



Staying Active throughout the School Day

The school environment can often cause increased levels of sedentary behaviour amongst students. In addition to physical education classes and recess, schools can promote and encourage physical activity within the classroom to get students moving regularly throughout the school day.

How much physical activity do my students need?

The Canadian [24-Hour Movement Guidelines](#) recommend that:

- **Preschoolers** - 3-4 years of age spend 180 minutes of physical activity throughout the day, with at least 60 minutes being energetic play.
- **Youth** - 5-17 years of age spend 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous aerobic physical activity, with 3 days a week on muscle strengthening activities.

How can classroom physical activity benefit my students?

Making physical activity a part of the classroom offers its own unique benefits, such as:

- Improving concentration, motivation, and engagement in the learning process.
- Decreasing behavioural problems.
- Improving student academic performance.
- Increasing students' total amount of daily physical activity to meet Canadian recommendations.

What can I do to get my students active in the classroom?

Educators can greatly influence and promote active behaviours amongst their students. To get students moving during class time, try to:

- Ask students what physical activities they would like to learn and try. Being physically active can look different for all students. Based on feedback from the class, incorporate these activities throughout the year and within your lesson plans (e.g. dance, games, and outdoor activities).
- Take active breaks throughout the school day. Have a student lead an activity of their choice (e.g. jumping jacks, running on the spot, stretching) to encourage their participation and imagination. Use this opportunity to educate the class on the “why” behind physical activity breaks to promote their understanding and emphasize the importance of reducing sedentary behaviours.
- Encourage classes to be taught outside to get the whole class moving while learning. Outside classrooms are also a great environment for physical distancing while learning and being active.