

# Active Parent Education Kit

## Fact Sheet 3 - Active kids at different ages

Physical activity is needed for children to reach their potential in growing strong and healthy muscle and in bone development. Sport and active recreation is an ideal way to build this necessary development as well as bringing psychological and social benefits to your child.



### Development of children

Children grow and mature at different rates. This means that their developmental status may not match their chronological age. Activities should be organised so young people have positive experiences regardless of their developmental status.

Parents must focus on personal development and advancement for their child, rather than comparison with other children of the same age. The result will be more young people having a chance to realise their potential, and the opportunity for future success in sport. Above all, it will allow every child to enjoy their chosen sport or active recreation activity.

### <sup>1</sup> Active kids at different ages

#### 0–2 years: Encourage active play

- Let your toddler be active and play with them.
- Show praise and encourage activity.

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### 3–5 years: Teach basic movement skills

- Children are learning about their bodies and how to control them – provide play and movement games that include basic skills such as running, jumping and sliding.
- Make obstacle courses with your child indoors and outdoors using everyday objects such as cardboard boxes, pillows, laundry baskets, chairs, trees or the garden hose.
- Limit the time your child spends watching television.

### 6–8 years: Build on basic skills

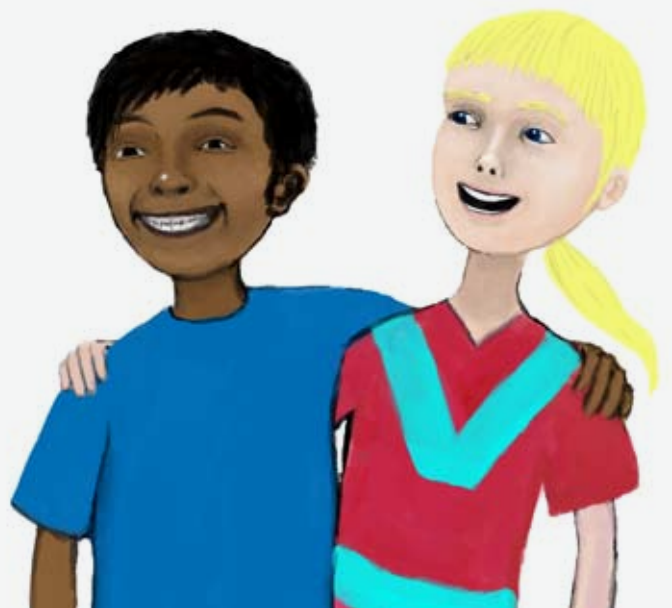
- Encourage the fun and enjoyment in being active.
- Give your child the opportunity to experiment and explore what they can and can't do and what they may need further development in.
- Allow your child to make mistakes and learn from them.
- Using appropriate equipment for your child's age and ability, teach ball skills e.g. throwing, catching, hitting and kicking using games.
- Encourage participation in organised sport.
- Whenever possible, use walking as a mode of transport.
- Limit the time your child spends watching television and using electronic devices.

### 9–12 years: Refine skills

- Encourage participation in a variety of sports (try not to let them specialise in one sport only).
- Discuss your child's interests and let them choose activities they enjoy the most.
- Help your child master more advanced skills like the over-arm throw, dribbling with the feet, catching using one hand, continuous bouncing using one hand and catching in a distracting environment.
- Encourage safe cycling and walking as transport.
- Limit the time your child spends watching television and using electronic devices.

### 13 – 16 years: Encourage participation

- Help your teenager find a balance between study, family obligations, time with friends and physical activity.
- Try a variety of other activities with your teenager such as bike riding, rollerblading or jogging.
- Encourage your teenager to continue activities they enjoy.



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- Encourage other involvement in sport e.g. volunteering with a club or becoming an umpire or coach.

### **<sup>1</sup> What you can do to get your children active?**

- Help them understand and appreciate how the body works.
- Limit their time spent watching television and using computers.
- Keep it fun.
- Be active parents (positive role modelling).
- Help them to find activities they enjoy.
- Encourage them to join a sporting club. Search the Find A Club database at [www.dsr.wa.gov.au/clubsonline](http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au/clubsonline).
- Walk them to school.
- When choosing presents, find things that encourage physical activity e.g. Frisbees, balls, kites and sporting equipment.
- Encourage family events that involve physical activity e.g. kite flying, frisbee and walking along the beach.
- Make activity part of a family lifestyle!

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***Young people grow and mature at different rates. Understanding the implications of this can make sports participation more rewarding and safer for young people.***

**Source:**

*<sup>1</sup> NSW Department of Sport and Recreation. (2002). Active community guide - Active Kids. Retrieved on the 13/11/09, from [dsr.nsw.gov.au/assets/pubs/active/active\\_kids.pdf](http://dsr.nsw.gov.au/assets/pubs/active/active_kids.pdf)*