

# Play activity important in development of children

Play activity forms one of the basic elements of the fitness and character development of a child - food, rest, education, companionship and protection are among others.

A child who plays long hours in the open air, eats good wholesome food at regular intervals and gets eight or nine hours of sleep at night is on the right track. It is widely accepted that physically fit youngsters are

more likely to grow up to be physically fit adults.

Play is a wonderful antidote to the physical and mental strains of school. It offsets the effect of long hours of sitting and the varied conditions that contribute to mental strain.

How much should children play? Play activities should include plenty of running, skipping, chasing, dodging and climbing, out of doors whenever possible.

Most children do not mind the cold weather when they are active and dressed appropriately.

Vigorous team sports such as softball, basketball, soccer, modified football and tag games fulfill the physical needs of children. Involvement with one or more of the many individual activities - skating, skate boarding, swimming, bicycling, skiing, jogging, rope-skipping - is also highly beneficial in helping

to attain an acceptable level of fitness.

Parents should familiarize themselves with local playgrounds and recreational facilities. It is important to find out what facilities and opportunities are available that will satisfy the needs and interests of your children. Impress upon the area's public officials the need for daily physical education in our public schools and adequate

playgrounds for out-of-school activity.

The lessons our youngsters learn from sports and exercise, be they in a spontaneous game of neighborhood stickball, an organized recreational program, or a quality daily program of physical education in school, are among the most important of their lives. The important thing for them is to be involved and play!

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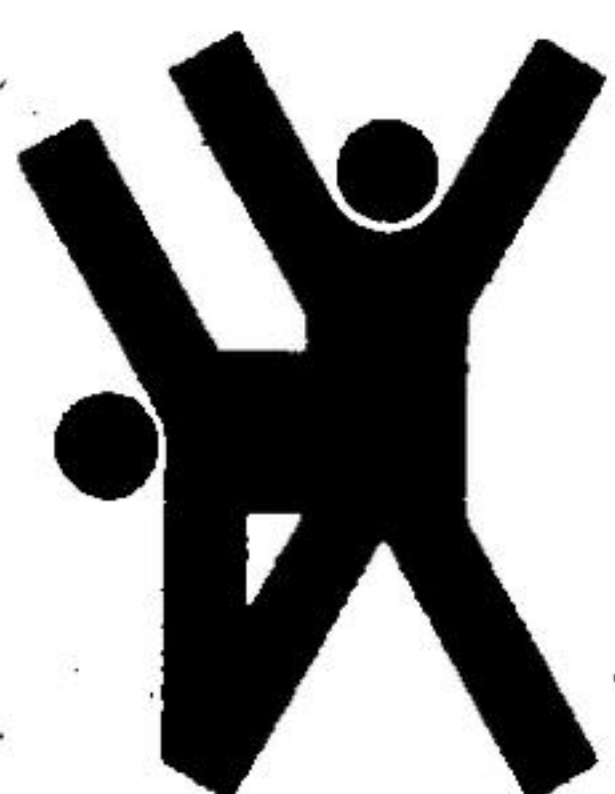
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