler with the feet parallel
- The hips and shoulders rotate during the swing of the bat
- Transfer the body weight to the front foot
- Swing the bat and hit the ball



Monitoring progress

Recording children's skill levels for each fundamental movement skill will assist services to determine which children may need more opportunities to discover and explore certain skills and which children are ready for extension and challenge. Keep in mind that only some of the children at your service would be at either the utilisation level or the proficiency level for one or more fundamental movement skills; most would be at either the pre-control level or control level.

It is also useful to assess the success of the learning experience, i.e. did the provisions have an element of challenge appropriate to each child or were they too hard or too easy for most children? The provisions can then be adjusted immediately or next time to account for the differing levels of confidence and proficiency.



See the Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers (Figures 1 to 3, page P.22–23) for three examples of tools or documentation methods to assist in monitoring fundamental movement skills.

Please note that these are only examples and your service may already have unique and innovative practices which could be shared with the *Good for Kids* program and other services.



Section Six

Active Early Childhood Environments

I Move We Move – The Guide

Active early childhood environments

Research suggests that early childhood services can have a strong influence on children's activity levels in care. Children are more active in services with less fixed and more portable equipment; fewer opportunities for children to use electronic games; and larger playgrounds. This shows that the physical environment of a children's service plays a key role in influencing the opportunities for children to be active whilst in care²⁵.

You don't need lots of space or specific equipment to facilitate quality physical activity experiences. If your service has limited space and equipment, develop a rotational roster for children's outdoor active play and fundamental movement skills learning experiences.

Fundamental movement skills development and enabling children to be physically active can be enhanced by providing children with regular access to a variety of appropriate equipment, and in amounts sufficient for all children to be engaged at once without having to wait for a turn. It is also important that children have access to equipment and resources that promote physical activity indoors and outdoors.

The ideas in this section of The Guide will help to enhance the physically active utilisation of any kind of space to suit the needs of the children in your care.

Equipment

Any equipment used needs to be freely accessible and child friendly, which means that it is:

- Suitable for the child's size, skill and confidence levels e.g. balls of different sizes that are soft and easy to grasp, light weight bats with large striking surface and small grip
- Modified or substituted when appropriate e.g. balloons instead of balls, lower heights for nets and goals

This doesn't mean having every new, expensive piece of equipment available. The *Good for Kids* program suggests that you use basic equipment which is common in many Children's Services or make your own from every day household items.

Equipment to promote physically active play

Whether it be as part of a group activity, provocation or available to children during free play; with creativity, simple resources and equipment can be a great way to encourage active play. The information below describes some equipment ideas to encourage active play.

Balls

An assortment of balls should be readily accessible to children either placed in ball bags or in baskets on shelving. Children may use these for catching and throwing, kicking or target practice. There are many different types of balls such as plastic, beach, sensory, wobble, foam or stress balls. Please don't use hard or heavy balls e.g. cricket balls or standard sized basketballs.

Scarves or ribbon

Soft fabric is slow to move through the air giving the children time to track and prepare their bodies and hands for catching. Children can throw the scarves in a small area indoors or outdoors without fear of wayward projectiles. Scarves can be accessed at garage sales; op shops; or ask parents for donations.

Wooden jouncer boards

Placed on the ground these will encourage most children to test their skill without adult support. These boards can be placed into interesting configurations or left individually. Other materials can be added to these boards to make it more challenging and extend skill development.

Footprints

These can be purchased or made using the children's footprints after walking through finger paint. Cut these out and laminate. Adult or school aged family members may also volunteer to make the footprints. Having a selection of adult and child sized footprints will help to promote discussion about feet and walking. Make these using a variety of colours to add to the flexibility of how the materials can be used.

Make your own!

Re-use everyday household items to make equipment; helping to save the environment and your budget.

Bats

Roll up and then tape a newspaper, or use a cardboard tube e.g. from the inside of wrapping paper.

Skittles

Use milk bottles that have been washed.

Totem tennis

Attach a rope between two pieces of equipment and hang stockings with foam tennis balls from this. Add a few bats and you have achieved the same result at a fraction of the cost of buying a totem tennis set.

