

# Physical activity ideas for children and young people

Health NZ recommends that children and young people aged 5 to 17 years do:

- at least 1 hour a day of moderate to vigorous physical activity;
- activities that strengthen muscles and bones at least 3 days per week;
- no more than 2 hours per day of recreational screen time; and
- light physical activities as much as possible.

It is also beneficial if an activity is done with a parent or other adult as family or whānau activity. This role-modelling also helps with mental wellbeing | hauora hinengaro.

The table below gives examples of activities that meet the first two recommendations.

Type of activity	Children's activities	Young people's activities
<b>Moderate intensity aerobic</b> To increase their heart rate and keep them fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roller blading, skateboarding</li> <li>• Brisk walking</li> <li>• Cycling</li> <li>• Dancing</li> <li>• Kapa haka</li> <li>• Games that require catching and throwing (such as T-ball)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roller blading, skateboarding</li> <li>• Brisk walking</li> <li>• Cycling</li> <li>• Dancing</li> <li>• Kapa haka</li> <li>• Housework and yard work</li> <li>• Games that require catching and throwing (such as softball)</li> </ul>
<b>Vigorous aerobic</b> To increase their heart rate and keep them fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active games involving running and chasing (like tag)</li> <li>• Bouncing on a trampoline</li> <li>• Skipping</li> <li>• Cycling</li> <li>• Martial arts, such as karate</li> <li>• Running</li> <li>• Sports such as football, netball, rugby, touch rugby, swimming, hockey</li> <li>• Dancing</li> <li>• Waka ama</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active games such as Ultimate Frisbee</li> <li>• Skipping</li> <li>• Cycling</li> <li>• Martial arts, such as karate</li> <li>• Running</li> <li>• Sports such as football, netball, rugby, touch rugby, swimming, hockey</li> <li>• Dancing</li> <li>• Waka ama</li> </ul>
<b>Muscle strengthening</b> To build strength in the muscles, tendons and ligaments. Also to improve joint function and reduce the potential for injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Games such as tug-of-war</li> <li>• Modified push-ups</li> <li>• Rope or tree climbing</li> <li>• Sit-ups</li> <li>• Swinging on playground equipment or bars</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Games such as tug-of-war</li> <li>• Push-ups and pull-ups</li> <li>• Resistance exercises with exercise bands, weight machines, hand-held weights</li> <li>• Climbing wall</li> <li>• Sit-ups</li> </ul>
<b>Bone strengthening</b> To strengthening bones – plus can double as aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Games such as hopscotch</li> <li>• Hopping, skipping, jumping</li> <li>• Bouncing on a trampoline</li> <li>• Rope skipping</li> <li>• Sports such as gymnastics, racket sports, basketball, volleyball</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hopping, skipping, jumping</li> <li>• Bouncing on a trampoline</li> <li>• Rope skipping</li> <li>• Sports such as gymnastics, racket sports, basketball, volleyball</li> </ul>