



Mastering fundamental movement skills such as jumping will help children grow in confidence

learn

GET PHYSICAL

Children who are active from an early age are more likely to develop a healthy body image and self-esteem.

Getting involved in physical activity from a young age allows children to learn what their bodies are capable of. Active play helps a child develop fundamental movement skills that enable agility, balance and coordination. These competencies underpin the learning of more complicated sports and movement skills as they grow older.

"The early years is the ideal time for children to acquire and master their fundamental movement skills," says Dr Miriam Lee, Senior Manager at Sport Singapore. "This

"I like running, jumping and bouncing a ball. Doing these makes me feel strong.

TANG ONN CHI, 6
NTUC First Campus' My First Skool at Blk 997 Buangkok Crescent

helps them to start right physically, social-emotionally and cognitively, benefitting the holistic healthy development of the whole individual."

HEALTHY, HAPPY AND CONFIDENT KIDS

Children who are active are less likely to fall ill or become obese. They also develop sharper cognitive abilities that help them think creatively, make decisions and solve problems. They are happier as endorphins, mood-lifting hormones, are released during exercise. They get to meet new people and build friendships through shared sporting experiences. Physical play, whether indoors or outdoors, also gives children valuable bonding time with their parents.

Regular and varied physical activity also enables children to gain a positive sense of self, notes Dr Lee. "Having a positive image of themselves makes them more comfortable about themselves, confident to try new things, and improves their social skills to make new friends."

FIRST OFF THE STARTING BLOCK

The development of these skills does not happen by chance. Parents and educators need to find or create relevant play opportunities and experiences. Dr Lee suggests, "Encourage children to be active in a way that suits them, be it cycling, hiking or a team sport. Provide them with various opportunities to participate in and learn different sports. Ask them what they enjoy most. List down different activities to try together as a family."

Pay attention to what your children enjoy and excel in, she advises. Praise their accomplishments, big or small, so that they feel affirmed and proud of themselves. Dr Lee also stresses the importance of modelling the right attitude. "Be active every day, adopt a healthy diet, talk about your own body in positive ways and take good care of it. Your child will learn from you and do the same for themselves."

"I like to scoot and cycle. Even though I feel tired sometimes, it makes me happy because I can go out and breathe fresh air.

RENEE TAN, 6
MY World @ Ang Mo Kio



So Much to Do, So Little Time

Young children aged below 7 who are capable of walking unaided should be physically active for at least **180 minutes** spread throughout the day, in safe environments, according to the Health Promotion Board.

"I am good at walking on the balancing beam. I want to do it well because it helps me when I dance ballet.

CADENA POH, 5
PCF Sparkletots @ Woodlands Blk 801



ACTION PLAN

Get your children to be physically active with these five tips from Family Life Educator Mrs Charis Patrick.

1. Keep it fun and free. Let children discover the types of movement and play they prefer, while keeping it safe. Inject fun and excitement into the activities.

2. Use the '3Es' to connect with children. Be enthusiastic, encouraging and empowering. Bear in mind that non-verbal cues such as facial expressions and tone of voice may have more impact than the words you use.

3. Create a routine to cultivate a habit. Routines are key to establishing habits and helping preschoolers compartmentalise their day into smaller, meaningful segments. Set aside dedicated pockets of time for play so that children look forward to quality time with you.

4. Introduce different types of active time. Provide different play formats to keep children interested and engaged:

- Personal active time for them to explore their surroundings by themselves
- Buddy active time with a sibling or grandparent for them to pick up social skills
- Family active time for bonding moments with the whole family

5. Be a role model. Walk the talk, because most attitudes and values are caught and not taught. If you want your children to be active, you too must be active. More importantly, have fun!

Watch Mrs Patrick explain the tips in this video series: tinyurl.com/yju978bm



ACTIVE KIDS, ACTIVE PARENTS

- > For ideas on fun and simple activities to do with your children, download resource kits from activeparents.myactivesg.com.
- > For sport programmes suitable for children aged 3 and above, check out the variety of options at www.myactivesg.com/Programmes/Academy.

Active Parents is a social movement by Sport Singapore to enable and empower parents to play an active role in their child's life and sporting journey.



Developing physical literacy and positive dispositions through the obstacle course

AGAINST ALL OBSTACLES

For nine weeks from 7 July 2020, more than 45,000 children from over 400 preschools participated in the Nurture Kids @ GetActive! Singapore programme, which is designed to develop physical literacy in preschoolers and give them an active and healthy start in life, at their respective preschools.

