Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans:
Youth Physical Activity Recommendations

Key Guidelines for Youth

Youth (ages 6–17) should do 60 minutes (1 hour) or more of physical activity daily.

- **Aerobic:** Most of the 60 or more minutes a day should be either moderate-or vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity and at least 3 days a week should include vigorous-intensity physical activity.

- **Muscle-strengthening:** As part of their 60 or more minutes of daily physical activity, youth should include muscle-strengthening physical activity at least 3 days a week.

- **Bone-strengthening:** As part of their 60 or more minutes of daily physical activity, youth should include bone-strengthening physical activity at least 3 days a week.

It is important to encourage youth to participate in physical activities that are appropriate for their age and ability, that are enjoyable, and that offer variety.

Type of Physical Activity	Examples of Activities for Youth
Moderate–intensity aerobic*	- Active recreation, such as hiking, skateboarding, and rollerblading - Bicycle riding - Brisk walking - Dancing
Vigorous–intensity aerobic**	- Active games involving running and chasing, such as tag - Martial arts - Running - Sports such as soccer, swimming, and tennis
Muscle-strengthening	- Games such as tug-of-war - Push-ups or modified push-ups (with knees on floor) - Resistance exercises using body weight or resistance bands - Sit-ups (curl-ups or crunches) - Swinging on playground equipment/bars
Bone-strengthening	- Games such as hopscotch - Skipping - Jumping rope - Sports such as basketball and volleyball

*Moderate-intensity activity: Allows you to talk but not sing.
**Vigorous-intensity aerobic: Allows you to say only a few words without catching your breath.
Note: Some activities can be classified as more than one type of activity.

www.health.gov/paguidelines

60 Minutes or More a Day
Where Kids Live, Learn, and Play
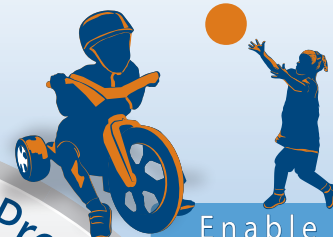
Inform

Enable

Health Care

92%
of youth saw a health care provider last year

Preschool

4.2 million
youth attend center-based preschools

Build

24 minutes
of physical activity are added for youth who walk to school

Community

Youth are **65%** more likely
to join organized physical activities when encouraged by their parents

95%
of youth are in school for 6-7 hours per day

School

Integrate

Home

Support

Physical activity is critical for overall health.

Learn more: www.health.gov/paguidelines

Sources: Synder T, Dillow S. Digest of education statistics 2010. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education; 2011. Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. America's children in brief: key national indicators of well-being, 2006. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office; 2006. Sirard JR, Riner WF, McIver KL, Pate RR. Physical activity and active commuting to elementary school. Med Sci Sports Exerc. 2005;37(12):2062–9. J Pediatr. 1991;118(2):215–9. Bloom B, Cohen RA, Freeman G. Summary health statistics for U.S. children: National Health Interview Survey, 2011. Vital Health Stat 10. 2012 Dec;(254):1–148. Heitzler CD, Martin SL, Duke J, et al. Correlates of physical activity in a national sample of children aged 9-13 years. Prev Med. 2006;42(4):254–60.