Crash mats

Fill queen sized bed quilt covers with foam off cuts from rubber stores – these can be bought cheaply from a rubber or foam products store. Put the off cuts into the cover and sew using a heavy weight thread.



For more equipment ideas and games to encourage active play involving torches, balloons, kites and parachutes see The Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers (Tables 1 and 6, pages P.2 and P.10).

Equipment to encourage fundamental movement skills development

Development of fundamental movement skills is enhanced by the provision and set-up of a variety of equipment and resources. Different equipment will encourage the exploration of different types of fundamental movement skills.

Table 1 provides ideas for equipment that could be used to promote each category of fundamental movement skills and to promote physical activity. You will also have your own favourites or find some new ones that you can add to the list.

Table 1: Equipment and resources to encourage fundamental movement skills development

Locomotor skills	Stability skills	Manipulative skills
Ropes to create pathways	Balance beams of different widths	Assortment of balls including soft and grip balls
Footprints	Balance discs	Sensory balls
Tunnels	Log ball	Frisbees
Tails	Hopper balls	Bean bags
Traffic cones	Gym balls	Balloons
Walk boards	Pedal peters	Lightweight cricket bats
Hoops	Stilts	Nets
Foam blocks	Walk boards	Totem tennis
Sand pit	Logs	Foam ten pin bowling set
Water bed bladders	Body rocker	Quoits
Mini trampolines	Rocking & twisting toys (e.g. a rocking horse)	Targets
	Flexible balance beams	Aiming equipment and numbers (e.g. goals, poles with one or more baskets)
	Stepping stones	Scrunched paper
	Low brick walls	Ball of wool
	Garden edges	



See The Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers (Tables 1 and 6, pages P.2 and P.10) for more ideas and information.

Setting up equipment to promote physical activity

Bringing different types of equipment together in specific set-ups and combinations is a great way to encourage development of fundamental movement skills. It is also important to regularly change the arrangement of equipment so that opportunities to promote physical activity remain fresh and exciting for children.

Use materials within the centre to make obstacle courses e.g. witches hats, cones/markers or chairs. Combine two materials e.g. footprints and bean bags to promote use of different skills such as walking, running and jumping. You could also use containers such as margarine and ice-cream tubs for children to step over. Attach containers to equipment or the floor with electrical tape or duct tape.



See The Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers (Tables 1 and 6, pages P.2 and P.10) for some fun and creative ways to set up equipment.

Opportunities to explore physical activity outdoors

In the outdoor environment there are endless possibilities for children to be physically active. Outdoor active play offers children the opportunity to structure their own play, to explore, and provides them with more room to move freely. Here we provide a few suggestions to encourage physical activity in the outdoor environment.



More detailed examples can be found in The Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers (Tables 1 and 6, pages P.2 and P.10).

Bike paths

Include speed humps, cones, crossings and 'Give Way' signs to encourage various types of movement.

Grassed areas

These allow for running, rolling, crawling or ball games.

Gardening

Having a digging patch allows children to be involved in active gardening experiences (e.g. digging, planting and watering) which increases their strength and coordination.

Sand pit

Why not use the sand pit to encourage children to jump. The sand pit can easily transform into a long jump pit. Have some tape measures or long pieces of string so children can measure their jumps. Children can assist by removing toys and raking the sand.

Amphitheatres

Setting up a mini amphitheatre can encourage active performances, dancing, movement and drama.

Plants and Foliage

Add a few pots with real plants – impatiens (big black caterpillars like these!) or geraniums. These easy care plants only require light watering and an occasional trim, which the children can do with their small scissors (muscle development for little hands). Children enjoy collecting flowers - another inspiration for movement. Encourage children to demonstrate how plants grow?? More inspiration for movement!

New opportunities to explore physical activity indoors

Indoor play can offer many possibilities for children to be physically active. Here are some ideas on how to create an indoor environment that invites active play.

Open spaces

Do you have an open space where the children come together for meetings or group time? This could double up as a physical activity area simply by adding equipment after the discussion or group time.

Indoor playground

Have you considered adding a playground off your socio-dramatic play area? This could include a see-saw, balls, slide, twist n turn carousel etc... You could even add a pedestrian crossing, road signs etc. This will also assist to develop road safety concepts.

