

MOVE, PLAY AND GROW

Helping Your Preschooler Stay Active

Regular physical activity is important for your child's growth, learning, and overall wellbeing. Children aged 3 to 5 learn best when they are active and engaged in play throughout the day.



For parents of children aged **3 to 5** years old in Singapore

BEING ACTIVE HELPS YOUR CHILD



Develop strong muscles and bones.



Build balance, coordination, and movement skills.



Improve focus and confidence.



Sleep better at night.



Stay healthy and develop lifelong active habits.

HOW MUCH ACTIVITY DOES MY CHILD NEED?

Children aged 3 to 5 years should aim for:



At Least 3 Hours of Physical Activity Each Day

This should include a variety of activities spread throughout the day. At least **60 minutes** should be energetic play that gets your child breathing faster and moving more.

Examples include:

- Running and chasing games
- Cycling or scooting
- Dancing
- Jumping and hopping
- Playing at the playground
- Ball games such as kicking, throwing, and catching



KEEP SCREEN TIME IN CHECK



While screens can be useful for learning and entertainment, young children also need plenty of time for active play.

Try to:

- Limit recreational screen time to **less than 1 hour per day**.
- Encourage hands-on activities such as drawing, building, pretend play, reading, and outdoor play.
- Take regular movement breaks if your child has been sitting for a while.

PRIORITISE GOOD SLEEP



Sleep is just as important as active play for healthy growth and development.

Recommended sleep duration:

- **3 to 4 years:** 10 to 13 hours per day
- **5 years:** 9 to 13 hours per day

A consistent bedtime routine can help your child get the rest they need.

SIMPLE WAYS TO ENCOURAGE ACTIVE PLAY



1 MAKE MOVEMENT PART OF EVERYDAY LIFE

Children do not need structured exercise sessions. Everyday activities can provide valuable opportunities to move and learn.

You can:

- Visit neighbourhood playgrounds and parks.
- Walk short distances together instead of using transport when possible.
- Play active games at home.
- Dance to your child's favourite songs.
- Explore nature parks and park connectors as a family.



2 LET PLAY BE FUN

Young children learn through play.

Try activities such as:

- Pretending to move like animals.
- Obstacle courses using cushions, chairs, and boxes.
- Treasure hunts around the house or park.
- Balloon, beanbag, or ball games.
- Action songs and movement games.



3 BUILD FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT SKILLS

The preschool years are an important time for developing movement skills that support future sports and physical activities.

Encourage your child to practise:

- Running
- Jumping
- Hopping
- Balancing
- Climbing
- Throwing
- Catching
- Kicking



Provide opportunities to practise these skills in different environments, such as playgrounds, grassy fields, sand areas, and open spaces.

IS THE ACTIVITY INTENSE ENOUGH?

A simple way to tell how hard your child is working is the "talk test":

LIGHT ACTIVITY



Your child can talk comfortably and sing.

- Slow walking
- Gentle play



MODERATE ACTIVITY



Your child can talk but cannot sing easily.

- Brisk walking
- Active playground play
- Cycling



VIGOROUS ACTIVITY



Your child is breathing hard and can only say a few words at a time.

- Running games
- Chasing games
- Fast cycling
- Energetic dancing



KEY TAKEAWAY



Children aged 3 to 5 thrive when they have plenty of opportunities to move, explore, and play. By encouraging active play, limiting screen time, ensuring adequate sleep, and spending time outdoors as a family, you can help your child develop healthy habits, strong movement skills, and a lifelong enjoyment of being active.

♥ Aim to include some moderate-to-vigorous activities every day.

♥ Every little bit of movement counts.
Let's move, play and grow together!