



**National Association for  
Sport and Physical Education**  
*an association of the American Alliance for Health,  
Physical Education, Recreation and Dance*

**NASPE Sets the Standard**

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## Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children From Birth to Age 5, 2nd Edition

**New, expanded edition, with more advice & practical suggestions for parents & caregivers than ever before.**

This new edition offers:

- ▶ More practical suggestions than ever on how parents & caregivers can implement NASPE's physical activity guidelines for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.
- ▶ Expanded guidance on physical activity for preschoolers, based on newly emerging research.
- ▶ FITT (Frequency, Intensity, Time and Type) guidelines for all three age groups.
- ▶ Expanded resource list for parents & caregivers.

**NASPE position statement:** All children from birth to age 5 should engage daily in physical activity that promotes movement skillfulness and foundations of health-related fitness.

### Purpose of the Guidelines

NASPE developed specific guidelines for the physical activity of children from birth to age 5 to support its position statement and to address the developing child's unique characteristics and needs. The guidelines reflect the best thinking of specialists in motor development, movement and exercise about the physical activity needs of young children during the first years of life.

### Organization of Guidelines

The book provides five guidelines for each age category: infants (birth to age 12 months), toddlers (age 12 to 36 months), and preschoolers (ages 3 to 5). The guidelines answer questions about kinds of physical activity, the activity's environment and the people responsible for facilitating the physical activity.

Explanations and discussion of typical activities accompany the listing of the guidelines. Also included: a Frequently Asked Questions section, a glossary of terms and an expanded, comprehensive list of background resources.

## Guidelines

### Guidelines for Infants:

- Guideline 1.** Infants should interact with caregivers in daily physical activities that are dedicated to exploring movement and the environment.
- Guideline 2.** Caregivers should place infants in settings that encourage and stimulate movement experiences and active play for short periods of time several times a day.
- Guideline 3.** Infants' physical activity should promote skill development in movement.
- Guideline 4.** Infants should be placed in an environment that meets or exceeds recommended safety standards for performing large-muscle activities.
- Guideline 5.** Those in charge of infants' well-being are responsible for understanding the importance of physical activity and should promote movement skills by providing opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity.

**Guidelines for Toddlers:**

- Guideline 1.** Toddlers should engage in a total of at least 30 minutes of structured physical activity each day.
- Guideline 2.** Toddlers should engage in at least 60 minutes -- and up to several hours -- per day of unstructured physical activity and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.
- Guideline 3.** Toddlers should be given ample opportunities to develop movement skills that will serve as the building blocks for future motor skillfulness and physical activity.
- Guideline 4.** Toddlers should have access to indoor and outdoor areas that meet or exceed recommended safety standards for performing large-muscle activities.
- Guideline 5.** Those in charge of toddlers' well-being are responsible for understanding the importance of physical activity and promoting movement skills by providing opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity and movement experiences.

**Guidelines for Preschoolers:**

- Guideline 1.** Preschoolers should accumulate at least 60 minutes of structured physical activity each day.
- Guideline 2.** Preschoolers should engage in at least 60 minutes -- and up to several hours -- of unstructured physical activity each day, and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.
- Guideline 3.** Preschoolers should be encouraged to develop competence in fundamental motor skills that will serve as the building blocks for future motor skillfulness and physical activity.
- Guideline 4.** Preschoolers should have access to indoor and outdoor areas that meet or exceed recommended safety standards for performing large-muscle activities.
- Guideline 5.** Caregivers and parents in charge of preschoolers' health and well-being are responsible for understanding the importance of physical activity and for promoting movement skills by providing opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity.