



# Be Active



## When “Being Active” is going well, your child may:

- Sleep better at night or fall asleep quicker.
- Talk about things they enjoy doing. It is important to encourage your child in the hobbies they choose to pursue.
- Eat well. If your child is being active regularly, this may encourage them to eat a varied, healthy diet.
- Feel less anxious. Being active encourages the ‘feel good hormones’ to be produced
- Be more social and want to make real life connections with people.
- Concentrate well for a period of time.
- Be open to talking about anything that may be worrying them.
- Be keen to go outside and move away from the screen.
- Be energetic.

## When “Being Active” is not going well, your child may :

- Find getting to sleep or sleeping well tricky at night.
- Not talk willingly about how their day has been or how they are feeling.
- Snack too much and not eat regular healthy meals.
- Feel anxious about everyday things.
- Want to stay at home all the time and not make friends.
- Find concentrating for any amount of time difficult.
- Be withdrawn.
- Become obsessive about a computer game, phone or console.
- Be either lethargic or over tired which may result in becoming ‘big and physical’ in presence. They may also tire easily after gentle exercise.

## Being outside

- Find an open space, somewhere around you there is space to ‘walk and talk’. Nature has a positive impact on our mental wellbeing.
- ‘Grow your own’ – even with a limited amount of space you can grow herbs or flowers.
- Contact local gardening/walking or volunteering groups. This is a great way to encourage your child to also take part in new things.
- Volunteer to walk a neighbours/friends/grandparent’s dog.
- Make a mud kitchen. An old saucepan, old spoon, somewhere they can dig some mud and a jug of water. That’s it!
- Build a den! You can use sheets and pegs, or the sofa or under the bed.
- Go on a treasure hunt for everyday things in nature. For example, find a feather, twig, road sign etc.
- Have a look at the National Trust website for ideas on walks.
- Create a bug hunt.
- Try geocaching - this has really taken off over the past couple of years and is great fun. Or Pokemon Go!



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## Be active inside

- Have a kitchen disco. The children will love it.
- Investigate indoor clubs in your local area. Don't forget to ask your school as some clubs are free.
- Dance to music when you are cooking, doing chores or simply having some family time.
- Build an indoor den using sheets and blankets.
- Remember - just 10 minutes of physical activity a day has been shown to have a really positive impact on our minds.

## Monitoring screen time

- Set expectations - You could say 'You can watch one programme/ play one game before dinner/ bath'.
- Choose your timings wisely - no screens at least one hour before bed.
- Always give a warning. Preparing a child is always a good thing as they know what is coming
- Choices and routines will make it more likely that your child will cooperate with screen time rules. Make sure to make these rules 'family rules' - and remember to lead by example.
- Have a 'tech free day'. Take it in turns to choose a family game, for a walk or cook together.
- Think about doing other things - for example, if you don't want your child using a screen in the car, have other games or conversation topics you can rely on.
- Revisit the rules every month to adapt to changing needs and interests as your child grows
- Get your child to write a letter to a friend or relative or to simply pick up the phone and chat
- Make sure you set consequences for misuse of screens. For example, if they don't stick to the family rules, then they have a day without the screen.

## Average attention span for each age group.

- 4 years old: 8-12 minutes.
- 5-6 years old: 12-18 minutes.
- 7-8 years old: 16-24 minutes.
- 9-10 years old: 20-30 minutes.
- 11-12 years old: 25-35 minutes

## Useful links

<https://www.walkingbritain.co.uk/find-walks-by-me.php>

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/grow-your-own>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-46758809>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/get-involved/take-part/volunteer>

<https://letsmove.obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/reduce-screen-time-and-get-active>

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/>

<https://www.mumsmakelists.com/50-fun-things-to-do-outdoors-for-free/>

<https://www.geocaching.com/play>

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/publichealth/hampshirehealthineducation/keystages/primary/physicalactivity>