

Physically active play

Korikori



Children love moving and movement, and being physically active is an important part of everyday life. Finding ways every day for children to use large and small muscles allows them to gain increasing control over their bodies. Physical activity promotes children's mental and emotional health as well as their physical well-being.

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Te Whāriki

Physically active play supports learning across all strands of Te Whāriki. In particular, it supports the **Exploration strand**, where children gain confidence in and control of their bodies. They develop increasing knowledge about how to keep physically healthy.



Physically active play can help children to

- develop large muscles, strength and balance
- develop flexibility and coordination including hand-eye coordination
- develop skills such as throwing, catching, hopping, skipping, climbing and balancing
- develop awareness of space, such as over/under, in front/behind, on top/beneath, inside/outside
- develop mathematical concepts such as long/short, big/small, wide/narrow
- be confident in controlling their bodies and learn their limits
- learn to cooperate and share
- understand that physical activity is fun and can release tension.



Adults can support children by

- making sure spaces are safe and free from obstructions
- making sure the equipment is safe, well maintained and positioned safely
- letting them play around with equipment in their own way and at their own pace
- joining in and providing encouragement, advice, support and demonstrations as needed e.g. different ways to land or throw a ball
- encouraging them to join in by taking turns
- modelling language that goes with the play
- making sure physical play resources and opportunities are available at all times.

Providing for physical activity

Being physically active can happen inside or out. Just remember that safety comes first, so make sure there is enough space for children to be physically active without the risk of hurting other children. If children are climbing, swinging, sliding or jumping, also make sure there's enough soft fall cushioning on the floor for safe landing.

Ideas for natural resources

Anything that allows for running, balancing, swinging, crawling, stepping, climbing, catching, throwing, pushing, pulling, hopping, skipping, jumping, rolling, crouching or twirling. Some examples are:

- skipping ropes
- ribbons or scarves
- balls
- bean bags
- balancing boards
- cones
- swings
- slides and other fixed equipment
- boxes, planks and ladders
- other junk material
- tunnels.

Provide children with waterproof overalls, umbrellas and gumboots so they can play outside on wet days.

