

***For the first time in the history of this country, today's preschoolers might not live as long as their parents do because of the effects of obesity.***

## **HOW CAN I DO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN A CHILD CARE PROGRAM?**

**(Questions about *Teacher-led, Use of Space, and Wisconsin Weather*)**

### **What types of physical activity does this include?**

Physical activity is any bodily movement, produced by muscles and burns energy. Moderate intensity physical activity refers to activity that requires effort and gets your heart beating fast. Vigorous intensity physical activity are activities that may be challenging to an individual and really make you sweat.

### **What is daily TEACHER-LED (structured) physical activity?**

Activities that are led by teachers, providers or parents. This type of activity involves setting aside a specific time to be active and planning activities to do during that time period. Time to teach children how to move. Through structured activities, providers can help children develop movement skills that are building blocks for more complex movement tasks. Teacher-led physical activities have clear goals for children. Remember that...

- Children are intermittent movers
- Children are inefficient movers
- Children tire easily, but also tend to recover quickly

Unstructured activity helps children develop imagination, body awareness, and creativity.

### **Consider Use of Space...**

Where do you already allow your child to be physically active in your home or program -

- Living room, hallway, bedroom, on the stairway, group center carpet, etc.
- How could you promote active movement in these spaces?

The **Wisconsin Early Care and Education Wellness Physical Activity Toolbox** is available at:  
[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/health/physicalactivity/sites/Community/Childcare/index.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/health/physicalactivity/sites/Community/Childcare/index.htm)  
~Child Care Resource and Referrals have resources to help assist with programming.

### **Outdoor play = more opportunities for:**

- Moderate to vigorous physical activity
- Testing their physical skills and abilities
- Increased mental stimulation from interacting with a changing landscape
- Whole body exercise
- Building strength & coordination

Children who play outside regularly:

Become fitter and leaner, develop stronger immune systems, have more active imaginations, have lower stress levels, play more creatively, have greater respect for themselves and others. When possible, allow children to be outside. They are more active when they are outside and most kids love the outdoors. If the playground is too wet but it is a nice day put up some cones in the parking lot or driveway and have children run around on the pavement, draw with chalk, or go for a nature walk.

(e.g., A provider schedules arrival time as outside time in the morning when the children arrive weather permitting to promote the importance of dressing children for the time that they will be outside.)