

## **Sample Physical Activity Policy for Early Childhood Education Centers**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children in this early childhood education center are supported and encouraged to engage in active play, develop fundamental movement skills, and limit small screen recreation time in line with current public health recommendations as advised by Nemours Health and Prevention Services, a non-profit organization that works with families and community partners to help children grow up healthy.

### **Active and Inactive Play Time**

- At least 120 minutes of active play time is provided to all children each day.
- Structured (teacher-led) play and unstructured play are provided to all children each day.
- Infants are offered tummy time daily.
- Moderate-to-vigorous physical activity is encouraged during play time for children.
- Opportunities for outdoor play at least twice a day are offered for all children (weather permitting).
- Children are rarely seated for periods of more than 30 minutes without an activity break (excluding nap time).
- Active play time is not withheld for children who misbehave. Instead, we provide additional active play time for good behavior.

### **Skill Development**

- We do not use infant walkers or exercise saucers for infant active play time.
- Children only participate in forms of physical activity that are developmentally appropriate.

### **Screen Time**

- Infants and toddlers under the age of 2 do not watch any screens while at the center.
- Children over the age of 2 have less than 30 minutes of screen time each week.
- We rarely show television and videos.

### **Play Environment**

- We provide developmentally appropriate play equipment that is extensive and varied for children.
- Indoor and outdoor physical environments provide enough space and resources to allow for active play and practice of fundamental movement skills
- Outdoor play space includes an open, grassy area and a track/path for wheeled toys.

- Indoor play space is available for all activities, including running, when weather does not permit outdoor play.

### **Supporting Physical Activity**

- Staff frequently encourage children to be active and often join children in active play.
- Posters, picture, and books are used to provide visible support for physical activity in classrooms and common areas.
- Staff and students are required to wear appropriate shoes and clothing that allows for active participation in physical activity.
- Participatory forms of play are encouraged instead of competitive play.

### **Physical Activity Education**

- We provide teacher-directed physical activity education for children, through a standardized curriculum, at least 1X a week or more.

### **Staff Training**

- Information on the physical activity policy is included in the staff orientation.
- Training opportunities for staff on physical activity (other than playground safety) are offered at least once a year.

### **Parent Communication**

- We communicate regularly with parents and provide information and advice on active play, fundamental movement skill development, and limiting small screen recreation. For example newsletters, orientation days, information sessions and informal discussions.
- We offer physical activity education to parents 2X per year or more.

Adapted from “Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies” by the NAP SACC Program, Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC, May 2007; and, “Best Practices for Physical Activity” by Nemours Health and Prevention Services, 2013.