



Physical Activity and Small Screen Recreation Policy (CHS 22)

Policy Rationale

Cooks Hill Preschool recognises the following important functions of physical activity for young children:

- Promotes healthy growth and development
- Builds strong bones and muscles
- Improves cardiovascular fitness
- Improves balance, coordination, posture and strength
- Maintains and develops flexibility
- Assists with the development of gross motor and fine motor skills
- Provides the opportunity to develop fundamental movement skills
- Helps to establish connections between different parts of the brain
- Improves concentration and thinking skills
- Improves confidence and self-esteem
- Relieves stress and promotes relaxation
- Provides opportunities to develop social skills and make friends
- Helps to achieve and maintain a healthy weight

The service is committed to implementing the key physical activity messages within *Munch & Move* and supporting the *National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children Birth to 5 years* as outlined below:

National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children Birth to 5 Years

- For healthy development in infants (birth to 1 year), physical activity – particularly supervised floor-based play in safe environments – should be encouraged from birth.
- Toddlers (1 to 3 years of age) and preschoolers (3 to 5 years of age) should be physically active every day for at least three hours, spread throughout the day.
- Infants, toddlers and preschoolers should not be sedentary, restrained, or kept inactive, for more than one hour at a time, with the exception of sleeping.
- Children younger than 2 years of age should not spend any time watching television or using other electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games).
- For children 2 to 5 years of age, sitting and watching television and the use of other electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games) should be limited to less than one hour per day.

This policy seeks to promote children's physical activity and the development of their gross motor and fundamental movement skills through a range of planned and spontaneous physically active play experiences, as well as through everyday physical tasks.

Cooks also seeks to limit the amount of time children spend engaging in sedentary small screen recreation and sedentary behaviour.

Further, Cooks Hill Preschool recognises the importance of supporting families to promote their children's physical activity, and their gross motor and fundamental movement skills development, and to limit their children's small screen recreation and sedentary behaviour.

Strategies, Practices and Procedures

Promote children's participation in a range of safe physically active learning experiences.

Note: Physically active learning experiences include planned play (eg, action games/songs, intentional teaching experiences), spontaneous 'free' play (eg, child initiated, active play in the playground, dancing to music), intentional teaching experiences and everyday physical tasks (eg helping with gardening, setting up experiences, tidying up spaces).

The service will:

- Provide the opportunity for children to be active every day through a balance of planned and spontaneous physically active experiences (including everyday physical tasks), in the indoor and outdoor environments.
- Plan daily intentional Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) experiences to support children's physical activity and their FMS development. This includes the planning of FMS experiences for older toddlers and preschoolers that consists of a warm-up, FMS game and a cool-down.
- Foster the development of a range of FMS - including running, galloping, hopping, jumping, leaping, side-sliding, throwing, catching, striking, kicking, underarm rolling and stationary dribbling.
- Ensure physically active experiences are play based, varied, creative, developmentally appropriate and cater to a range of abilities and interests.
- Ensure all physically active experiences are safe by providing an appropriate environment - ensuring all equipment is developmentally appropriate and well maintained and supervision is constant.
- Encourage children's participation in physical activity of varying intensity (eg. lighter through to vigorous activity).
- Provide space, time and resources for children to revisit and practice FMS and engage in active play.
- Where possible, educators will involve children in the planning of physically active experiences.
- Encourage educators to actively role model to children appropriate physical activity behaviours.
- Encourage children and educators to drink water before, during and after physically active experiences.
- Provide opportunities for educators to undertake regular professional development to maintain and enhance their knowledge about early childhood physical activity.

Provide a positive physically active environment which reflects cultural and family values.

The service will:

- Positively encourage children to participate in a range of active play and physically active experiences.
- Provide children with encouragement and positive reinforcement.
- Provide positive instruction and constructive feedback to children to assist them in developing and refining their FMS.
- Offer inclusive physical activity opportunities which cater for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and those children with additional needs.
- Adopt a participatory approach to physically active experiences offered to children and emphasise fun and participation rather than competition.
- Invite and engage families and the wider community to participate in promoting physical activity with the children.
- Encourage children to be understanding and accepting of the different physical skills and abilities of other children.

Promote lifelong enjoyment of physical activity.

The service will:

- Offer a range of physically active learning experiences.
- Encourage children to be as active as possible during daily active play times.
- Encourage all children to participate in physically active experiences to the best of their ability.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in discovery learning about the importance of being physically active and reducing small screen time as part of their learning experiences.
- Assist children to develop daily habits, understandings and skills that support health and wellbeing.

Limit time children spend engaging in small screen recreation (television, DVDs, computer and other electronic games) and sedentary behaviour whilst at the service.

The service will:

- Limit the amount of time spent in small screen recreation.
- Endeavour to limit experiences involving small screen use to those which have an educational component – including movement.
- Discuss with children the role of small screen time in their lives and support them in making healthy choices about their use of small screen recreation for both education and recreation.
- Encourage educators to model appropriate small screen behaviours to the children.
- In accordance with the national recommendations, monitor all sedentary behaviours that children may be engaging in at the service and encourage the promotion of physical activity as necessary.
- Ensure that an appropriate balance between inactive and active time is maintained each day.

Encourage communication with families about physical activity, gross motor skills development, fundamental movement skills development and limiting small screen recreation and sedentary behaviour.

The service will:

- Provide a copy of the *Physical Activity and Small Screen Recreation Policy* to all families during orientation to the service. Families will be provided with opportunities to contribute to the review and development of the policy.
- Request that any details of children's additional needs in relation to physical activity participation be provided to the service.
- Encourage families to share with the service links between cultural backgrounds and physical activity.
- Communicate regularly with families and provide information, support and advice on physical activity, gross motor skills development, FMS development, everyday physical tasks, active transport and limiting small screen recreation and sedentary behaviour. This information may be provided to families in a variety of ways including factsheets, newsletters, noticeboards, during orientation, information sessions and informal discussion.

Links to Legislation & National Quality Standards

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Part 4.1 & 4.2
- Guide to the National Quality Standard ACECQA (2011): 2.2.2

References

This policy has been adopted from Hunter New England Health: Good for Kids program.

Links to other Policies

- Creating Curriculum Policy (EPP 1)

Policy Updated: _____ MARCH 2013 _____