



# NEWSLETTER 01

## Physical activity, sitting time and health

The Transform-Us! Program aims to get kids to move more and sit less. We are interested in all types of physical activity including moderate activity that makes you breathe a little harder than normal (e.g., cycling) and vigorous activity that makes you breathe much harder than normal (e.g., running).

THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN AGED 5-17 YEARS IN AUSTRALIA THAT MEET BOTH GUIDELINES EVERY DAY:



### WHAT ARE SEDENTARY BEHAVIOURS?

Sedentary behaviours are activities that are done while sitting or lying down (e.g., watching TV, iPad or computer, homework).

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

No more than two hours a day using screens (e.g., TV, electronic tablets, video games) for entertainment and break up long periods of sitting as often as possible.

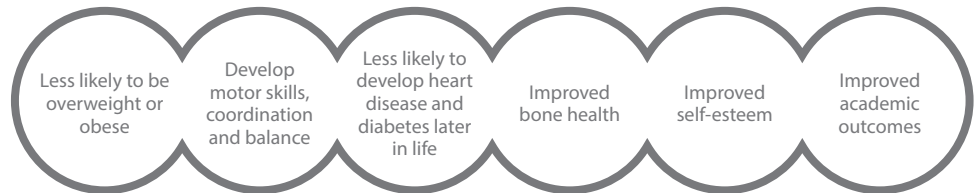
### WHAT IS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

Physical activity is about moving your muscles. You feel warm and a little out of breath (e.g., walking, climbing trees, skipping, running, riding).

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

At least 60 minutes of physical activity every day and doing activities that help **strengthen** bones at least three days per week.

### BENEFITS OF SITTING LESS AND MOVING MORE:

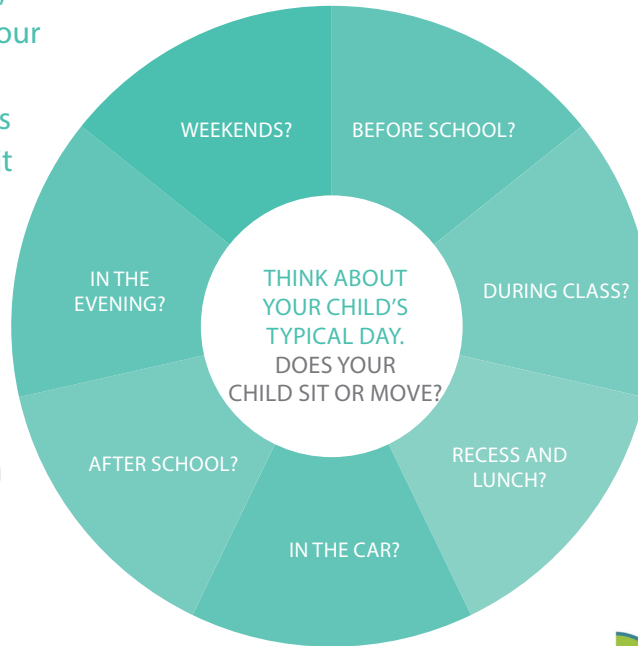




## NEWSLETTER 02

### How much does your child sit and when is your child active?

Often parents think their child gets lots of activity. As parents, it's important to know when your child is being active and when they are sitting. Often, sitting is just a habit and we don't give it any further thought.



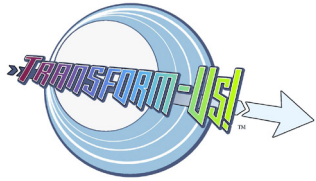
#### SUGGESTIONS TO GET YOUR CHILD MOVING!

- Encourage them to walk or ride to school (or part way to school)
- Stop at a park on the way home from school
- Go outside with them
- Encourage them to play active games during recess or lunch and at home
- Together with your child, make a list of their favourite active games- Keep this on the fridge so when they get bored they can be reminded to do something active



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## NEWSLETTER 03

### The home environment

Our environment influences whether we sit or move. There are many things about your house that can't be changed, like the number of bedrooms, location, size of yard. But, there are also many things that can easily be adapted to help your child move more and sit less.



**FACT:** Children with screens in their bedrooms tend to be more sedentary.

#### WHAT IS IN YOUR HOME AND NEIGHBOURHOOD THAT CAN HELP CHILDREN BE ACTIVE OR HELP THEM TO SIT LESS?



Keep active equipment at the door (e.g., skipping rope, balls, bats etc.). Your child will be more likely to use it if they can see it.



Where possible install activity prompts such as sandpits, basketball rings, trampolines cubby houses to encourage children to spend more time outside.



Reduce availability of screens for your child. If they have a TV in their room consider removing it.



Limit mobile screen devices before bed.



Designate a safe area inside the home where your child can be active (e.g., using a foam ball or balloon).



Find a map of your area and plan out a way (or partway) that you and your child could walk/ride to school. There may be some friends along the way who can join in.



Explore your neighbourhood! Spend 15 minutes researching your area to see what is available for you and your child to use. There could be some fantastic paths, parks or centres just around the corner!





## NEWSLETTER 04

### Creative thinking and alternatives to sitting

Organised activities, like club-based sport training or lessons, are not the only way to get your child moving more and sitting less. If there is not an organised activity planned, some creative thinking may help your child move more and sit less.

#### CREATIVE IDEAS TO GET YOUR CHILD MOVING MORE AND SITTING LESS.



Use chalk to draw a court or target your child can use in the drive way.

Play charades where your child acts out a scene from their favourite movie for you to guess.



Glue or pin some ribbon to the end of a ruler to make a ribbon your child can dance with.

Set your child a challenge to get up during the ad breaks and do an activity (e.g., star jumps, squats). Each ad break see if they can beat their last number.