Indoor circus

How about adding a circus tent by stringing up a parachute from the roof and attaching edges to a wall? Inside the tent add juggling balls, rocking horses, narrow balance beams, tumbling mats, low platforms connected by board. Remember to add protective matting!

Foot prints

Use the foyer or entry from the gate into the building to provide an opportunity for some fundamental movement skill provisions. Add footprints in specific patterns e.g. hopping, jumping. Parents or carers could participate as well. By adding some quick tips on the skills being developed, parents and carers begin to gain an understanding of the importance of each skill and will be more likely to encourage and support their child.

Visual and written materials to encourage movement

The reading area can include books which children can act out. Display photos, posters and images of the children being active.



Many of the activities could be adapted for indoor play in The Physical Activity Handbook – Preschoolers.

Risk management

Early childhood educators must look closely at the risk factors not only for the children but also for staff. Balancing what you know to be best practice with children's holistic development, while maintaining a challenging, but safe environment is important.

Providing an environment which supports safe, active play is important for all early childhood services. Ensuring that your service adheres to the indoor and outdoor play space and play equipment requirements set out in the Children's Services Regulation 2004 is a good starting point¹¹. Also take into account any allergies your children have to materials used e.g. latex allergy for balloons. Check for allergies at enrolment and orientation.

Take a fresh look at your physical environment, resources and equipment. Consider the layout of your service and take precautions to avoid injuries to children from things such as trip hazards, protruding objects and inappropriate surfacing beneath equipment. Equipment should be well maintained and all activities appropriately supervised.

Your centre will have an OH&S system in place for monitoring and managing risk. Ignorance is no excuse; if your centre does not have a system in place, work together with management, families and staff to develop it.

It is simply not an effective strategy to remove all materials which may include inherent risk. If that risk can be managed while supporting children's interactions with materials then take action – identify the risk, look at what is happening and what needs to be done to manage the risk, then implement a strategy to support the child's investigation and you in your role. Include these in your policy and practices. Many services discourage children from climbing trees or working with sticks. Why is that?

Think about the restrictions your service places on children: Are they for safety reasons or are they traditions carried on from year to year where no one thinks to ask why? Can those risks be managed? Have you thought to discuss this with the children, families and other staff?

If a staff member or parent is nervous about children climbing trees or participating in other activities where staff are not confident in their own ability then this needs to be addressed. Such insecurities are transferrable. Many prophecies have been realised by well intentioned, but risk adverse comments about the safety of what children are doing by concerned parents or staff members. Work with staff to support them on this journey. It will take time but it is well worth the effort.

Ultimately, if the environment doesn't support children in their quest for mastery and challenge, then they will develop their own activities which may be climbing fences and escaping. Take a long hard look at what is happening and work with your children.

For additional information on playground safety for your early childhood service contact The Playground Advisory Unit of Kidsafe NSW (the Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia). The Playground Advisory Unit is the leading independent organisation in NSW that issues technical and design advice in relation to playgrounds and children's play in a variety of settings. Kidsafe NSW can be contacted on 9845 0890 or www.kidsafensw.org

Sun protection

Exposure to UV radiation from the sun is another very important example of a risk to children. Children's Services have an important role to play in reducing young children's exposure to UV radiation and in helping to establish long-term sun-safe behaviour. Your service likely already covers sun protection in your policies and practices e.g. no hat or sunscreen, no outdoor play. Other ways to manage this risk so children can still be physically active during times of peak UV radiation include being active indoors (see page 6.5) or providing sun protection in the form of shade structures or trees so you can enjoy outdoor activities in a shaded area.

The SunSmart Early Childhood Program is a free program run by the Cancer Council NSW. It supports Children's Services to develop and implement a sun protection policy that reduces children's exposure to UV radiation and reduces the risk of skin cancer. Being SunSmart sends a positive message to the community and can also help services meet licensing and accreditation requirements.

For further information on the SunSmart program or sun safety in your early childhood service contact the Cancer Council NSW on 9334 1761, sunsmartchildcare@nswcc.org.au or go to their website at www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart.

Case Study



Trampoline Safety

Our centre has always had a trampoline that, when not programmed, was stored at the end of the veranda under cover. This tradition was firmly entrenched in our centre's philosophy. We believed children to be capable and resourceful yet we didn't trust them to be able to work with us in managing the risk of being able to freely access the trampoline.

