

PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN



Pinellas County Health Department

Steps to a HealthierFL-Pinellas County

Stop Boredom — Start Physical Activity

Parents have an important role in shaping their children's physical activity attitudes and behaviors. Here are some tips for you that may help your children to be more physically active.

- ▶ Set a positive example by leading an active lifestyle yourself.
- ▶ Make physical activity part of your family's daily routine by making time for family walks or playing active games together.
- ▶ Provide opportunities for children to be active by playing with them. Suggest games that involve physical activity. Give your kids toys and equipment, and take them to places where they can run, jump and play.
- ▶ Be supportive of the physical activities in which your children participate and encourage them as they express interest in new activities.
- ▶ Make physical activity fun. Fun activities can be anything your child enjoys from team sports to individual sports such as walking, running, skating, bicycling, swimming, playground activities, and free-time play.
- ▶ Find a convenient place to be active regularly. Utilize the Pinellas Trail and the many beautiful parks in our community.

More Physical Activity Time

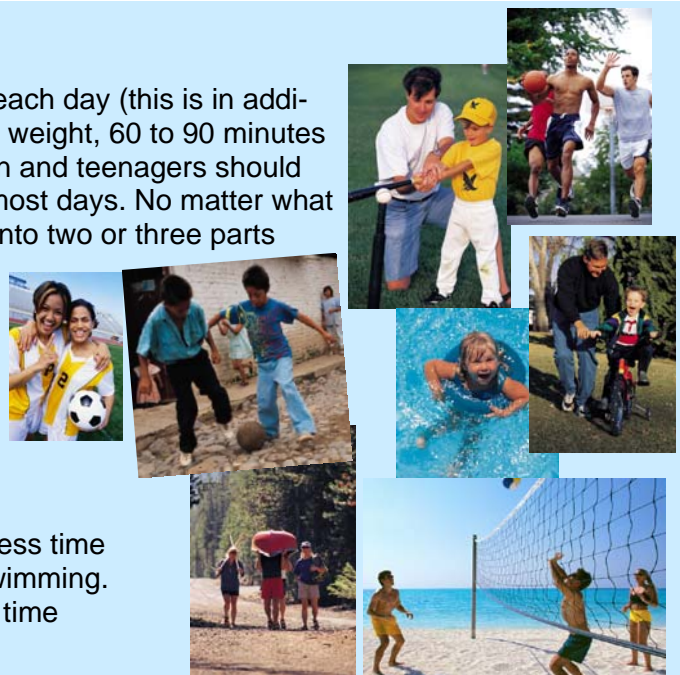
Adults should be physically active for at least 30 minutes each day (this is in addition to your usual daily activities). For those who have lost weight, 60 to 90 minutes a day may be needed to maintain the weight loss. Children and teenagers should be physically active for at least 60 minutes every day, or most days. No matter what activity you choose, it can be done all at once, or divided into two or three parts during the day.

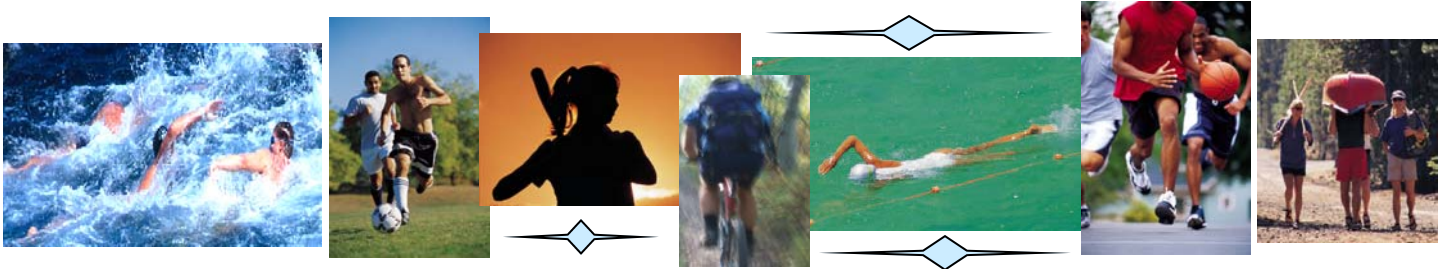
Even 10-minute bouts of activity count toward your total.

Less Screen Time

What's screen time? It's the amount of time spent watching TV, DVDs and videos, playing handheld computer games, and using the computer.

The more time spent on these sitting-down activities, the less time available for active play, like basketball, bike riding and swimming. No more than two hours a day should be spent on screen time (not counting computer use related to school work).





Let's Play!

Have you ever heard your child say, "I'm bored. There's nothing to do."? Well there's always something to do! No matter what the weather is like or how many friends are around, there's always a way for your child to be physically active and have fun. Here are some suggestions that you can offer.

One Child

There are plenty of interesting activities children can do alone. They can hop on their bikes, strap on their skates, or grab their skateboards. Buy a circular hoop and challenge your child to master the hula, or suggest using a jump rope and counting how many times the child can jump before missing. Jumping rope is a great way to get aerobic exercise.

Being alone can give a child the opportunity to practice activities and get better at them. The child could try hitting a tennis ball against a brick wall or try shooting basketball hoops and counting how many they can sink. If the child likes soccer, they can grab a ball and see how long they can keep it in the air using their feet, knees or head. You could suggest your child practice hopscotch, see how long they can hop on one foot, do jumping jacks, invent some dance moves, do sprints (short running races) and possibly time them to see how fast they go.

Two Children

Suggest they practice playing ping-pong or start a tennis tournament between them. Have they ever tried badminton? It's great if you have a net, but they can also play by just seeing how many times they can hit the birdie back and forth to each other. How about a little one-on-one in basketball or a race to see who's the fastest runner? Maybe they're into cheerleading. If so, they can invent some new cheers together. Suggest they have a handstand contest, invent dances to their favorite songs, jump rope together, ride bikes or practice pitching and hitting a baseball.

Groups of Children

Lots of sports and games work well with groups. Baseball, softball, basketball, soccer and volleyball are good group games. You might suggest they play follow-the-leader on bikes, blades or skates. You can suggest they have a skateboarding contest, play tag, play outdoor hide-and-seek or dance to their favorite music.

Five Steps to Avoid Injury

Get your kids to take these five steps to prevent injuries so they can stay in the game:

- 1) Wear protective gear such as helmets and protective pads.
- 2) Warm up.
- 3) Know the rules of the game.
- 4) Watch out for others.
- 5) Don't play when you're injured.

For information about Steps to a HealthierFL-Pinellas County visit our website:

www.StepsFL.com or dial 2-1-1 (Pinellas County cell phone users must call 727-210-4211).



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