

# Sit Less, Move More, Sleep Well

## Physical Activity Guidelines for Children and Young People

For school-aged children and young people (aged 5 to 17 years) high levels of physical activity, low levels of sedentary behaviour and sufficient sleep each day achieves greater health benefits.

**A healthy 24 hours includes:**



**quality uninterrupted sleep of 9 to 11 hours per night for those aged 5 to 13 years and 8 to 10 hours per night for those aged 14 to 17 years, with consistent bed and wake-up times**



**an accumulation of at least one hour a day of moderate to vigorous physical activity (incorporate vigorous physical activities and activities that strengthen muscles and bones, at least three days a week)**



**no more than two hours per day of recreational screen time**



**for the remainder of the day:**

- **sitting less, moving more – break up sitting time.**
- **participating in structured and unstructured light physical activities.**

**Preserving sleep, trading indoor time for outdoor time, and replacing sedentary behaviours and light physical activity with additional moderate to vigorous physical activity can provide greater health benefits.**

# Background

These guidelines are for all apparently healthy children and young people (aged 5–17 years) in New Zealand. Children and young people are encouraged to live an active lifestyle with a daily balance of sleep, sedentary behaviour, and physical activity that supports their healthy development.

Children and young people should have healthy sleep behaviours (habits and practices that help them to sleep well), limit sedentary behaviours (especially screen time), and participate in physical activities in a variety of environments (eg, home/school/community; indoors/outdoors; land/water; summer/winter) and contexts (eg, play, recreation, sport, active transportation, hobbies and chores).

For children and young people not currently meeting these guidelines, a progressive adjustment toward them is recommended. Following these guidelines is associated with better body composition, cardiorespiratory and musculoskeletal fitness, academic achievement and cognition, emotional regulation, positive social behaviours, cardiovascular and metabolic health, and overall quality of life. The benefits of following these guidelines far exceed potential risks.

These guidelines may be appropriate for children and young people with a disability or medical condition; however, consult a health professional for additional guidance.

These guidelines update and replace the 2007 New Zealand Physical Activity Guidelines for Children and Young People. The *24-hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth* was developed in Canada, © 2016. They have been adapted with permission from the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology [www.csep.ca/guidelines](http://www.csep.ca/guidelines)

For advice on how to achieve the Guidelines go to:

## Sleep

[health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-and-physical-activity/sleeping/helping-children-sleep-better](http://health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-and-physical-activity/sleeping/helping-children-sleep-better)

[health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-and-physical-activity/sleeping/helping-teenagers-sleep-better](http://health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-and-physical-activity/sleeping/helping-teenagers-sleep-better)

## Being active

[health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-and-physical-activity/physical-activity/being-active-everyone-every-age/activities-children-and-young-people](http://health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-and-physical-activity/physical-activity/being-active-everyone-every-age/activities-children-and-young-people)

[health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-and-physical-activity/physical-activity/being-active-everyone-every-age/helping-teenagers-be-more-active](http://health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-and-physical-activity/physical-activity/being-active-everyone-every-age/helping-teenagers-be-more-active)