

# SOUTH AFRICAN 24-HOUR MOVEMENT GUIDELINES FOR BIRTH TO FIVE YEARS

An integration of physical activity, sitting behaviour, screen time and sleep



## Using the guidelines at early childhood development (ECD) facilities: Some tips for practitioners



### BABIES (BIRTH TO 1 YEAR OLD)

#### Moving

- ✓ During the day at the ECD centre, including some tummy time while babies are awake helps babies' physical development by helping them get strong and ready to crawl.
- ✓ Tummy time should take place on a flat, safe surface and while supervised. A soft blanket on the floor with other babies and some soft toys is a great way to get babies moving and interacting, and to make the tummy time **fun!**
- ✓ For babies who struggle during tummy time (e.g. they cry after a short while), tummy time can be done for just a few minutes at a time.
- ✓ For crawling babies, prepare a safe area to move and play with each other. Scattering age-appropriate toys like teddy bears and rattles, as well as blankets and pillows will encourage the babies to crawl and play while on their tummies. This helps the babies' physical development.

#### Sitting

- ✓ If you work in an ECD centre with a TV, it is best to not let the babies watch any TV. Better activities for babies include singing, listening to age-appropriate music and story-telling.

#### Sleeping

- ✓ Babies need sleep to help them develop and to grow. It is best for ECD centres to have a set sleeping time for babies.
- ✓ Ensure that sleeping areas in the ECD centre are safe and quiet, and that sleep times are supervised by an ECD practitioner.



### TODDLERS (1 AND 2 YEARS OLD)

#### Moving

- ✓ Toddlers should be encouraged to move and play during their time at home **and** at ECD centres. Play areas at the ECD centre should be safe, whether it is inside or outside.
- ✓ Toddlers should spend time playing with other toddlers, and they should play **fun** games like 'on-on' and 'hide and seek'. To help physical and brain development, teach toddlers to play and do activities that take place over, under, behind and around obstacles (e.g. chairs, jungle gym equipment).
- ✓ Toddlers also benefit from playing games (e.g. 'Simon Says') and doing activities that are guided by an ECD practitioner. Ball games and activities that teach toddlers skills like catching, kicking, bouncing and jumping are great! Try your best to make sure every toddler in the class gets a chance to play.

#### Sitting

- ✓ If you work in an ECD centre with a TV, try your best to keep the toddlers away from the TV. Also keep other screens like cell phones and tablets out of toddlers' reach.
- ✓ Story-telling, playing with blocks, doing puzzles and reading at are excellent for toddlers' development, and are good ways to keep a group of toddlers busy!

#### Sleeping

- ✓ Like babies, toddlers need a lot of sleep and some of this sleep will take place in the ECD centre.
- ✓ Sleep routines are very important in toddlers. Keep an eye on toddlers who are unusually tired during the day at the ECD centre. If necessary, chat with toddlers' parents about the importance of bedtime routines.



### PRE-SCHOOLERS (3, 4 AND 5 YEARS OLD)

#### Moving

- ✓ Like toddlers, pre-schoolers should be active at home **and** at ECD centres. Pre-schoolers should be active indoors and outdoors (where possible), and should play with other pre-schoolers too! Playing games like 'follow the leader', 'hide and seek' and 'on-on' are good for pre-schooler's physical and social development.
- ✓ As an ECD practitioner, you can help develop some budding sports stars! Helping children learn ball skills such as throwing, kicking and bouncing balls; balancing skills such as standing like a flamingo; or movement skills like jumping and galloping are excellent ways to improve the growth and development of pre-schoolers.

#### Sitting

- ✓ Some TV programmes encourage learning in pre-schoolers (e.g. Takalani Sesame), but it may be helpful to have screen time **rules**, since too much screen time (more than 1 hour) can negatively affect children's readiness for school.
- ✓ Rather get pre-schoolers to do sitting activities that will help prepare them for school (e.g. playing 'make believe' games, drawing, and painting).

#### Sleeping

- ✓ Pre-schoolers who sleep well **and** get enough sleep may do better at preschool. Most of pre-schoolers' sleep should be at night time.
- ✓ Encourage parents to send pre-schoolers to bed earlier at night if a pre-schooler is sleepy during the day at an ECD centre.



DST-NRF Centre of Excellence  
in Human Development

Individual and Society

Laureus

SPORT  
FOR  
GOOD

SOUTH AFRICA