

Movement and Fluids- How Much Does my Child Need?

Your child moves in so many ways throughout the day. They may have walked with you around the grocery store, helped you cook dinner, or played outside after school. Physical movement is an important part of your child's healthy growth and development. Movement can benefit them both mentally and physically by improving sleep, strengthening muscles and bones, decreasing depression and anxiety, and reducing the risk for chronic diseases². But you may be wondering, how much movement should my child be getting? The Center for Disease Control (CDC)¹ recommends that children ages 3-5 years be physically active throughout the day. Those aged 6-17 years should engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day, and muscle and bone strengthening activities at least 3 days per week¹.

Movement can come in all forms!

Whether structured or unstructured, any age-appropriate activity counts. Here are some examples of how your child can engage in movement:

- Bike riding
- Playing on the playground
- Hand clapping games
- Helping in the garden
- Obstacle course
- Dance party
- Helping with grocery shopping
- Grabbing the mail
- Walking the dog
- Ball toss
- Taking a family walk
- Helping with chores around the house

Remember- Your child will also need to stay hydrated while moving! Make sure they have fluids available throughout the day. Recommendations are as follows³:

- 6-12 months: In addition to their formula or breast milk, children at this age can be offered 4-8oz water/day
- 1-3 years-old: 4 cups of beverages/day
- 4-8 years-old: 5 cups of beverages/day
- 8-years and older: 7-8 cups/day

References:

1. Center for Disease Control. (2023). *How much physical activity do children need?*. <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/children/index.htm>
2. Center for Disease Control. (2022). *Physical activity facts*. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/physicalactivity/facts.htm>

3. Rethy, J. (2020). *Water for healthy hydration*. https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/Choose-Water-for-Healthy-Hydration.aspx?_gl=1*m5c9gc*_ga*NzI1NDgwMDgzLjE3MTEzMzI3OTI.*_ga_FD9D3XZVQQ*MTcxMTEzMjc5MS4xLjAuMTcxMTEzMjc5MS4wLjAuMA..