



Government of **Western Australia**
Child and Adolescent Health Service



Move to Improve

A guide for parents and caregivers



Contents

What is Move to Improve?	Page 3
Australian 24-hour movement guidelines	Page 4
What counts as physical activity?	Page 5
Families who move together, improve together	Page 6
Sedentary behaviour	Page 7
Sleep	Page 8
Tips to help fuel your child's body	Page 9
Resources	Page 10
Helpful apps to download	Page 11

What is Move to Improve?

1



Move to Improve is an 8-week program that will help me to move more.

2



At my first visit I will meet the Move to Improve team to talk about my current activity levels, complete some movement, talk about food and things I might be struggling with.

3



I will wear a watch for the first 8 days to measure my physical activity and sleep. I will wear the watch again at the end of the 8 week program.

4



I will have 8 physical activity sessions that may be at Perth Children's Hospital or in my community.

5



Things I might do in the PCH gym include playing games to make me jump higher, run faster and make my body stronger!

6



Things that I might do in the local sports centre include using the gym or playing ball sports. I might go into the pool to learn about water safety and swimming skills!

7



During my physical activity sessions we might talk about things like being active at home, sleep and screen time.

8



During the 8 weeks I may talk to a dietitian or psychologist about healthy eating and how I am feeling.

9



At the end of the program, I will go back to PCH to see how much I have improved, and receive my certificate and present!

Move to Improve has been made possible through funding from the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation and Perth Children's Hospital Foundation.

Australian 24-hour movement guidelines

Why is being physically active important for everyone?

Physical benefits

- Promotes healthy growth and development
- Raises stamina and physical endurance
- Lowers chance of chronic diseases like hypertension and diabetes
- Supports weight management and improves metabolic health
- Improves flexibility, balance, and overall physical function

Social benefits

- Grows social connections and networks
- Supports teamwork through group sports
- Builds communication skills
- Creates a sense of belonging and community
- Offers opportunities for family bonding
- Grows leadership skills and sportsmanship
- Offers opportunities for positive social recognition

Psychological benefits

- Improves mood and emotional resilience
- Boosts self-esteem and confidence
- Lowers stress levels and promotes relaxation
- Improves self-discipline and academic performance
- Boosts cognitive function and memory
- Improves overall quality of life and well-being
- Supports quality sleep

Adults

Adults should be active most days, and aim for some activity every day.

Each week, adults should do either:

- 2.5 to 5 hours of moderate intensity physical activity – such as a fast walk, golf, mowing the lawn or swimming.
- 1.25 to 2.5 hours of vigorous intensity physical activity – such as jogging, aerobics, fast cycling, soccer or netball.
- An equal mix of moderate and vigorous activities.
- Add muscle-strengthening activities as part of your daily physical activity on at least 2 days each week.

Children and adolescents

Children 5 years old and over should aim for:

- 60 minutes each day of moderate to vigorous physical activity that makes the heart beat faster.
- At least 3 days per week, should also include: vigorous activities and activities that strengthen muscle and bone in the 60 minutes.
- Limited sedentary time and break up long periods of sitting with movement.

It doesn't have to be a full 60 minutes at once. Some shorter sessions throughout the day works too.

What counts as physical activity?

Anything you do that uses your muscles to move your body counts as physical activity. This can include movement you do as you go about your normal day (incidental activity), activity you do on purpose to increase your heart rate and make you breathe more deeply (exercise), or more formal physical activity with rules and maybe organised completion (sport).

Exercise examples

- Walking the dog
- Going for a bike ride
- Swimming
- Doing a specific muscle strengthening program

Incidental activity examples

- Walking around the shops
- Walking between classes at school
- Chores like making your bed or vacuuming the floor
- Walking up and down stairs

Sport examples

- Netball
- Soccer
- Basketball
- Tennis



The different exercise intensities

Your physical activity has to be of moderate intensity or higher for it to count towards your 60 minutes per day.

• Light intensity

Activity doesn't make you hot or puffed, but you are more active than just sitting or lying down.



• High intensity

Makes you very puffed, you can still talk but you have to stop every couple of words to take a breath.



• Moderate intensity

Makes you feel warm and slightly out of breath, but not so puffed that you cannot talk.



• Incidental activity, exercise and sport

Can all be low, moderate or vigorous in intensity depending upon how you perform them.



Families who move together, improve together

When families are physically active together, young people are more likely to build positive and lasting lifestyle changes. It is also a great way for families to connect.

How can our family make a start?

- Set alarms. Mark it in the family calendar. Don't just "forget" to be active.
- Set some activity goals together.
- Bike, walk, or scoot together to school
- Play games e.g. "what's the time Mister Wolf", balloon volleyball, musical bobs.
- Find a new playground to explore.
- Walk the dog together.
- Park a little further away and walk together.
- Have a family dance party.
- Commit to using the stairs instead of using lifts.
- Learn a new skill together e.g. surfing, basketball, martial arts.
- Create an activity jar and take turns picking one for the family engage in.
- Set a family step challenge (see the resource page for suggested apps).



Other tips for motivation

During the Move to Improve program, you may find that your child's motivation goes up and down. This is normal, and changing behaviour is hard.