Use masking tape to draw a target on a wall. Your child can practice throwing or batting a tennis ball against it.

Using bubbles get kids to pop them using their hands, feet or a bat/racquet.



BOYS spend an average of 2.5 hours per day on screens for entertainment.\*



GIRLS spend an average of 2 hours per day on screens for entertainment.\*



\*not including homework screen time

Brainstorm with your child activities they could do at home instead of sitting to watch TV?



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## NEWSLETTER 05

### Choosing to move or sit

This first step to breaking a habit (like sitting) is to be aware of other options. Weighing up the positives and negatives helps us make the healthy choice.

#### GIVE YOUR CHILD THE OPTION TO CHOOSE

By providing children with a range of activities to choose from, they feel in control when selecting which one they complete:

- 'Do you want to play soccer or basketball?'
- 'Do you want to use your bike or walk to school/friends place?'

#### Limiting screen options:

- 'You can watch half an hour of TV after-school, do you want to watch show X or show Y?'
- 'Do you want to play X-BOX or watch TV tonight?'



#### POSITIVES



- It's fun
- Get fresh air
- Good for them
- Feel better afterwards

#### NEGATIVES

- Might get hot and sweaty
- Might hurt themselves
- Might get too tired



- Challenge to beat last score
- Easy to fill in time when bored

- Can become bored/frustrated
- Anti-social activity

It is important that everyone, especially children, receives praise for making good choices. When your child turns off the screen and does something active, praise and encourage them.





# NEWSLETTER 06

## How many steps?

Research shows that children should take between 12,000 and 16,000 steps everyday (adults should take 10,000 steps) for good health. This may seem like a large number, but you can easily accumulate them across the day. Here are some simple examples of how your child can reach their daily step goal.

**FOR GOOD HEALTH, CHILDREN NEED TO TAKE 12,000 TO 16,000 STEPS A DAY!**

Household chores  
(20 minutes)  
**2000 steps**



Walking to school  
(15 minutes)  
**1500 steps**



Playing soccer  
(45 minutes)  
**4500 steps**



Walk the dog  
(30 minutes)  
**3000 steps**

Get off the bus  
one stop earlier  
**1000 steps**



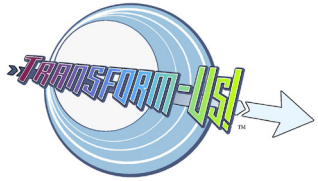
What other activities could you and your child do to reach your step target?

- 1 .....
- 2 .....
- 3 .....
- 4 .....



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## NEWSLETTER 07

# What's getting in the way? Overcoming barriers to being active

Encouraging your child to move more and sit less can be difficult. It's important to know that there is no one size fits all approach. Here are some suggestions for overcoming common barriers to being active.



**FACT:**  
Being active will  
actually give you more  
energy!

### I don't have time to play with my child –

- Create a roster with families who live nearby. Rotate each week which family takes the children to the local park.
- Invite your child's friends over to play after school or on the weekends.

### I'm scared my child will get hurt –

- Ensure your child has the appropriate safety gear for their activity (i.e. helmet, wrist guards, shin guards, mouth guard).



### It's too cold or wet –

- Make sure your child is dressed for the occasion (e.g., raincoat if it's raining, layers if it's cold).
- Designate a safe area at home where your child can be active (e.g., using a balloon inside).
- There are lots of games that can be played indoors too.

### My child is too tired after school –

- Try being active with your child for just a short time (10 minutes) to begin with and increase it each day.
- Play an active game in the morning before school or straight after school before they do their homework or get too tired. This could help them concentrate better.





## NEWSLETTER 08

### Active role modelling

Research shows that parents are important role models for children's health behaviours; this is also true for physical activity and screen time. Children observe and participate in lifestyle habits with parents and learn what is normal and acceptable. When parents spend extended periods of time in front of screens, their children will consider this normal and do the same. Therefore, it is important for parents to monitor their own screen time and spend more time being active (with and without their child).

The amount of TV that parents watch is an important influence on children's own viewing time.



**FRIGHTENING FACT:**  
Children who report either of their parents watch more than 2 hours of TV a day, are 4 times more likely to watch more than 2 hours of TV each day.

Here are some ideas of how to help your child follow your lead and be active

- **Be a role model**  
Your child will copy what you do, so let them see you turning off the screen and being active.
- **Be imaginative**  
Think of different ways that you and your child can be active (e.g., walk to school, make a kite and fly it at the park, go on a hiking adventure or dance to your favourite song).
- **Be willing**  
Play with your child. Take him or her to the park or for a bike ride or walk your dog together.
- **Be fun**  
Play with your child in an active way. This will not only get both of you moving, but it will also give you more time to spend with each other.
- **Be prepared**  
Have a basket with active equipment (e.g., balls, bats, runners) in the car so whenever you go past a park you can jump out and play.





## NEWSLETTER 09

### Active families

Children from active families are more active than children who have a less active family. Changing behaviour is difficult, but with the support of family and friends, it becomes easier. In addition, being active with others can be more fun than doing it on your own. Have a little competition to see who can get the most steps at the park or have a target number of steps to get whilst at the park.

#### FACT:

Parents who support their child to be active have more active children.

#### ACTIVE PASTIMES WE CAN DO AS A FAMILY:



Visit a local pool



Go to the park



Go for a bike ride



Walk the dog



Get in the garden



Play in the yard

Weekends and holidays are key times to be active as a family. They also give you more time to try different activities with your child that may be too difficult during the week.

With your child, write down a list of the activities you would like to do instead of spending your time sitting. These activities do not have to be a sport, just so long as they get the family moving.

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....



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