After an epiphany moment we realized how controlling and how un-child friendly that rule was. We discussed this with the children. They had great ideas on how to manage the risk, and also assisted to develop guidelines in consultation with staff and parents – these were recorded and attached to the trampoline for all participants in our program to see.

Children's skills in using the trampoline were supported and scaffolded. This happens annually and when new children are enrolled into the service. We revisit the guidelines for trampoline use regularly to ensure ongoing commitment to safety. This may be individually or as a large group.

The trampoline is now located in our soft fall area where children are free to access the trampoline as they desire. This also solved two existing problems:

- 1) Staff had to lift the heavy equipment out between veranda posts and often over the top of other equipment and,
- 2) The children often climbed onto the trampoline while it was on the veranda potentially causing them an injury.

All risks were managed successfully with staff, children and families working together. Our children really are resourceful and capable!!!





Section Seven

I Move We Move Away from the TV

I Move We Move – The Guide

Small screen recreation

This section of The Guide aims to support Children's Services to influence and limit children's sedentary small screen time by providing strategies for your service and also for families to implement.

Small screen recreation is a type of sedentary behaviour that involves a person using a computer, playing electronic games or watching television (broadcast, DVDs or videos) for recreation, not education, particularly when they are not doing anything else that is physically active e.g. dancing.

The *National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 years* (these recommendations are draft and subject to endorsement by the Australian Health Ministers' Conference)⁶ state:

- "Children younger than 2 years of age should not spend any time watching television or using other electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games)
- For children 2 to 5 years of age, sitting and watching television and the use of other electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games) should be limited to less than one hour per day"*

Why do we need to limit small screen recreation in the early childhood education and care sector?

There is no denying that computers and television are important tools for children's education and development. It may be acceptable to include computers in your daily program particularly if children at your service don't have access to computers at home. However, spending too much time being sedentary in front of the small screen can reduce the opportunities for children to grow, learn and develop through play (active and inactive), real world interaction and relationships with others. Also the content of what young children can encounter on the small screen is an issue as they can not distinguish between fantasy and reality. For example, exposure to violence and advertising on the television can impact on children's behaviour and their self-esteem^{26,27}.

What can early childhood services do?

Set and enforce a clear policy on limiting screen time

Children's Services can develop strategies to ensure the inclusion of computers, television and electronic games consoles is responsible and in the best interests of children in care. Within your service, staff may be aware of a child who would happily spend every waking moment on the computer or in front of the television. It is the responsibility of the staff to monitor and ensure a balance for all children.

In line with the *National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 years* (these recommendations are draft and subject to endorsement by the Australian Health Ministers' Conference)⁶, your service is encouraged to ensure that children under two years of age are not provided opportunities for small screen recreation whilst in care. For children aged two years and over, it is recommended that your service ensures that if small screen recreation time is offered; it is infrequent, only for short periods of time and that children are encouraged to be active after screen time. Including small screen recreation in your service's policies ensures that your staff's practices are consistent, and staff and families should be made aware of the policy. The amount of time children spend in small screen recreation whilst in care should also be communicated to families to help them decide how much small screen recreation to allow at home.

Think carefully about the amount of time different children in your service are sedentary. Could small screen time be replaced with a more beneficial activity, or be used in a way to encourage children to be active? For example, do you:

- Select television programs, videos, DVD's or computer games that encourage children to move around and be active? This is fun way for children to explore a variety of movements
- Use the television or computer in the afternoon to settle children or for entertainment while waiting for parents to arrive? How about another, more productive activity e.g. a game like 'hide 'n' seek' (this can be played indoors), 'chasies' or 'What's the time Mr. Wolf'?
- Have the television or computer on when children are engaged in other activities, or transitioning between activities?

Build partnerships with families around small screen recreation

Children's Services have the potential to support families to encourage their children to be active rather than spend time in small screen recreation as they are a valued source of information on parenting and child development. Staff should take opportunities to talk to families about the new national recommendations for small screen recreation and how to limit screen time at home. This could include asking a general question like "Do you have any concerns about the amount of time your child spends sitting still in front of the TV or computer?" and providing families with information on the recommendations relating to screen time and monitoring their use and what they are watching on TV and computers in the home.

