

Mealtime Memo

for Child Care

Get Moving! Having Fun with Physical Activity

Good nutrition and physical activity are partners in creating a healthy body. Along with a well-balanced diet, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends children ages six through 17 years to be active at least 60 minutes or more each day. Currently, there is not a specific recommendation for the number of minutes young children (ages 2–5 years) should be active throughout each day. Active play should be a variety of developmentally appropriate, fun physical activities for this age group. The CDC provides many ways to encourage physical activity. The [Move Your Way](#) activity tool helps parents and caregivers find ways to fit more activity into their day. You can check out their tips and Move Your Way by clicking on this link: [60 A Day!](#)



Here are more tips for having fun with physical activity:

Be inventive and try something new!

Themed scavenger hunts, marching in place while waiting in line, or starting a group cause such as a walk-a-thon or dance competition are great ways to have fun while being physical active. Rearrange furniture to create a larger space for indoor movement. Use a laundry basket and folded socks to have a sock toss competition.



Research creative ideas for fun physical activities!

Search the internet or local library for new ideas. Parent and child care groups, educators, and local extension offices are also useful resources. Invite the children to write down their favorite physical activities and create a “Get Moving Jar.” Draw a suggestion from the jar when you are searching for a quick and fun activity.

Don't let the weather keep you indoors!

Providers should define the rules for when recess is indoors or outdoors, as well as comply with State regulations. Rain or snow days can still be great opportunities for outdoor fun. Visit [Playworks](#) for fun ideas during rain and snow days. In areas where temperatures are hot and humid, consider scheduling outdoor play early in the morning when the heat is less intense. Take frequent water breaks and provide shaded areas to make outdoor play comfortable.

Get Moving Activity: Animal Walk

Inside or outdoors, encourage children to mimic the behaviors of animals. For example, slither like a snake, gallop like a horse, or hop like a frog. It can include an added challenge by naming animals in alphabetical order. For example, using your hands, chomp like an Alligator. Walk on all fours like a Bear. Stretch like a Cat. Roar and roam like a Dinosaur. Another variation of this activity is to pick a child to lead the group, but not announce the animal. Have the children take turns guessing what animal is being portrayed by movements and sounds.



COVID-19

If child care programs remain open during the COVID-19 pandemic, additional considerations should be addressed. These include implementing social distancing and screening procedures, incorporating the use of personal protection equipment (PPE), intensifying sanitation procedures and handwashing, and modifying drop off and pick up procedures. Additional information and guidelines can be found on the [CDC website](#). This guidance does not supersede applicable Federal, State, and local laws and policies for child care programs.

References

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, February 7). *Making physical activity a part of a child's life*. <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adding-pa/activities-children.html>
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- Playworks. (2018, March 15). *Recess in the rain and snow*. <https://www.playworks.org/resource/recess-rain-snow/>
- U.S. Department of Agriculture. (2020, April). *Choose my plate, physical activity amount*. <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/resources/physical-activity-amount>

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