

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY for LIFE – Youth (6-17 yrs)

2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

How Much Physical Activity Should I Do?

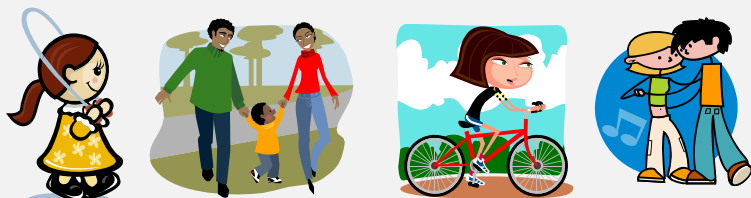
Youth ages 6 to 17 years should do **at least 60** minutes of physical activity **every day**.

- Most of this physical activity should be either moderate¹ or vigorous².
- Do aerobic³ activity at least 10 minutes at a time throughout the week.
- Mix different types of activity for a total of 60 minutes. Do these 3 or more days each week:
 - Activities that make muscles in arms, legs, chest, back, and shoulders strong
 - Vigorous aerobic activity to help your heart, breathing, and fitness
 - Activities with weights to help your bone health
- Youth should **avoid being inactive** longer than 120 minutes.

¹**Moderate intensity activity:** breathing is harder and faster than normal, but you can still talk while you exercise.

²**Vigorous intensity activity:** breathing is hard enough that you cannot talk while you exercise.

³**Aerobic means** "with oxygen." Exercises like walking, running, biking, swimming, rope jumping and dancing (see pictures below).



Health Benefits of Physical Activity for Youth

Lower risk of:

- Type 2 diabetes
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Metabolic syndrome

Added benefits:

- Healthier weight
- Better heart and muscle fitness
- Less depression and anxiety
- Better self esteem and self concept
- Higher bone density

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Sources:

1. HHS, USDA (2005). *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
2. HHS (2008). *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*.
3. Corbin CB, Pangrazi RP (2004). *Physical activity for children: a statement of guidelines for children ages 5-12*. Reston, Va: National Association for Sport and Physical Education.