

Smooth Moves

Youth Health Transitions (YHT) Vol 9

Involving adolescents in community-based athletic, academic and/or arts programs can “contribute heavily to the positive development of youth” (AAP, 2012).

Sports, recreation programs, and hobby clubs are not just about having fun! Keeping your mind and body active is a proven wellness strategy and a good health habit.

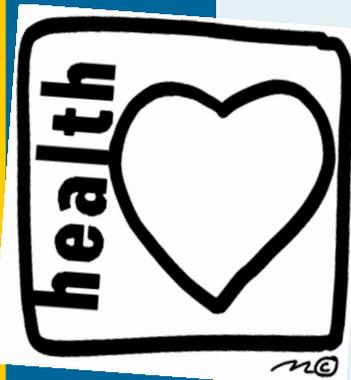
Recreation activities can help prepare teens for transition. Participating in group pastimes helps teens learn how to resolve conflicts, negotiate with peers, and work as part of a team. Play also stimulates creativity and sparks the imagination.

The skills teens build while having fun can help ready them to assume adult roles.

Benefits of recreation:

- ◆ Supports the development of positive social skills
- ◆ Builds resilience and self-sufficiency
- ◆ Promotes physical conditioning
- ◆ Prevents idleness and boredom
- ◆ Promotes inclusion
- ◆ Improves overall wellbeing

Look for community activities which match your youth’s abilities and interests. Encourage your youth to get out there and start having fun!



Action Items & Think Points for Youth:

YHT ACTIVITIES

- ⇒ Check out playground programs
- ⇒ Participate in community theatre
- ⇒ if you like animals, volunteer at the local shelter
- ⇒ Want to camp, look into scout programs or summer camps
- ⇒ The National Center on Health, Physical Activity & Disability website has lots of info for getting active—use the Individual-Caregivers link at www.nchpad.org

Resources:

Promoting the Participation of Children With Disabilities in Sports, Recreation, and Physical Activities. Clinical Report. Murphy and Carbon, AAP Pediatrics 2008, May; 121(5): 1057-1061.

Physical Activity and Health: Adolescents and Young Adults. 1999, US Office of the Surgeon General. CDC.org

Physical activity and depression in adolescents: cross-sectional findings from the ALSPAC cohort. Wiles, Haase, Lawlor, Ness, Lewis Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epi, 2012 Jul; 47(7): 1023–1033.

*Regional Families Helping Families Programs or the CSHS Family Resource Center (504-896-1350) can assist families with locating community programs for youth with special health care needs.