

## Playing Outside is Important

Children need to have at least 60 minutes of active play time daily. Playing outside gives kids more room to run around, have fun, and be children.

### Ask your school or daycare about play. Do they:

- ❖ Take kids for walks, go to parks or on nature hikes?
- ❖ Have fun play areas and active toys?
- ❖ Have scheduled active play times and limited TV and screen time?

## Questions Parents Have

- ❖ Why should I take my child to play outside?

Outdoor play is more active than playing inside. It burns more calories and lowers the chance of your child being overweight or getting diabetes.

- ❖ Will my child get hurt playing outside?

Kids need a chance to run, climb, and jump. Sometimes they may fall, but playing in safe places should help avoid serious injury.

## Resources for Play

- ❖ [ContraCostaHealthPlan.org](http://ContraCostaHealthPlan.org). Find more fun ideas and healthy play.
- ❖ [HealthyandActiveBefore5.org](http://HealthyandActiveBefore5.org). Play resources for young children.
- ❖ [Kaboom.org](http://Kaboom.org). Find your local playgrounds.



## Why Outdoor Play is Good For Your Family

Playing outside gives families more time together, having fun! It also helps keep everyone healthy.

### Outdoor play helps kids:

- ❖ Learn better in school
- ❖ Learn new skills and use their imagination
- ❖ Build healthy bones and develop good exercise habits for life
- ❖ Sleep better and reduce their stress
- ❖ Learn how to play with other kids
- ❖ Stay at a healthy weight and avoid future diabetes and obesity



- ❖ Schedule time for kids to play the same way you schedule lunch and dinner.
- ❖ Set limits on watching TV. Plan to do a fun activity outside instead.
- ❖ Kids will want to play outside when parents make the time to play with them.
- ❖ Parents can be busy people. Try and take turns with other adults to take the children out to play.



- ❖ Walking, playing tag, or taking kids to a park are all free of cost.
- ❖ Toys such as a Frisbee, jump rope, chalk, boxes, and beach balls don't cost much and can be shared.



- ❖ Find a park that has good lights, a bathroom, and room to run and play away from cars.
- ❖ Make sure there is an adult with young children at all times. Take turns with other parents or go as a group.
- ❖ Kids should wear tennis shoes year round for outside play.
- ❖ Bring water to drink. No soda or sweetened drinks!



- ❖ When it is cold, kids should wear a jacket and a hat.
- ❖ For rainy days, move furniture around to make a safe space for children to play inside.
- ❖ Remember, kids do not get sick from playing outside in the cold.
- ❖ Don't forget sunscreen!

