Sedentary behavior is not a lack of a positive health behavior but rather it is itself a negative health behavior.

**WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE CONSIDERED SEDENTARY?**

Sedentary activities most often understood are screen time activities such as watching TV, playing video games or sitting at a computer or smartphone. But it can also include other activities like reading, playing cards, driving in a car or bus or sitting at a desk during school or work time.

Nevada Statute defines sedentary activity as those that "do not significantly use arms or legs or provide significant exercise, including, without limitation, sitting, standing, reading, playing a board game, riding in a wagon or drawing." So while it is important for a child to do a puzzle, sit and build blocks or read a book, these are still sedentary activities and should be broken up with a physical activity at least every 60 minutes.

Studies show in the past few years, children and youth are sitting a lot more than they used to and specific populations are at risk such as lower income families, African American and Latino populations.

Studies show that a gym workout doesn’t eliminate the health effects of sitting all day. In one study on healthy adults who met the daily physical activity requirements, sitting and watching TV was still positively associated with a number of health risks.

This shows us the importance of not only being active everyday but getting up at least 5 minutes every hour to stretch, walk or do some light activity.

Nevada law requires that children receive both moderate-vigorous physical activity periods as well as limited sedentary time.

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**Nevada Statute NRS 432A.1771.1.(b) -** Requires most licensees that operate a child care facility to provide a program of physical activity that:

1. Ensures that all children receive daily periods of moderate or vigorous physical activity that are appropriate for the age of the child;
2. Limits the amount of sedentary activity, other than meals, snacks and naps, that children engage in each day;
AREN'T CHILDREN NATURALLY ACTIVE?

Many preschoolers spend considerable time at organized out-of-home care, such as pre-schools, child care centers, and family child care homes. While these settings provide excellent opportunities to promote physical activity and limit time spent being sedentary, studies show that children spend up to 87% of their time in early care and education (excluding naps) being sedentary. It is important for parents and teachers to work closely together and ensure children are not sedentary between home and school settings combined.

Factors that influence sedentary behavior in the classroom or on the playground include not enough space (indoors or outdoors); bad weather (snow, rain, heat); limited equipment (e.g. must share with other classes) or unsafe or broken playground equipment, lack of teacher involvement (motivation, skill, personality, teaching style); and children who might be uninterested, overweight and or lack motor skills.

Excess screen time has a unique set of conditions, beyond obesity, all of its own such as decreased creativity, eye problems, anxiety, depression and associations with brain development.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Requires involvement from both parents and teachers!

- If weather permits, provide daily periods of outdoor play (Nevada NRS 432A.390)
- Provide parent or teacher-led physical activity sessions at home or in preschools - not just free play
- Teach children movement skills, don’t just expect them to “figure it out”
- Provide enough materials and working equipment to avoid excessive competition and long waiting periods for sharing (Nevada NRS 432A.390)
- Find fun games and activities suitable for all children regardless of weight status, ability, or skill level
- Avoid elimination games and ensure children are active and inclusive
- Create opportunities for physical activity during lesson plans or times of transition or waiting
- Look for indoor activities such as dancing or doing a treasure hunt
- Allow children who cannot sleep to play quietly during nap time (Nevada NRS 432A.390)

REFERENCES


Preschoolers should not be sedentary for more than 60 mins at a time except when sleeping.