

# Pediatricians should promote physical activity in children

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(HealthDay)—Pediatricians should promote physical literacy and

activity in children, according to an American Academy of Pediatrics clinical report published online Feb. 24 in *Pediatrics*.

Noting that only 26.1 percent of American adolescents reported levels of activity consistent with current guidelines in the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Felipe Lobelo, M.D., Ph.D., from Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University in Atlanta, and colleagues address the need for [physical activity](#) assessment and counseling in pediatric clinical settings.

The authors recommend pediatricians promote physical literacy and activity in children and progress toward recommended physical activity guidelines. Gross motor skill development and physical literacy and activity should be assessed and documented as appropriate at health care visits. The role and benefits of physical activity on physical and social growth should be discussed as well in the management of health conditions, [mental health](#), [school performance](#), behavioral management, and risk-behavior reduction. Parents should be encouraged to lead by example; children growing up with active parents are more likely to be active themselves. Specific tools and resources can be provided to families, including assistance in overcoming barriers to physical activity. For [children](#) facing barriers to activity, pediatricians should identify opportunities for physical activity assessment and prescription.

"Ideally, every child will leave their pediatrician's office with specific instructions and goals on how to become more active," a coauthor said in a statement. "Physical activity is a potent medicine for the whole family's [health](#) and well-being."

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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