

Fast Facts About Physical Activity and Learning

- Brain research shows that young children need a substantial amount of physical activity in order to meet their developmental needs.
- Scientists now believe that for young children to achieve their maximum potential, their activities and environments need to be stimulating to their brains.
- Physical movement plays a vital role in the creation of nerve cell networks essential to learning. Cross-lateral movement, specifically, activates both hemispheres and all four lobes of the brain, heightening cognitive functioning and increasing ease of learning.
- Regular physical activity reduces feelings of depression and anxiety, and may, through its effect on mental health, increase children's capacity for learning.
- Children use movement to express feelings, manipulate objects, and learn about their world.
- Children acquire knowledge experientially, using different modalities (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic). Many children who do poorly in school are predominantly tactile or kinesthetic learners who are not allowed to move to learn.
- Movement can help children to adjust socially and emotionally because it can provide them with successful experiences and permit interrelationships with other children.
- Young children are watching television an average of 24 hours a week. By the time a child graduates from high school, estimates are that he/she will have spent 15,000 hours in front of a television and only 12,000 hours in the classroom.
- A success-oriented movement program has fewer behavior problems because children who experience success are less likely to want to disrupt the class.