

“All children benefit from physical activity, and children with disabilities are no exception... Participation in sports and physical activity programs promotes physical, emotional and social wellbeing”. (Murphy et. al., 2008)

During adolescence many habits that we carry into adulthood begin to form; good and bad. The way we act and behave today is a good gauge of what we will do in the future. Starting good health habits during adolescence can reap great rewards for our adult lives.

This *Smooth Moves* column looks at the importance of physical activity to good health. Did you know that being active improves physical as well as emotional health? You might wonder if this applies to youth with a physical or mental disability; the answer is a definite yes! Experts agree that physical activity benefits everyone.

Research shows that teens are affected by parent's behaviors. Stay fit and be active. Parents teach through actions by setting good examples. Summer is a great time to get moving! Help your youth explore new interests and support their goals.

Have YSHCN talk with their health care provider about their interest and get help matching and adapting activities to their condition. Because physical recreation is important to good health it should be part of transition planning. Staying active is an important wellness strategy!

For some fun in the sun, check out the summer camp info in this issue of *Family Matters!*

The National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability is an excellent on-line resource for YSHCN and their family.
Go to: www.nchpad.org.

The Challenged Athletes Foundation (CAF) is a great resource for persons with a physical disability. CAF provides grants to fund adaptive equipment and mentorship programs: <http://www.challengedathletes.org>.

Contact CSHS Family Resource Center for additional assistance with recreation resources in Louisiana: 504-896-1340.



Action Items & Think Points:

HEALTHY HABITS

- ⇒ Try walking or wheeling to the store...
- ⇒ Instead of a movie, what about a walk in the park or visit to the zoo?
- ⇒ Do you like sports? Contact your local playground and see what is offered.
- ⇒ Do you have a dog? Walk or wheel your pet and get those muscles moving.
- ⇒ Camping can be great fun! Contact your local scouting or church youth group.
- ⇒ Tune into PBS which offers weekly yoga, aerobics and chair exercise programming.

Resources:

Clinical Report: Promoting the Participation of Children with Disabilities in Sports, Recreation, and Physical Activities. Murphy N, Carbone PS, and the Council on Children with Disabilities (AAP: Pediatrics 121:5 May 2008)

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Physical Activity and Health: Persons with Disabilities. <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/sgr/disab.htm>

Surviving (Your Child's) Adolescence; Adolescence and the Development of Habits. Pickhardt, CE. January 2012. <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/surviving-your-childs-adolescence/201201/adolescence-and-the-development-habits>