



Tips on how to keep play alive

1

Make “free-time” a fun, regular time for active play

- Give children and youth the opportunity to play freely and spontaneously after school and on the weekends by letting them decide what they like to do. They can connect with other children at the playground, play a game of hide and seek, dance or explore nature.
- Create a safe, open area at home – either indoors or outdoors – with balls and toys that encourage active play.
- Create an environment that helps foster imagination and spontaneity, with access to items to build a fort, a costume trunk and music.
- Accept that teens and tweens need free time to play without direct supervision, and without the assumption they are “up to no good.”
- Ensure your childcare provider offers periods where kids can play actively throughout the day.
- Look into different play spaces, like fields or nature areas, to help facilitate active play. A new play environment can keep your child engaged.

2

Make active play safe play

- Consider hosting a “street-proofing course” with your children to teach them basic safety precautions while they are playing outdoors.
- Parents or caregivers can take turns supervising children at play in the park or on the street.
- Encourage your kids to play with a buddy.
- To increase neighbourhood safety, advocate for traffic-calming measures such as speed bumps and roundabouts, which have been shown to decrease pedestrian-vehicle accidents.

3

Be smart about screen time

- For kids five and up, set a maximum of two hours of screen time (computer, smart phone, TV and gaming) per day.
- Turn screen time into active time by encouraging outdoor play, rather than turning on the TV.
- Remove TVs and computers from your child’s bedroom.

4

Lead by example – be a good role model and play with your children!

- Make sure you live an active life. It’s important for your kids to see you being active and spending time outdoors, doing things such as running, walking, gardening or lawn work.
- Encourage active play as part of every after-school period. If you aren’t available after school, have a caregiver, babysitter or neighbour take the lead and get your kids playing outdoors, doing things such as bike riding, jumping rope, throwing a ball around or playing hopscotch.
- Set aside designated family play time on the weekend.