

Health Unit Media Release

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Have a Ball Together!

Young children who are active every day are more likely to be happy and healthy. Unfortunately, many children are not active enough.

Did you know that:

- The time children spend being physically active begins to decrease by the age of three?
- Preschoolers watch close to two hours of TV per day, which is contributing to increasing numbers of children being overweight or obese?

The good news is that together we can change this! The Health Unit is promoting *Best Start's* "Have a Ball" campaign. "Have a Ball" aims to make active play part of a family's daily routine. The campaign provides parents and caregivers with tips on how to help their preschoolers be active in a fun and easy way. Active play does not need to be costly or time consuming! Try these fun and easy ideas at home:

- Set up an obstacle course using couch cushions for your child to crawl over/under
- Blow bubbles, chase and pop them
- Dance or move to some music
- Roll, throw, kick and toss a ball. Try different kinds of balls

And remember...less TV and computer time means more time for active play!

Best Start's "Have a Ball" resources and activities will be incorporated into the Health Unit's *Summer Health and Safety Program* when delivered at daycares. These resources, as well as other health and safety tips, will be sent home with the children at the participating daycares.

If you are a childcare provider interested in having the *Summer Health and Safety Program* at your daycare or day camp, please contact the team at:

summerbookings@healthunit.org or 613-345-5685 ext. 3049

For more information on *Best Start's* "Have a Ball" campaign, visit their website:

<http://www.beststart.org/haveaballtogether/index.html> or visit www.healthunit.org/children. To speak to a public health nurse, call 1-800-660-5853.