

Physical Activity Policy

Name of the Child Care Program: _____

Our staff recognize that all children need enough active playtime, indoors and outdoors, throughout each day to develop and practice gross motor and movement skills appropriate for their age and that active play includes moderate to vigorous activities such as rolling, crawling, scooting, running, climbing, dancing, hopping, galloping, skipping, and jumping. Our staff model healthy, active behaviors by participating in physical activity (PA) with the children as much as possible. When this is not feasible, our staff at least encourage children to safely participate in PA.

Infants (up to 12 months old)

During each full day of care, and while awake, our infants who are not yet crawling spend multiple periods, three to five minutes at a time (and more if they enjoy the activity), on their tummies interacting with staff and other infants. While in our care, infants will get as much “[tummy time](#)” as they can tolerate.

We do not seat our infants or place our infants in restrictive equipment (e.g., swings, molded seats, stationary activity centers, etc.) for more than 15 minutes at a time, twice a day, except when they are eating or sleeping, or secured safely in a car seat while traveling inside a vehicle. A least-restrictive environment is encouraged at all times and includes a variety of outdoor and indoor play.

Outdoor time is important for our infants. Staff model behavior demonstrating that spending time outdoors is important. Consistent time spent outdoors can lead to an increase in PA once the infant becomes more mobile.

We take our infants outdoors two to three times each day, weather permitting.



Examples of supervised infant outdoor or indoor play include:

- Playing on safe surfaces such as a floor mat or a large blanket spread on the ground with appropriately sized balls or other age-appropriate toys placed just out of reach, encouraging stretching and movement.
- Playing with toys designed for older infants to use to safely pull themselves to a standing position, crawling through a tube tunnel, and pushing toys across a safe surface. Older infants may use balls to push, lie on, or kick.
- Staff offering their hands to infants for pulling up; cycling the infant's legs; or opening and closing both arms across an infant's chest.

Note: Riding in a carriage or stroller - or swinging in an acceptable, secure infant swing - are not substitutes for gross motor play.

Screen time:

- Infants will not have any screen time (e.g., computers, iPads, phones, videos and television).

Toddlers

(12 months to three years old)

Each day, our toddlers participate in at least **30 minutes** of structured (teacher-led) PA, and at least **60 minutes** total of unstructured (free play) PA; with a priority placed on moderate to vigorous PA, including running.

Our toddlers will not sit still for more than 60 minutes at a time while they are awake.

Each day, we give our children enough time and opportunities to explore and refine body movements that will help them develop emerging fundamental movement skills, including locomotor skills such as walking, running, and jumping; object control skills such as throwing, catching, and kicking; and stability skills such as bending, twisting, and rolling.

We use strollers, highchairs, and other similar equipment with toddlers only when necessary and only for a brief time.

We take our toddlers outdoors for active play two to three times each day (totaling 60-90 minutes of outdoor time), weather permitting.

Screen time:

- Toddlers ages one and two will not have any screen time. We provide and offer free and readily available access to self-service water throughout the day in indoor and outdoor areas and during indoor and outdoor activities.



Preschool-aged Children (three through five years old)

Each day, our children accumulate at least **60 minutes** of structured (teacher-led) PA and **60-90, or more, total minutes** of unstructured (free play) PA; with a priority placed on moderate to vigorous PA, including running.

Our children rarely sit for more than 60 minutes at a time while they are awake.

Each day, we give our children enough time and opportunities to develop mature fundamental movement abilities including locomotor skills such as running, jumping, and hopping; object control skills such as throwing, catching, and kicking; and stability skills such as stretching, bending, twisting, and rolling.

