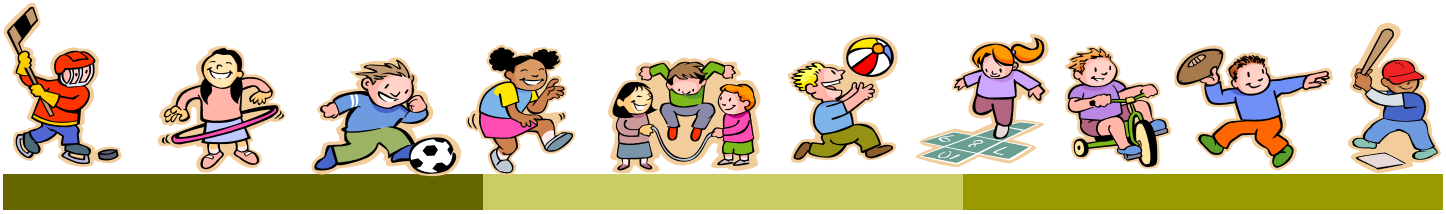


Toddler Time

Physical activity is important at all ages, including pre-school age. Having your young children engage in physical activities will allow for them to release their natural energy in a productive way. These activities also teach your pre-school child better habits early in life. It is important to set a good example as the adult and participate in physical activities as well. Young children learn by example and seeing adults participate will trigger their will to participate in these fun activities.

WINTER TIME ACTIVITIES

- *Do Three With Me* is a fun activity that can be done anywhere; whether you are preparing dinner or standing in the line at the grocery store. Tell your child three (3) actions or movements and have them act out the actions along with you. For example, reach up high, touch the floor, hop like a bunny. As you and your child act out each movement, encourage them to come up with the next movement. This activity can also enhance their vocabulary and sequencing skills.

- *Balloon Batting* is a great activity for younger children. Using a paper towel roll as a bat, have your child hit an inflated balloon like a baseball player. Then when it is your turn to this the ball, have your child catch the balloon before it hits the ground. This activity is a good way to practice hand eye coordination without the worry of breaking a window!

- *How do you* is a wonderful activity for children. Their imaginations are endless and this allows for the child to act out their favorite animals and everyday items. Ask your child to show you how to “soar like a plane,” “pounce like a lion,” “walk like a robot,” and “walk like a duck.” This will really get them smiling and moving around.

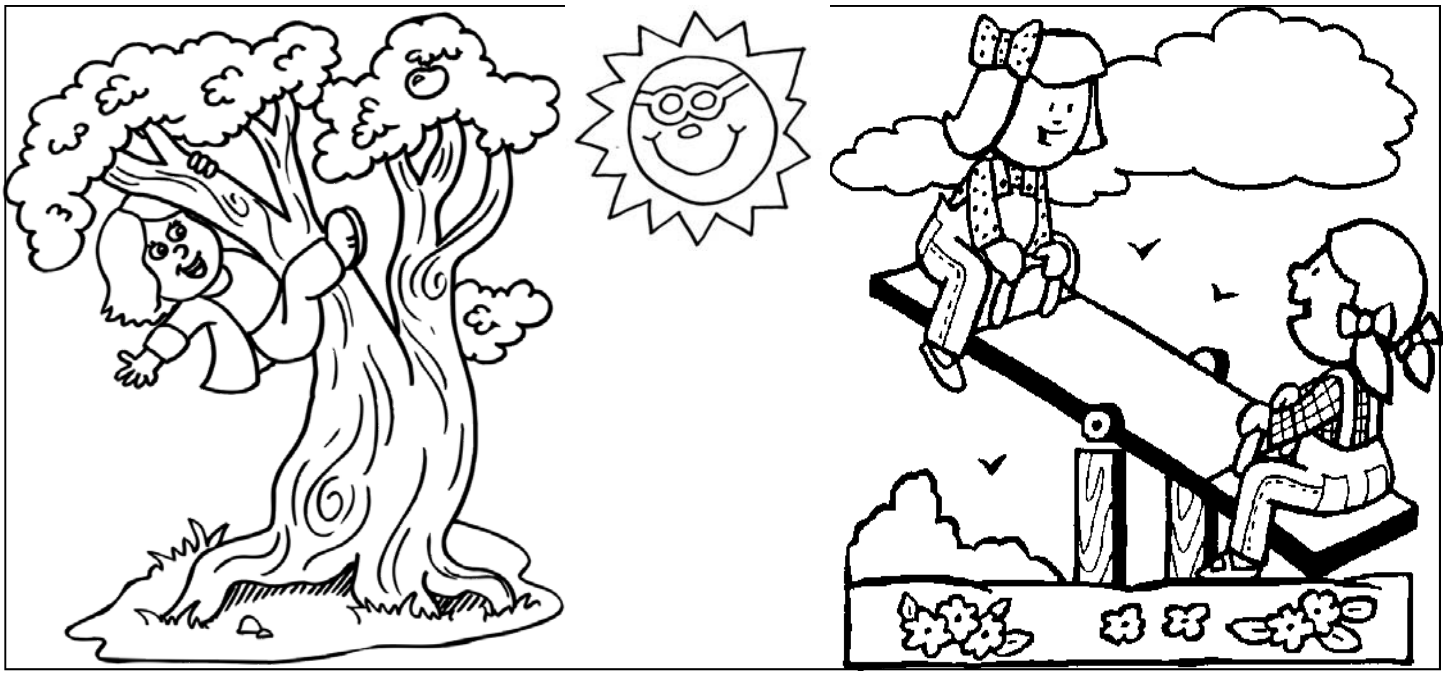
Toddler Time: Fun in the Sun

As adults, it is important to be good role models for our preschoolers. Participating in physical activity will allow our children to see how you enjoy exercising and this will reinforce the idea that being active is better than screen time. Preschool aged children should receive 60 minutes of structured time, i.e. led activities, and 60 minutes of unstructured activities, i.e. child's own play time. Next time you and your child have activity time, go outside and enjoy the outdoors. According to Head Start Body Start: National Center for Physical Development and Outdoor Play, 9% of all children between the ages of 1 and 21in the US are deficient in Vitamin D. The sun is the primary provider for Vitamin D so all the more reason to take your activities outdoors!

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Shape it and Make it

- Supplies: Sidewalk chalk; outdoor area to draw on
- Activity: Draw a shape on the sidewalk with your chalk such as a circle, a "T" or an "X" and have your child mimic the shape of that letter but laying on the ground and tracing the letter with their body.

Rainbow Run

- Supplies: space to run around outside (i.e. yard, park)
- Activity: Practice the colors of the rainbow by calling out a color and having your child run to touch 2 items that are the same color. This is a great way to practice colors with your young child and also get in a physical activity.