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Grande Prairie Family
Centered Coalition

NEWSLETTER

JULY 2019



PHYSICAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING

WHAT IS IT?

Includes physical readiness for the school day, physical independence, and gross motor skills (e.g. - catching and throwing a ball, walking up stairs) and fine motor skills, (e.g. - holding a pencil). It also includes the development of healthy eating, sleeping and hygiene habits.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Children who get enough sleep, eat right and keep active will:

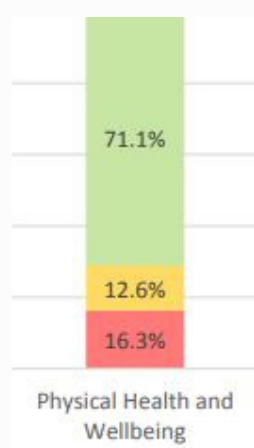
Do better at school - active living helps children have better concentration, memory, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

Have a healthy body weight - daily exercise builds a healthy heart, encourages muscle growth and helps develop strong bones.

Develop healthy self-esteem - active living helps children feel good about themselves. It reduces anxiety and depression and makes children better able to deal with stress.

Play with others - active living provides opportunities for children to socialize, make friendships, and practice self-discipline.

The chart below shows data collected from the 2016 Early Development Instrument for **Grande Prairie** in the area of **physical health and well-being**.



71.1% - Children developmentally on track: Almost never have problems that interfere with their ability to physically cope with the school day. These children are generally independent, have excellent motor skills, and have energy levels that can get them through the school day.

12.6% - Children who are developmentally at risk: Experience some challenges that interfere with their ability to physically cope with the school day. This may include being dressed inappropriately, frequently late, hungry or tired. Children may also show poor coordination, poor to average fine and gross motor skills, or show poor to average levels of energy levels during the school day.

16.3% - Children who are developmentally vulnerable: Experience a number of challenges that interfere with their ability to physically cope with the school day. This may include being dressed inappropriately, frequently late, hungry or tired. Children lack coordination skills, do not show the fine and gross motor skills of other peers their age and may have fading energy levels.

DEVELOPING HEALTHY HABITS

Helping your child develop healthy habits can be simple! Here are a few ideas to help your child(ren) develop their physical healthy & well-being:

A Tasting Party: Helps your child learn about healthy eating and have fun at the same time! Select from the food groups: fruits and vegetables (broccoli, carrots, berries, apples), proteins (chicken, beans, eggs, fish), whole grains (whole wheat bread, pasta and rice). Put a sample of each food onto your child's plate and talk about each one. For example, talk about how fruits and vegetables have lots of vitamins that help bodies grow. Ask your child about how the food tastes, what kind of texture it has, etc.

Sweet Sleep: Children need plenty of sleep in order to stay healthy and for their minds and bodies to grow. If they are rested they will have the emotional and mental strength to be able to solve problems and get along with others. One way to make bedtime easier is to create a routine to fit you and your family and do it everyday. It could be listening to soothing music, singing together, reading a book, deep breathing, whatever helps children wind down from the day. Creating a visual (like a small poster) can help remind your child(ren) what the routine is each night before bed.

I'm Growing: Most of us had this when we were children! Find a place in your home where you can mark your child(ren)'s height as they grow. You can even use a piece of tape to mark growth. As you do this every couple of months your child(ren) will love to see how much they are growing.

The No TV Box: Children need a lot of active play to be healthy so screen time should be limited. It is the dreaded "I'm bored" that sometimes makes giving them screen time easier than thinking of something for them to do. Here is a way to help break the screen time habit! Make a "No t.v." box or plastic jar (any container will do). Decorate the container together then cut up small pieces of paper. Talk to your child(ren) about the fun things they like to do (they can be things they do everyday and be simple ideas) then write the ideas down on the slips of paper and put them in the "No t.v." box. Next time they are looking for something to do they can pull a slip of paper from their "No t.v." box. Another easy way to break up screen time is to **create a busy bag**. These bags contain ready to do activities for children that can help develop literacy, numeracy and fine motor skills. Any Google search will lead to you a ton of different ideas. Many of the activities can be created using materials found at home or the local dollar store!

Gross Motor Skills: these skills can be developed by simply playing catch, playing on the playground, going for a walk, or even playing hopscotch!!

Resources used in this newsletter:

<http://ecdcoalitions.org/parent-information/>
<https://edi.offordcentre.com/parent-toolkit-aimed-at-helping-childrens-development/>
<http://occhildrenandfamilies.com/about-us/publications/kid-builder-resources/>
<https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>

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