The third edition, co-organised by Sport Singapore and Obstacle Course Racing Singapore, involved preschools setting up a series of activity stations for the children, while observing safe distancing during the COVID-19 period. The activities, such as tossing a beanbag into a hoop, throwing a ball into a basket and crab walk, helped children pick up important skills, including balance and hand-eye coordination.

"The activity stations created many positive opportunities for children to overcome their fears and build their capabilities and self-confidence," says Mdm Nurdiana Binte Omar, Senior Educator at MY World @ Ang Mo Kio. "One child who was reluctant to crawl under the 'barb wire' at first eventually conquered his fear with the encouragement of his peers and teachers." Overcoming obstacles and challenges will help children boost their self-worth and see themselves as being capable.

NTUC First Campus' My First Skool at Blk 997 Buangkok Crescent participated in the programme to encourage its preschoolers to adopt a more active lifestyle, but noted they also reaped other benefits. "Besides the development of physical skills, we also observed that the children developed positive dispositions through the virtual activity stations. They displayed a sense of perseverance with their persistent efforts to complete the course. And they displayed higher self-esteem and confidence when they finally managed to overcome the challenges independently," says Lead Teacher Ms Tan Kaiyan.

What sets the Nurture Kids programme apart is that it makes physical activity fun. "Because children acquire these skills through play, there is no pressure on them to learn," observes Ms Wong Peng Peng, Centre Supervisor at PCF Sparkletots @ Woodlands Blk 801. "Children wanted to practise again and again until they perfected the skill. It gave them a sense of achievement and pride that 'I can do it'. The Nurture Kids programme helped our children develop a positive self-image."

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→ One lucky reader will receive a UNIQTGIFT voucher worth \$50.

Simply answer this question:

Name one strategy that can be used to encourage your child to be physically active and improve his or her self-image.

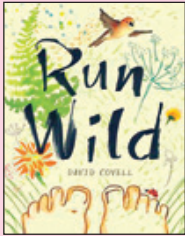
Send your answer to beanstalk@mediacorp.com.sg with your name and contact details.

Closing date: **19 February 2021**



Do You See What I See?

Nurture your child's capacity to care about the world and one another.

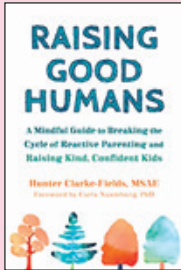


> Run Wild

By David Covell

Run Wild invites young readers on a whirlwind adventure through the simple joys of nature. In these pages, you'll race a rabbit, talk to worms, and keep going through rain dumps and slippery slumps. With catchy rhymes and gorgeous watercolour illustrations, this is a great book to read aloud together, followed by a nice long walk!

Contributed by **Nathaniel Chew**, Associate Librarian, National Library Board



> Raising Good Humans: A Mindful Guide to Breaking the Cycle of Reactive Parenting and Raising Kind, Confident Kids (ebook)

By Hunter Clarke-Fields

OverDrive link: nlb.overdrive.com/media/4535207

Taking an empathetic approach that understands the challenges of parenting, the author encourages parents to reflect on their communication with their children. Envisioning kind, respectful and compassionate children who emulate their parents, Clarke-Fields shares helpful techniques about reconsidering knee-jerk responses and embracing positive language when speaking to children.

Contributed by **Neo Wan Ting**, Associate Librarian, National Library Board

NLB eReads



Check out these online resources from the comfort of your own home.



Storytime with Our Librarians

Tune in to Facebook storytelling sessions in the four official languages.

www.nlb.gov.sg/discovereads/diy-resources/storytime-with-our-librarians



DIY Resources

A wide range of activity sheets, craft activities and other ideas to engage preschoolers. www.nlb.gov.sg/discovereads/preschool-resources

Live Zoom events are also organised. For more information, visit www.eventbrite.sg/o/golibrary-national-library-board-singapore-26735252849.

FOR YOUR DAILY DOSE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD INSPIRATION...

Grow@Beanstalk is your one-stop early childhood (EC) resource portal for inspiring stories, useful tips and activity ideas, as well as the latest happenings from the EC sector.



Visit www.ecda.gov.sg/growatbeanstalk, or scan the QR code



You can also share your passion of "Giving a Good Start to Every Child" by "liking" our Facebook page for daily content, and engaging with other parents and EC educators.



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