

## Everyday . . . play outside

Since children are naturally active, if you take them outside they will play. Find a safe place for them to play. Keep an eye on them, or better yet, play with them.

Explore the different seasons.

- Stomp in puddles
- Splash through sprinklers
- Jump into piles of autumn leaves
- Build a snow fort

In cold weather, keep everyone's outdoor clothes organized. During summer it's helpful to keep sunscreen, hats and water handy.

### Try these ideas:

- Put a plastic mat or piece of cardboard on the floor near the door for wet or snowy boots.
- Put up some hooks for jackets and snow pants.
- Give each child a box, bin or basket for their hats, scarves, heavy socks and mittens. (Your child can have fun decorating the box.)
- Get a plastic water bottle for each member of the family and write their names on them.

## Now you're ready to go out to play – snow or shine!

### Cold Weather Activities

go for a walk outside  
(dress warmly!)

play in the leaves  
or  
in the snow

help rake leaves  
or  
shovel snow

make a snowman  
or a snow angel

go sledding

go ice skating

play inside

help with chores

play music and stretch, dance,  
climb, jump, skip,  
march

### Warm Weather Activities

play outside

jump in puddles

weed, water and rake the garden

run through a sprinkler or splash in a wading pool

play with sand, pails and shovels

play with water

help wash the car

ride a tricycle or bike

go to a park or playground and skip, run, jump, hop, swing

## Play Everyday!



### Playing has many benefits

Aim for 60 minutes or more of play each day.

Your child will:

- Get along better with other children
- Learn to solve problems
- Be smarter
- Be happier
- Be healthier
- Eat better
- Sleep better

Play with your child several times each day. She will love being with you.

By the end of the day, you will both feel more relaxed and be ready for a good night's sleep.

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Bloomington Public Health - 952-563-8900  
Adapted from Fit WIC Activities  
Vermont Department of Health

Funding provided by:  
UCare and AFHKMN

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**Fit Activities for Kids #1**

## Toys that encourage physical play

Most of the activities in this series use easy-to-make toys. Just use things you already have around your house. Toys that encourage physical play don't have to cost a lot of money.

Here are some ideas to try:

### Balls

Rolled-up socks; crumpled paper, newspaper or old aluminum foil; yarn

### Hoops

Make your own with 6 feet of 1/2 inch flexible plumbing pipe. Join the ends by inserting a 3 inch piece of 3/8 inch plastic piping. If it does not fit snugly, you may need to tape the joint.

Decorate with colored plastic tape if you like.

### Racquets

Pull the bottom of a wire coat hanger down into a diamond or circular shape. Next, cover the hanger with an old pantyhose leg, nylon knee high or large sock. Secure the end with a rubber band or masking tape. Bend the hook of the hanger in, and cover any sharp edges with masking tape to make a handle.

## Playing together is a great first step to a healthier family

These are other important steps:

- Drink water often during the day
- Limit intake of sugar-sweetened drinks
- Offer 2-3 glasses of milk every day
- Eat meals and talk together most days of the week
- Serve fruits and vegetables at meals and snacks
- Eat most of your meals at home
- Offer small portions; let your child decide how much to eat
- Limit television/computer time to one or two hours per day
- Set a good example by being active and eating well

### Everyday activities

Children love to be active! Teach your child to help you inside or outside the house. Helping around the house is a good alternative to watching TV. And keeping the house and yard picked up leaves a clear space for kids to play safely!

The helping activities listed at right are perfect for your young child. Start with the easiest ones and work your way up to harder jobs.

## Tasks your child can help with

### Indoor Helping Activities

pick up her toys

make beds  
(pull up the covers)

carry laundry

pick up and put away dishes, pots & pans

clean floors  
(sweep, mop, vacuum)

pick up the living room

dust furniture

carry and put away groceries

set the table for family meals

water plants

feed and care for pets

### Outdoor Helping Activities

sweep the porch

pick up the yard

hang out laundry

carry out the trash

wash the car or brush off snow

stack firewood or pickup kindling

wash the dog