



OKLAHOMA AUTISM NETWORK

The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center

ON A ROAD TO... SOMEWHERE? ANYWHERE?
AND HOW ON EARTH DO WE GET THERE??
**CREATING A ROAD OF POSSIBILITIES IN
THE MIDDLE CHILDHOOD YEARS**

PROMOTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR
HEALTH AND WELLBEING
WEBINAR WORKSHEET

About this Webinar:

One aspect of living an enviable life includes living a life filled with wellness and good health. Physical activity benefits overall health for children with ASD and can also improve overall behavior. Research has shown that regular physical activity can decrease self-stimulatory and aggressive behavior in children with ASD. Participants in this webinar will learn the benefits of physical activity, along with some specific ways to encourage goal directed physical activity for children ages 6-12.

Purpose of this Worksheet:

This worksheet is a tool you can use during the webinar to take notes about how you can apply the information you learn. There is also a resource guide for parents and professionals to refer to when creating an intentional plan to work on increasing physical activity to improve overall health and wellness.

The content included is general information and is not specific medical or behavioral advice. The information provided may not work for every child with autism or their family. We recommend working closely with your child's doctor(s), therapist(s), and/or educator to discuss how the ideas shared may be individualized to meet your child's needs. If you have an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room right away.

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Promoting Physical Activity for Health and Wellbeing

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Things to remember from today's presentation:

- **Physical activity** improves
 - physical health, brain health, and mental health
 - focus and attention to tasks
 - metabolic function in children with ASD
- **Physical activity** can lead to decreases in:
 - self-stimulatory behavior for children with ASD
 - aggressive behavior for children with ASD

Recommended Physical Activity for All Children

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

Children and adolescents ages 6 through 17 years are recommended to get 60 minutes (1 hour) or more of moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity each day, including:

- daily aerobic and activities that strengthen bones (like running or jumping) – 3 days each week, and;
- activity that build muscles (like climbing or doing push-ups) – 3 days each week."

Steps to improving physical health and increasing your child's activity level:

1. How does my child currently get physical activity/exercise in his daily life? How much time does he spend each day being physically active in a way that will benefit his overall health? (eg: walking a certain amount of time each day at a steady pace, running, jumping on a trampoline).

If you are unsure how much physical activity your child currently gets each day, use the sheet below to take some notes for a few days:

Day				
Activity				
Amount of time				



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2. Identify the physical activity option you think may work best for your child, and your family. Consider activities that bring the person joy or match their personal interests. Take some time to think about your child's current skill as it relates to this activity. Consider where you and your child are the most likely to experience success.
3. Think about the routines in your day and consider modifications or adjustments that may need to be made to help your child be successful in increasing his physical activity. This will help you be intentional about any preparation necessary to set your child up for success.
4. Remember to provide positive reinforcement with any progress you see from your child. Also, think about how to make any adjustments or changes as positive as possible.
5. Take time to reflect. What could you adjust to better support your child in achieving success?

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Practice Plan Example – Increasing Physical Activity

<p>Skill to Teach: Physical Activity</p> <p><i>How will this skill help my child? How will improvements in this area improve my child's overall health and well being? How do I teach my child "why" this is important to learn?</i></p>	<p>My child Dan is 10 years old and has become less physically active, particularly over the past year. He likes to spend a lot of time sitting and playing on the iPad. Getting more physical activity will help him feel better, may help him lose a little weight, and could be an opportunity for him to play more with the neighbor boys. I can talk to Dan about some ideas for us all getting out as a family to do some things outdoors. He used to love exploring and looking for insects and may be interested in doing that again.</p>
<p>Routine/Activity</p> <p><i>When could we include physical activity in our routines? Ideally we will have some form of physical activity every day, or at least multiple times a week, so that my child can get the practice needed to make improvements in this area.</i></p>	<p>We can plan to go on walks in the evening, and maybe even work up to jogging at some point. We can go on walks at least three times during the week. We can also plan to go on longer walks or hikes at the local trail on the weekends.</p>
<p>Adjusting the Routine</p> <p><i>What adjustments will we need to make as parents to help set our child/family up for success? Who will be responsible for making these adjustments and assuring that they happen on a consistent basis? How can we incorporate our child's interests and current strengths?</i></p>	<p>We need to adjust our evening routine to plan for a walk after dinner. Dan is great at keeping track of time, so he could help us set a time for our walks and remind us when it is time to go. Mom will be the primary person responsible for assuring this happens during the week and what days are best, based on other family commitments. On the weekends, Dad will plan an outing and involve Dan and his siblings in deciding where to go and what to do.</p>
<p>Supports for Learning</p> <p><i>What kind of visuals could help my child learn the new routine or skill? Would my child be more likely to start learning the skill if we started as work partners?</i></p>	<p>Dan likes to have things on the calendar so he knows what to expect each day. We will do our best to plan on Sundays what days work best for a walk or other outdoor activity during the week. We will write it on the calendar at the beginning of the week. Initially going on walks together and planning weekend outings as a family will be the most motivating way for Dan to get more active. Over time, we will work towards more of a variety of activities he can do outside with his siblings and eventually the neighbors with less parent support.</p>



