

Common barriers to physical activity and solutions in Preschoolers

<p>If your child does not want to go for a walk or says” I’m tired”</p>	<p>A brisk walk may be dull to a young child, but there are ways to liven up your family stroll. Here are some things you may want to try:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make your walk a scavenger hunt by giving your child something to find, like a red door, a cat, a flag, and something square. • Sing songs or recite nursery rhymes while you walk. • Mix walking with jumping, racing, hopping, and walking backwards. • Make your walk together a mathematical experience as you emphasize numbers and counting: How many windows are on the garage door? Do you see any number threes?
<p>If household chores need to be completed</p>	<p>Give your children opportunities to help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let your child gather up dirty clothes and put them in the washing machine and dryer. Teach them how to fold clothes/towels and match socks. • Give them a cloth to dust with and see who can make the dirtiest cloth. • Let your child help with the gardening, raking or shoveling. • Turn on your child’s favourite music and start tidying up the playroom
<p>If safety is a concern</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervise play • Create a safe play space. Check for safety hazards and remove any strings or scarves that might strangle a child if they get caught in equipment • Visit Sports and Active Living Safety Tips by the Canada Safety Council at http://www.safety-council.org/info/child/children.htm for more ideas
<p>If activities cost too much</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use your imagination: make an obstacle course in the basement or backyard (overturned chairs, tunnels made from cardboard boxes); play a game of catch with bean bags (dried beans in an old sock tied off with an elastic band). Equipment doesn't need to be expensive • Check your local leisure centre for reduced cost swim nights, free skate nights etc. • Use outdoor facilities and parks and go to community events that have free physical activities for children • Check to see if subsidized programs are available
<p>If you have to bring your younger child to an older child’s activity</p>	<p>Instead of just sitting and watching try:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing a ball that the two of you can play with while waiting for the activity to finish • Go for a walk around the playing field while game is taking place • If the activity is swimming, swim with your preschooler at the same time • Play on a nearby playground.
<p>If the weather is cold outside,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go outside and build a snowman or snow fort, go sliding at

it's raining etc.	<p>a nearby hill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go for a walk in the mall, a swim in an indoor pool, or a walk at the zoo visiting the indoor exhibits • Go skating at a local rink • Make up a dance to your favourite song, play catch inside with a foam ball, play a game of charades • Go to an indoor playground • Put on your rain gear and go jump in puddles
If it seems like there is no time for play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set aside time each day for play • Plan play dates for your child several times a week • Join an organized activity i.e. swim lessons so you are less likely to miss it
If my child hates to lose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it fun rather than competitive • Teach skills like running throwing, catching and kicking • Plan activities that they are capable of so they can achieve success • Praise them for trying!
If my child doesn't feel comfortable participating because their clothing might get wrecked or they will get wet/cold etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress your child in clothes that allows them to move freely • Ensure that they are wearing seasonal outdoor clothing and indoor clothing that doesn't need to be kept " neat and clean"
If all my child wants to do is watch TV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit TV, computer and video games to 1 hour a day • Get a foam ball to play catch with during commercials • Set up a play date with another child • Be a positive role model by staying active yourself: make regular exercise part of your own routine. • Turn the TV off when it is not in use