You may find the following resources from the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (Paediatrics & Child Health Division) useful when talking to families about small screen recreation: Children and the Media: Advocating for the Future (there is the policy of the College, a brochure for Health Professionals and a brochure for parents/carers) <http://www.racp.edu.au/page/health-policy-and-advocacy/paediatrics-and-child-health>

Small screen learning experiences

Computers, television and game consoles are a part of our lives. While no one is undermining the value of these technologies; learning how to use the small screen responsibly, so that it is of benefit rather than harm is important. Services can conduct small screen learning experiences to help children learn how to use the small screen responsibly. Preschoolers are most developmentally ready for these learning experiences.

Conducting small screen learning experiences helps children understand why it is important to turn off the television or computer and get active and can also assist to develop their ability to be a critical rather than a passive consumer of media.

Many of the ideas for small screen learning experiences are adapted from the Munch and Move Resource Manual developed by NSW Health. NSW Health has kindly granted permission to adapt parts of this resource.

The learning experiences follow a three step process:

1. Introduce the concepts through an activity, for example:
 - Develop social stories and read books that reinforce the concept of 'turn off the television or computer and get active'⁴
 - Arrange for guest speakers that are physically active, for example from sports clubs or dance studios to visit the service to demonstrate and get the children involved in physical activity⁴
 - Role play scenarios that involve small screen recreation (see pages 7.5–6 for examples)
2. Explore these concepts through discussion – ask questions and explain key points (using child friendly terms) for example:
 - What are your favourite TV shows, computer games or DVDs?⁴
 - Discuss their favourite characters and how they have lots of energy and look healthy, so they must do healthy things every day like move and play rather than sit still, eat healthy foods, drink plenty of water, get enough sleep etc ²⁸
 - When do you watch TV, watch DVDs/play computer games? (Discuss in terms that the children will understand, for example both before and after preschool, during dinner, and at breakfast time etc)⁴
 - How much TV do you watch/DVDs do you watch/computer games do you play? (Discuss in terms that the children understand, for example both before and after preschool, during dinner, and at breakfast time etc.)⁴
 - Explain that activities such as watching TV and playing on the computer are called 'screen time'⁴
 - Discuss with children that we should only participate in no longer than one hour of screen time per day. To help explain screen time use images of a computer, electronic games console and television and describe the one hour time limit in a way that children understand e.g. as long as it takes to watch (insert name of a 1 hour long children's DVD or TV program that is popular amongst the children at your service)⁴
 - Explain that being active is important for all children as they grow and develop. Young children need plenty of opportunities to move throughout the day and should not sit still for a long time⁴
 - Explain to children that after screen time there needs to be active time. Explore with children the types of activities the children can participate in instead of or after screen time ⁴

3. Record children's responses to the decision , for example through encouraging:

- Drawing and/or using pictures from magazines either as a whole group or individually
- Active dramatic play based around the ideas generated during discussion. Take photographs and put up around the service

You could display their responses as a poster or in book form for children to access later on as a reinforcing tool⁴.

Some suggestions of small screen learning experiences

- Have a television free week at the service. Staff can model this at home and share what they did instead of watching television with the children. Extend this idea by encouraging families to do the same. You may start off small by having one television free night during the week. Encourage discussion and reflection around being physically active instead of small screen time through activities such as children's news time, or recording in a diary or calendar. Children can draw the physical activity they did and add their own 'no television' stickers for every day without television^{4,29}
- Discuss with the children what 'screen time' activities are currently occurring at the service, and brainstorm ideas to reduce the amount of screen time. Record ideas and suggestions in a poster or book and where practical, implement the children's suggestions. Some examples include using an egg timer or stop watch to monitor time on the computer or putting the television or computer 'to sleep' by covering it over with a blanket^{4,29}



Example scenarios

Scenario One – Taking turns on the computer

Scene / situation – A child has been on the computer for a long time and refuses to let other children have a turn⁴.

Role play

- Ask the group to sit in a semi circle around the computer
- Ask for 2 children to do the role play
- Child 1 sits at the computer, pretending to use it
- Child 2 walks up to Child 1 and asks “Can I use the computer now please?”
- Child 1 says “No, I am using it.”
- Child 2 says “But you have been using it for a long time, I want a turn.”
- Child 1 says “No, I haven’t finished yet.”

