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Lewis, Kiara

Children and physical activity - why bother?

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Children and physical activity – why bother?
Why bother?

✓ Benefits of being a physically active child

✓ Physical activity recommendations and current levels of activity

✓ How to engage children in physical activity
Active Children

Physical benefits

Psychosocial

Academic benefits
Physical benefits

- Less likely to be overweight
- Reduced CVD risk factors
- Musculoskeletal benefits
Academic benefits

- 59 studies, children aged 5-16
- Range of academic tests
- Experimental and cross-sectional studies
Results

• All physical activity programmes increased outcomes
• Aerobic exercise best
• Higher fitness, higher the results
• Highest in primary school

• Small group activities best
• >3 times a week better results
• Physically disabled and those with a learning difficulty improved most
Psychosocial (potential)

- Reduced depression
- Reduced anxiety
- Increase self-esteem
Children’s views of P.E.:

- This is not fun
- I’m not good enough
- I will let the team down
- This will hurt
- It will make my asthma worse
Children’s views of adapted physical activity programme:

- The more times I came the more confident I got
- I feel fitter and happier
- It’s fun, energetic, it tires you out and it’s healthy
- I like people what come to the sessions
- I’ve made lots of new friends
Physical activity

for children and young people (5-19 years)

Improves Sleep

Develops Co-ordination

Improves Health & Fitness

Maintains Healthy Weight

Improves Concentration & Learning

Strengthens Muscles & Bones

Builds Confidence & Social Skills

Makes You feel good

Aim for at least 60 minutes everyday

Sit less move more

Be physically active

Spread activity throughout the day

All activities should make you breathe faster & feel warmer

Play

Run/walk

Bike

Active travel

Swim

Skate

Sport

PE

Skip

Climb

Workout

Dance

Include muscle and bone strengthening activities

3 Times per week

For further information about local opportunities to be active please visit:

www.yorkshireactive.org/get-active/

Everybody Active
Physical activity
for early years (birth-5 years)

Aim for at least 3 Hours across everyday

Every movement counts

Active children are healthy, happy, school ready and sleep better

Builds Relationships & Social Skills
Encourages Movement & Co-ordination
Contributes to Brain Development & Learning
Improves Sleep
Develops Muscles & Bones
Maintains Health & Weight

Sit less move more

For further information about local opportunities to be active please visit: www.yorkshiresport.org/get-active/
Around two in ten children aged 5-15 years meet the government recommendations* for physical activity (boys 21%, girls 16%)

*Child recommendations for physical activity in CMO report 2011 – one hour moderate activity per day
HSE reports at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity on all seven days in the last week
Physical inactivity among children
Health Survey for England 2012

Around four in ten children aged 5-15 years are physically inactive*
(boys 39%, girls 45%)

*Fewer than 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity on each day or 60 minutes or more on fewer than seven days in the last week
**Trends in physical activity**

*Children aged 2-15 years; Health Survey for England 2008-2012*

**Low activity:** <30 minutes of MVPA on each day, or MVPA of 60+ minutes on less than seven days in the last week

**Some activity:** 30-59 minutes of MVPA on all seven days in the last week

**Meets recommendations:** At least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous (MVPA) on all seven days in the last week

MVPA = moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity
Physical inactivity by household income

Children aged 2-15 years; Health Survey for England 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Level</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lowest income</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest income</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Equivalised household income is a measure that takes account of the number of people in the household. For this analysis, households were split into five equal-sized groups banded by income level (income quintiles). Physical activity levels were compared between these groups.*
Time spent sedentary in leisure time

Children aged 2-15 years; Health Survey for England 2012

Proportion of children who spent six or more hours being sedentary per day by age group

Weekdays

Weekends

Age 2-4: Boys 7%, Girls 10%; Age 5-7: Boys 4%, Girls 15%; Age 8-10: Boys 7%, Girls 16%; Age 11-12: Boys 11%, Girls 22%; Age 13-15: Boys 16%, Girls 27%
Current activity levels and fitness

- KS1 – average 102 min a week
- KS2 – average of 114 min a week
- 67% children below the recommended fitness levels
- By age 15 a child is 5x more likely to be unfit than obese
- Physical activity – in particular high intensity predicts fitness
Why do children participate?

- Children participate:
  - Enjoy
  - Feel competent
  - Not forced to compete
  - Feel supported by others
How to engage

- Opportunity to socialise with friends
- Variety of activities
- Include children in decision making on what activities to include
- Energy levels – self-determined
Engaging children

✓ Positive relationship with programme leaders and other pupils

✓ Opportunity to work with and for others

✓ Culture of play
School roles

• Encourage parents and carers to get involved in physical activities with their children

• Staff should act as role models

• School physical activity policy
Key Messages – implications for practice

✓ Promote participation not excellence
✓ Promote social skills not just physical skills
✓ Show respect and compassion for children not strict discipline
✓ Emphasise fun not weight loss or health
✓ Provide appropriate choice of clothing and changing facilities
✓ Positive experience during activity parents/instructors/teachers influence this
Why bother?
References


12. Farooq, M.A. et al. (2017) Timing of decline in physical activity in children and adolescence: Gateshead Millennium Cohort Study. *British Journal of Sport Medicine* [http://bjsm.bmj.com/content/early/2017/02/05/bjsports-2016-096933](http://bjsm.bmj.com/content/early/2017/02/05/bjsports-2016-096933)