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<p>Positive Reinforcement</p> <p><i>How will I show/tell my child I see how hard my child is working to learn this new skill? Is there a natural reinforcer that is gained by doing the skill?</i></p>	<p>Dan loves insects. We can get a special container where he can keep the insects he finds on our walks and outings. He will enjoy showing them to his siblings and neighbors. When on our walks and outings we can praise Dan and his siblings.</p>
<p>Reflect and Adjust</p> <p><i>What went well? Is there something I can change to help my child be more successful?</i></p>	<p>We tried our plan for the past three weeks. The first week we only got out two times, but after we got the insect case Dan was more motivated and we went out four times each week since then. Dan and his siblings are playing more outside in the evenings. We need to have a talk as a family about additional outside activities we can do together and that the boys can do on their own in the backyard or front yard in the evening.</p>



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Practice Plan

<p style="text-align: center;">Skill to Teach</p> <p><i>How will this skill help my child? How will improvements in this area improve my child's overall health and well being? How do I teach my child "why" this is important to learn?</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Routine/Activity</p> <p><i>When could we include physical activity in our routines? Ideally we will have some form of physical activity every day, or at least multiple times a week, so that my child can get the practice needed to make improvements in this area.</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Adjusting the Routine</p> <p><i>What adjustments will we need to make as parents to help set our child/family up for success? Who will be responsible for making these adjustments and assuring that they happen on a consistent basis? How can we incorporate our child's interests and current strengths?</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Supports for Learning</p> <p><i>What kind of visuals could help my child learn the new routine or skill? Would my child be more likely to start learning the skill if we started as work partners?</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Positive Reinforcement</p> <p><i>What went well? Is there something I can change to help my child be more successful?</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Reflect and Adjust</p> <p><i>What went well? Is there something I can change to help my child be more successful?</i></p>	



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RESOURCES

Healthy Children from the American Academy of Pediatrics

<https://healthychildren.org/english/healthy-living/pages/default.aspx>

The Healthy Living section provides information and resources on nutrition, fitness, and sleep. Free.

Helping Kids Stay Active

<https://www.marcus.org/autism-resources/autism-tips-and-resources/helping-kids-with-autism-stay-active>

This section of their website offers tips to help children with ASD increase their physical activity and stay active. Free.

Autism Speaks: Health and Wellness Section

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/health-and-wellness>

This section of their website includes tips in multiple areas for supporting health and wellness for individuals with ASD.

What Counts as Physical Activity: Guide from the Centers for Disease Control

https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/children/what_counts.htm

Ideas for what activities count as physical activity. Free.

Go Noodle

<https://family.gonoodle.com/>

Website that includes multiple songs and videos that promote movement and dancing for children.

Cosmic Kids Yoga

<https://cosmickids.com>

This website includes multiple tools and videos to help teach children yoga and mindfulness.

7 Minute Workouts with Lazy Monster

<https://www.pecentral.org/apps/appdetail.asp?appid=134>

This free app includes short warm up videos with an animated 'lazy' monster.

PE Bowman – YouTube channel

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIX_dbLC_bbHXksbZyuPdQQ/videos

Free workout videos for kids.

Exercise Buddy – App

<https://www.exercisebuddy.com/>

An app available for a monthly charge that provides visuals, social narratives, and other tools to help implement a fitness program for individuals with ASD.



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Sports and Activities in Oklahoma for Children with Special Needs

<https://www.metrofamilymagazine.com/sports-and-activities-for-children-with-special-needs/>

Metro Family magazine listed sports and activity options in Oklahoma. Contact each individual group or organization to find out the most current information about programs.

Exergaming – Technology driven physical activities

<https://healthysd.gov/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/exergaming.pdf>

American College of Sports Medicine – Exergaming overview

The Oklahoma Autism Network strongly encourages families and providers to review these materials for goodness of fit before sharing them with the individuals they support.