What can we do to fix this?

- Ask the children questions like “What can be done?”, “What rules could we set so they each get their turn?”, “What could we use so we know our turn has finished and can time how long each person has for a turn?”
- Have a timing device like an egg timer or stop watch in a dark bag. Bring the timing device out of the bag and ask “Could we use this egg timer/stop watch?” Show the children how it works
- Write up the rules and have children draw pictures about the rules

Scenario Two – Television or play outside

Scene/situation – You have just finished your afternoon tea, it is a beautiful day and your brother wants you to play ball but there is a movie on television. What should you do – watch television or go outside and play?⁴

Role play

- Ask the group to sit in a semi circle around the television
- Ask for 2 children to do the role play
- Child 1 sits in front of the television, pretending to watch it
- Child 2 is holding a ball and walks up to Child 1 and says “Mum says it is a lovely day and we should go outside and play, come on.”
- Child 1 says “No, I am watching this movie”

What can we do to fix this?

- Give each child a sticker. Put a piece of paper with a picture of a television on it, next to Child 1. Put a piece of paper with a picture of a ball on it, next to Child 2
- Ask the children what they would do. “Who would watch the movie? Move to sit with ‘Child 1’. Put your sticker on the piece of paper with a television on it”
- “Who would go outside and play? Move to stand with ‘Child 2’. Put your sticker on the piece of paper with a ball on it”
- Ask the children what other fun things they could do when they are moving around outside. Ask the children to draw the fun things. Display these and the votes for the television and playing ball

Possible further discussion points

- Explain that being active is important for all children as they grow and develop. Young children need plenty of opportunities to move throughout the day and should not sit still for a long time. Discuss this in a way that make sense to the children
- Explain that activities such as watching television and playing on the computer are called ‘screen time’
- Explain to children that after screen time there needs to be active time. Explore with children the types of physical activities the children can participate in instead of or after screen time

References

1. National Public Health Partnership, 2005. Be Active Australia: A Framework for Health Sector Action for Physical Activity, NPHP, Melbourne (VIC).
2. Sanders SW, 2002. Active for Life. Developmentally appropriate movement programs for children. Washington DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
3. Sumsion J and Harrison L November, 2008, Early Years Learning Framework for the Federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.
4. NSW Health, 2008. The Munch and Move Resource Manual. Sydney: NSW Government.
5. Department of Health and Ageing, 2004. Australia's Physical Activity Recommendations for 5–12 year olds. Canberra: Australian Government.
6. Department of Health and Ageing, 2009. National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0–5 years (these recommendations are draft and subject to endorsement by the Australian Health Ministers' Conference). Canberra: Australian Government
7. Viner RM and Cole TJ, 2005. Television Viewing In Early Childhood Predicts Adult Body Mass Index. *Journal of Pediatrics*, 147:429-435.
8. Hunter New England Health 2007, Unpublished data – Good for Kids Household Survey Results: Childcare, 2007.
9. Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2005. Growing Up in Australia: The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children: 2004 Annual Report. Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.
10. Hunter New England Health, 2008. Unpublished data – Good for Kids Household survey results for children in formal care.
11. NSW Government, 2004. Children's Services Regulation 2004. Sydney: NSW Government.
12. NSW Department of Community Services, 2008. Review of the Children's Services Regulation 2004 – Discussion Paper. Sydney: NSW Government.
http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/docswr/_assets/main/documents/reg_review_paper.pdf, accessed 8 October 2008.
13. Australian Government, 2005. Quality Improvement and Accreditation System Quality Practices Guide 1st edition. Sydney: National Childcare Accreditation Council Inc.
14. NSW Department of Community Services, 2002. NSW Curriculum Framework for Children's Services – The Practice of Relationships. Essential Provisions for Children's Services.
15. Crowe R and Connell G, 2003. Moving to learn – making the connection between movement, music, learning and play (birth to three years). The Caxton Press Christchurch New Zealand.
16. Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, 2008. Discussion paper for the development of physical activity recommendations for children under five years (this discussion paper is draft and subject to endorsement by the Australian Health Ministers' Conference). Prepared by Okely T, Salmon J, Trost SG and Hinkley T. Canberra. Australian Government.
17. Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2004a. An Introduction to Active Movement, Koringa Hihiko. Available online at <http://www.sparc.org.nz/education/activemovement/policy-and-research>, accessed 10 March 2008.

18. Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2004b. Active Movement, Koringa Hihiko Tummy time, rolling and crawling – an activity guide for under-fives.
19. NSW Government, 1993. Disability Services Act 1993. Sydney: NSW Government.
20. Roberts A, Teacher Children's Services, Hunter TAFE, 2009. Research area – Teaching practices affecting gross motor development in early childhood. Personal communication.
21. Booth M et al, 2006 NSW. Schools Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey (SPANS) 2004. Summary Report. Sydney: NSW Department of Health.
22. Pica R, 2008. Physical education for young children – movement ABCs for the little ones. Human Kinetics USA.
23. Morgan P, 2009. Associate Professor Faculty of Education and Arts, University of Newcastle, Research Areas School and community based interventions to promote physical activity and Interventions to prevent and treat obesity. Personal communication.
24. NSW Department of Education and Training, Sports Unit, 1999. Guidelines for the Safe Conduct of Sport and Physical Activity in Schools. Sydney: NSW Government.
25. Dowda M, Brown WH, McIver KL, Pfeiffer KA, O'Neill JR, Addy CL and Pate RR, 2009. Policies and characteristics of the preschool environment and physical activity of young children. *Pediatrics*; 123; e261-e266.
26. Paediatrics & Child Health Division, The Royal Australasian College of Physicians, 2004. Paediatric Policy – Children and the media: Advocating for the future. The Royal Australasian College of Physicians, Sydney, 2004. Available at <http://racp.edu.au/page/health-policy-and-advocacy/paediatrics-and-childhealth>, accessed 11 May 2009.
27. Josephson WL, 1995. Television violence: a review of the effects on children of different ages. Canada: National Clearinghouse on Family Violence. Ottawa: Health Canada. Available at <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfvcnivf/pdfs/tvviol.pdf>, accessed 11 May 2009.
28. Davies M, 2009. Former Teacher Children's Services, Hunter TAFE and former coowner and operator of Playful Parenting Mount Hutton. Personal communication.
29. M&M, Dennison, BA, Russo, TJ, Burdick, PA and Jenkins, PL, 2004. "An Intervention to Reduce Television Viewing by Preschool Children", *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine* 58.
30. The State of Queensland (Department of Sport and Recreation) 2003. Move Baby Move. Brisbane: Queensland Department of Sport and Recreation.
31. Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2004c. Active Movement, Koringa Hihiko Balance: swinging, spinning and rocking – an activity guide for under-fives.
32. Box, J and Lancaster, A, 1997. From Cuddles to Coordination, Royal Blind Society, Enfield, Australia.
33. Dwyer G, Paediatric Physiotherapist, PhD Student (Discipline of Paediatrics & Child Health, The Children's Hospital at Westmead) and Lecturer (Discipline of Physiotherapy, University of Sydney), 2009. Personal communication.
34. Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2004d. Active Movement, Koringa Hihiko Catching, throwing and kicking – an activity guide for under-fives.
35. Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2004e. Active Movement, Koringa Hihiko Walking, running and jumping – an activity guide for under-fives.

36. The State of Queensland (Department of Sport and Recreation), 2004. Active Alphabet for Parents. Brisbane: Queensland Department of Sport and Recreation.
37. Gallagher J, 2009. Authorised Supervisor, Kurri Kurri and District Pre-School Kindergarten and Academic, University of Newcastle. Personal communication.
38. Western Australian Minister for Education and Steps Professional Development, Edith Cowan University, 2004. Fundamental Movement Skills Teacher Resource Kit. Book 2. The Tools for Learning, Teaching and Assessment. Perth: Western Australian Government.
39. Australian Sports Commission, 2008. Yulunga – Traditional Indigenous Games
Canberra: Australian Government.
40. Australian Sports Commission, 2000. Indigenous Traditional Games – child version. Canberra: Australian Government. Available at http://fulltext.usport.gov.au/fulltext/2000/ascpub/childhood_games.pdf, accessed 5 June 2009.