

## UNDERSTANDING THE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Bodies are designed to move. Health Canada recommends 90 minutes a day of moderate activity for children and youth and 60 minutes a day of moderate activity for adults in order to stay healthy or improve their health. Research shows that physical activity in three, 10-minute sessions is just as effective as one 30-minute session.

You can gradually increase the amount of time you and your children are active by increasing the time currently spent on physical activity by 30 minutes each day and decreasing the amount of “screen time” (watching TV, playing video games or being on the computer) by 30 minutes each day. Health Canada recommends that children and youth get no more than 90 minutes of screen time each day.

### **Types of activity: endurance, flexibility and strength**

The following types of activity are all important for overall health. Do a combination of these types of activities over the week.

- ◆ Endurance – involves continuous movement to get the heart, lungs and circulatory system working.
- ◆ Flexibility – includes gentle reaching, bending and stretching activities to keep the muscles relaxed and the joints mobile.
- ◆ Strength – involves moving the muscles against resistance. Resistance can be provided by water, weights or a person’s own body weight.

Parents who are active tend to have children who enjoy being active. If you and your family are not meeting these guidelines, begin slowly and gradually increase the amount of time you spend being active as you become accustomed to it. Ideally, find a fun activity that the whole family can do together.

For more information contact:

- ◆ [www.activehealthykids.ca](http://www.activehealthykids.ca)
- ◆ Physical Activity Guide [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/index.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/index.html)
- ◆ [www.actnowbc.ca](http://www.actnowbc.ca)