

Physical Health & Well-being

What is it? Physical health and well-being is physical readiness for school (not arriving at school hungry), physical independence (well-coordinated movements), as well as gross motor skills (e.g., able to catch and throw a ball) and fine motor skills (e.g., able to handle crayons and pencils).

Why is it important? Children who are healthy and happy are children who are prepared to learn and succeed—at school and throughout life.



Children who get enough sleep, eat right and keep active will:

- **Do better at school**
Active living helps children have better concentration, memory, creativity and problem-solving skills.
- **Have a healthy body weight**
Daily physical activity builds a healthy heart, encourages muscle growth, and helps develop strong bones.
- **Develop healthy self-esteem**
Active living helps children feel good about themselves. It reduces anxiety and depression, and makes children better able to deal with stress.
- **Play with others**
Active living provides opportunities for children to socialize, make friendships, and practise self-discipline.

Physical Health & Well-being



From your child's first days, encourage her or him to be healthy

- Give your child some “Tummy Time”: While your baby is lying on his or her tummy, place interesting objects, such as shiny toys, on the ground and cheer while your baby reaches for them.
- Give your infant items to hold and bang together. Talk and sing while he or she has fun making noise and practising hand-eye coordination.
- Play “Copy-Cat”: You perform a simple action (e.g., smile, stick out your tongue, or clap) and cheer whenever your baby copies you.



Singing and playing games are fun ways to promote health

- Do the “Mirror Dance”: You and your child dance to your favourite music in front of a large mirror. Also try “Freeze Dance,” where everyone has to freeze like a statue as soon as the music stops.
- Sing, sing, sing!
—especially music and movement songs, such as See the Sleeping Bunnies, Hokey Pokey, and The Chicken Dance.



Physical Health & Well-being



Health and well-being also includes eating well, dressing for the weather, and proper hand-washing and hygiene

- Make a weekly “Meal Calendar” and let your child pick a meal that he or she will help prepare. Breakfast is an especially easy one to make, and it is said to be the most important meal of the day.
- At the grocery store, play the “I spy” shopping game with your child. Let your child put the items in your shopping cart that he or she spies.
- Provide a washcloth and a little soapy water in a bowl and let your child wash plastic dolls or animals.



Healthy activities can be simple

- Take short walks together around the neighbourhood. This is a great time to play “I Spy” and “I Hear.”
- At your local park, you can play tag, hide-and-seek, or make up your own game.
- Make an indoor obstacle course, using pillows, chairs, pots, pans, measuring cups and water – anything and everything! Activities could include walking along a chalk line, jumping over a box, and crawling through a tunnel.

Physical Health & Well-being



Active parents have active children. You are your child's best role model.

Get involved at home by:

- Building activity into your daily routine
- Replacing screen time with active time
- Making fast, healthy dinners
- Planning to be active on weekends and vacations



For more information, visit

www.peelregion.ca

www.mississauga.ca

www.healthyenvironmentforkids.ca

www.healthcanada.gc.ca