

T/E Elementary Physical Education Department

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When most adults think about exercise, they imagine working out in the gym on a treadmill or lifting weights. But for kids, exercise means playing and being physically active. Kids exercise when they have Physical Education class at school, during recess, at dance class or soccer practice, while riding bikes, or when playing tag.

The Many Benefits of Exercise

- ▶ have stronger [muscles and bones](#)
- ▶ have a leaner body because exercise helps control body fat
- ▶ be less likely to become [overweight](#)
- ▶ decrease the risk of developing [type 2 diabetes](#)
- ▶ possibly lower [blood pressure](#) and blood cholesterol levels
- ▶ have a better outlook on life

Besides enjoying the health benefits of regular exercise, kids who are physically fit sleep better and are better able to handle physical and emotional challenges — from running to catch a bus to studying for a test.

The Sedentary Problem: The percentage of overweight and obese kids and teens has more than doubled in the past 30 years. Although many factors contribute to this epidemic, children are becoming more sedentary. In other words, they're sitting around a lot more than they used to.

How Much Exercise Is Enough? Parents should make sure that their kids get enough exercise. So, how much is enough? Kids and teens get 60 minutes or more of physical activity daily.

The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) offers these activity guidelines for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers:

Infants and young children should not be inactive for prolonged periods of time — no more than 1 hour unless they're sleeping. And school-age children should not be inactive for periods longer than 2 hours.

Raising Fit Kids: Combining regular physical activity with a healthy diet is the key to a healthy lifestyle.

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