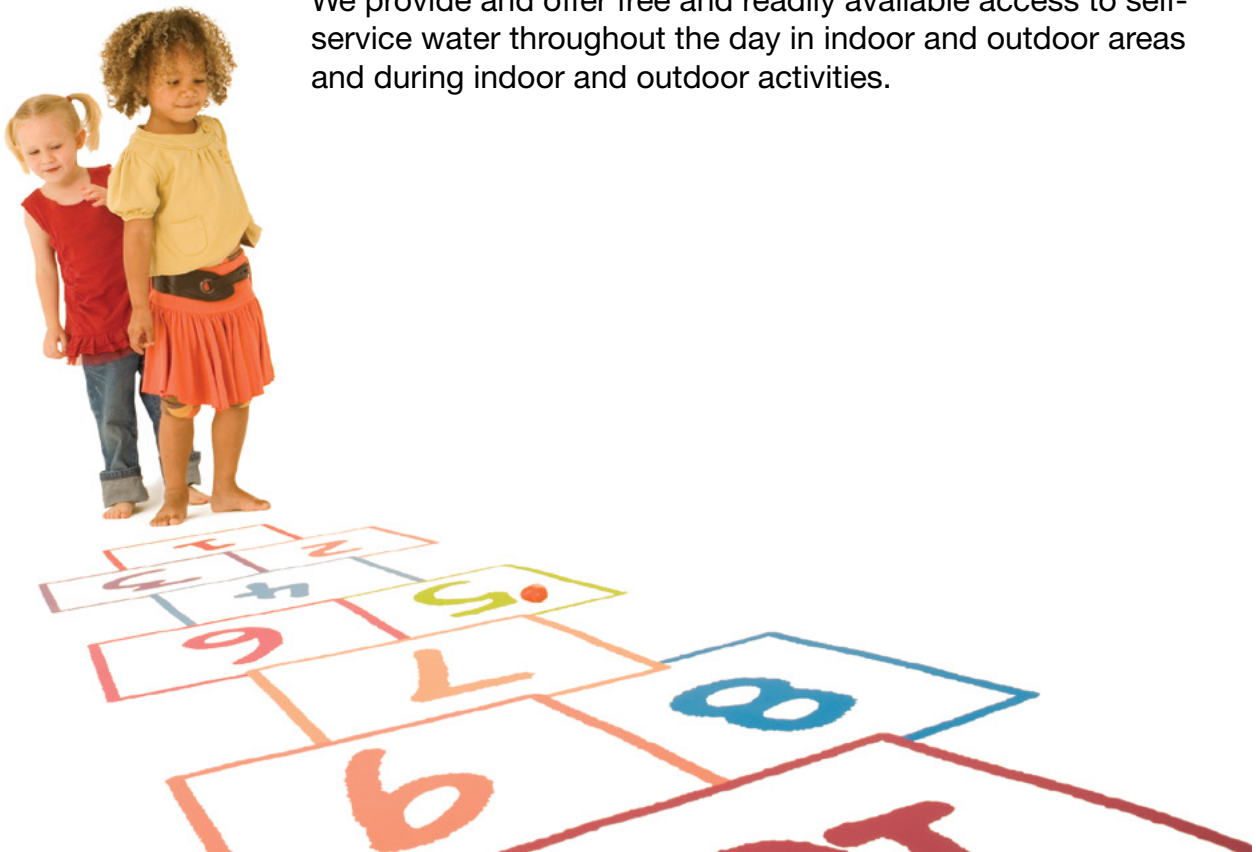
We take our preschoolers outdoors for active play two to three times each day (totaling 60-90 minutes of outdoor time), weather permitting.

We encourage all children to try new activities and we celebrate with children when they participate at any skill level. We focus on self-challenges and find a new goal for each child according to his or her skill level. For example, we say, “Great effort! You did three hops on one foot! Now can you do four?”

Screen time:

- Preschool-aged children will not have more than 30 minutes of screen time per week while in the facility, and then only for meeting educational goals or to promote PA.
- We do not permit screen time during meals and snacks, or during nap/rest times.

We provide and offer free and readily available access to self-service water throughout the day in indoor and outdoor areas and during indoor and outdoor activities.



Safety

We ask that children wear clothing that is suitable for the weather, including appropriate seasonal clothing and footwear, so that they can participate fully, move freely, and play safely indoors and outdoors.

To prevent sunburn and overexposure to sunlight, we protect children with shade, and we work with parents to provide sunscreen, protective clothing, and hats.

We provide safe indoor and outdoor play areas that meet or exceed recommended safety standards for performing large-muscle activities.

We keep activity and play areas clear of sharp objects, trash, and other things that can hurt children.

We always supervise children while they use playground equipment or otherwise participate in active play.



Parent Education, Staff Training, & Expectations

Our staff receives training and/or information on age-appropriate PA at least once per year.

Staff will:

- At least annually, provide the parents of our infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children with information about how to encourage PA at home and about the importance of active play for the growth and development of their children (e.g., through newsletters, emails, bulletin boards and family night events).
- Encourage and model PA behavior with all age groups by leading a variety of structured physical activities.
- Be active during children's active play. Staff wear clothing and footwear that allow easy and safe movement.
- Encourage a variety of physical activities that are appropriate and safe for children of all abilities in the setting (e.g., encourage running on the playground when it is safe to run).
- Provide lots of PA opportunities indoors when the weather does not permit play outdoors.
- Encourage children to drink water during playtimes.

We post the daily schedule so that families know when their child's daily active playtime occurs.

We do not withhold active play for children as a punishment.

We provide sufficient PA items (such as sponge or foam balls) to accommodate all children who are playing at a given time.

Our organization's site administrators and activity directors consult with an early childhood PA expert at least once per year to ensure our PA programming and implementation are appropriate and meet all applicable state and federal recommendations and guidelines.

Parent Printed Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Staff Printed Name: _____

Staff Signature: _____

Date: _____

Extracted from and for use with the EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & NUTRITION TEMPLATES AND POLICIES document.