

## Exercise. It's good for the brain!

Being physically active has long-lasting positive effects on kids' brains. It helps to increase blood flow to the brain making it easier for them to learn. It affects the shape and function of the brain, helps improve their short-term memory, increases their reaction time, boosts their mood and leads to a higher level of creativity. Exercise increases your child's strength, flexibility and endurance giving them confidence to run and play games, carry heavy books and bend to tie shoes.



Some tips to help kids be active:

- **Set an example to kids by being active yourself.** Grown-ups can affect their kids by acting as role models, by helping them to be active, and by being active with them.
- **Make physical activity a priority in your home.** Set limits on watching TV, playing video games, and being on the internet/screens, as well as expectations for being outside and active.
- **Make it fun to be active.** Engage your kids in fun sports and other games or activities they love.
- **Encourage your kid to walk, run and dance.** Don't use the car if you can walk. Look for opportunities to help your child get used to and learn to love walking. Think outside the box - video games like Dance Revolution can be played actively.
- **Encourage your kid to use wheels.** Not wheels of a car, but bikes, scooters, rollerblades or skateboards (with helmets, elbow pads and long pants).
- **Encourage some friendly competition.** Compete with other family members or friends in a fun way. Try having a running race, seeing who does the most jumping jacks or who can skip for the longest time skipping rope.
- **Go on regular outings.** Take a hike. Explore a nearby park. Enjoy the outdoors. Remember to bring a ball or a frisbee.
- **Don't be too strict about an active life.** Although a regular routine of being active is what's best, if your kid has a busy day try to get in as much activity as you can and schedule longer activity during a day when there is more time.

Adapted from [www.raisesmartkid.com/3-to-6-years-old/4-articles/35-the-benefits-of-exercise-on-your-kids-brain](http://www.raisesmartkid.com/3-to-6-years-old/4-articles/35-the-benefits-of-exercise-on-your-kids-brain) on October 31, 2019

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