If they are struggling with motivation you may like to try some of the options below:

- Start small – help your child break down their goals and focus on one step at a time. For example, if their goal is to go for a daily walk, start with a short walk once per week.
- Cheerlead your child by celebrating effort and even small behaviour changes.
- Make it part of the day, and link the new behaviour to something you already do as a family. For example, park further away at the shops, walk the dog together, etc.
- Reassure your child that it is normal to feel a little sore a day or two after exercise. It means that they have worked their muscles. They will feel less sore as their muscles adapt.
- Support your child's energy levels by: making sure they are getting to bed early, drinking lots of water, eating regularly and having breaks.
- Remind yourself and your child of the benefits of being active- see information above.

If you would like to learn more tips on motivation speak to your M2I team.

Sedentary behaviour

Sedentary behaviour is any time (when you're not sleeping) where you are sitting or lying down for more than half an hour.

Ideas on how to break up sedentary behaviours

Here are some tips:

- Spread your usual chores out during the evening so they break up your screen time.
- Set a timer to remind you to get up and move every half hour. Using the kitchen timer means you have to get up to turn it off!
- Only drive part way to or from school and walk the rest of the way.
- Use recess and lunch time to walk and talk rather than sitting about.
- Do a movement task – play a game, go for a walk with friends or family or do a specific exercise program.

Too much time on screens may lead to:

- Mood changes e.g. irritability or withdrawal
- Feeling tired or flat
- Sleeping less
- Loss of interest in screen free activities
- Change in school grades
- Conflict with family
- Raised risk of problems with your heart, lungs and bones

Tips for managing your child's screen time:

- Be mindful of how much time your child is spending on screens (like TV, iPad, gaming consoles, mobile devices).
- Plan for screen free activities for each day.
- Turn off any non-essential notifications on all devices.
- Have a daily checklist of other important daily tasks to finish before allowing screen time. For example: brush teeth, shower, finish homework.
- Role model setting limits on screen time, like your mobile phone.
- Create a family screen agreement that has tech free times (e.g. meals, study blocks, bedtime).
- Focus on screen free activities as a family. For example: family walks, playing ball games, playing board or card games, cooking or baking, gardening, visiting the library, etc).
- Use screen time limits in apps.



Sleep

Getting enough good-quality sleep is essential to healthy growth. Good sleep helps us to make better food choices and feel like being active.

We recommend that each night:

- Children aged 5 to 13 years get 9 to 11 hours of uninterrupted sleep.
- Young people aged 14 to 17 years get 8 to 10 hours of uninterrupted sleep.
- Adults need to get 7 to 9 hours of uninterrupted sleep.



Tips to help improve your child's sleep:

- Set the same bedtime and wake-up times for your child.
- No screens for at least one hour before sleep.
- Keep screens out of your child's bedroom.
- Support your child to do something soothing before bed (e.g. shower, read a book, etc).
- Support your child to get outside into direct sunlight in the early mornings.
- Keep your child's bedroom cool, dark and quiet.
- Support your child to do daily physical activity.
- Lower artificial light and quieten the house in the lead up to bedtime.
- Limit daytime sleeping.



Tips to help fuel your child's body

Provide a range of healthy foods from the five food groups every day. Refer to the Australian Guide to Healthy eating below for ideas:

Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from these five food groups every day.

Drink plenty of water.

Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties



Vegetables and legumes/beans



Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds and legumes/beans



Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives, mostly reduced fat



Fruit



Use small amounts



Only sometimes and in small amounts



- Offer 3 meals per day and 2 snacks if needed.
- Choose discretionary food (junk foods) only sometimes and in small amounts.
- Support your child to drink at least 8 glasses of water per day. Drink more water when exercising and in hot conditions.
- Talk to the M2I Dietitian for personal dietary advice.
- See resources page for more healthy eating information.

Resources

Physical activity



Parkrun
Free community events



KidSport vouchers
To help fund physical activity



Find a
KidSport Club



Trails WA
Find a trail to walk

Food



Eat for health
General information for healthy eating



PCH Diabetes information to help fund physical activity



Headspace
Explore topics for young people



Headspace
Psychosocial benefits of physical activity

Information for people with disability



Find resources and events hosted by **WA Disabled Sports Association**



Directory of Inclusive Sports in WA by **Autism Association of Western Australia**

Screen time



eSafety Commissioner
Advice on screen time

Information on parenting



The Australian Parenting Website
Information about raising children in Australia

Helpful apps to download



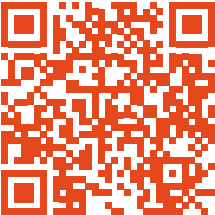
Apple storeGoogle store

Talk N Walk app



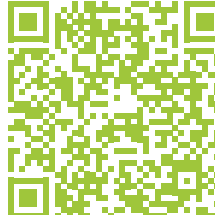
Apple storeGoogle store

Geocaching



Apple storeGoogle store

Pokémon GO



Apple storeGoogle store

Sleep Ninja



Apple storeGoogle store

Headspace



Apple storeGoogle store

StepUp Pedometer



Apple storeGoogle store

Smiling Mind



Apple storeGoogle store

GoNoodle



Apple store

Habit Tracker



Apple storeGoogle store

Just Dance Now



Government of **Western Australia**
Child and Adolescent Health Service



Move to Improve (during office hours)
(08) 6456 1111, select option 6
or email movetoimprove@health.wa.gov.au

For language assistance, please speak to one of our staff or call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450 to facilitate your call. This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for people with disability.

Disclaimer: This publication is for general education and information purposes. Contact a qualified healthcare professional for any medical advice needed. © State of Western Australia, Child and Adolescent Health Service. Produced by: Move to Improve. Ref.no 2032. Sep 2026.