
	Management Area: Childrens Services	Version No: 1.0 Pages: 5
	Category of Policy: Operational	Approval Date: 11/04/2023 Policy Approver: Head of Children's Services
Policy Title: Physical Activity and Screen Time (Activated OSHC) Policy		Author: YMCA's of Australia

# YMCA SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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## Physical Activity and Screen Time (Activated OSHC) Policy

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## 1. Purpose

Physical activity is essential for children to grow, learn and develop optimally. Benefits include better cognitive and academic outcomes, and improved heart health, fitness, sleeping patterns, and mental wellbeing.

Screen time is associated with poorer physical, social, and intellectual development, though offered in moderation, can have some benefits. Unfortunately, however, most Australian children get too much recreational screen time.

OSHC (including Vacation Care) plays a vital role in children's physical activity and screen time. Children who attend OSHC spend a considerable part of their day there and generally attend regularly, so the activities they do at OSHC substantially influence their ongoing daily activity patterns and lifestyle. Therefore, by having a service-wide policy that ensures a healthy balance of physical activity and screen time, OSHC services can positively impact the health and wellbeing of many children.

This policy has been developed to:

- Encourage children to achieve their recommended daily amount of physical activity every day in OSHC and Vacation Care.
- Have both outdoor and indoor environments that provide ample opportunities for children to be active.
- Assist OSHC educators to facilitate healthy physical activity and screen time behaviours.
- Ensure families, children and educators are informed of the service's physical activity and screen time policy.


## 2. Scope

The scope of this Policy applies to all approved YMCA South Australia Children's Services that operate under the Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653) and Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011. This includes Before School Care, After School Care and Vacation Care Services.

## 3. Policy Statement

The policy will be implemented daily in before school care, after school care, and vacation care, within reason. The policy may not be implemented in exceptional circumstances, such as inclement weather (e.g., wet weather or extreme heat). In addition, it may occasionally not be implemented, for example, on the last day of term. However, exceptions should not be made every week (e.g., it is not acceptable to disregard the policy every Friday).

Physical activity will be incorporated into educational programs and activities, supporting children's learning, development, and wellbeing. Healthy physical activity and screen time will be reinforced through practice, service displays and resources available for families.

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## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- During Before School Care, children will be offered a minimum of 45 minutes of energetic outdoor/indoor play, preferably later in the session, when most children are in attendance.
- During After School Care, children will be offered a minimum of 90 minutes of energetic outdoor/indoor play, preferably earlier in the session, when most children are in attendance.
- During Vacation Care, children will be offered a minimum of 3 hours of energetic outdoor/indoor play.

Children will have access to a wide range of energetic/active play resources and spaces, indoors (when available) and outdoors. Services are encouraged to consider playing energising music in active play areas to encourage children to dance and create a lively atmosphere.

Outdoor free play (unstructured, child-initiated activity) is the main physical activity in OSHC and Vacation Care. It is offered every day. Educator-led play (where OSHC educators lead a group of children in an activity, such as a sport or game) may also be offered. When adult-led games are offered, games that maximise children's active participation will be used (e.g., avoid games that involve long waits for a turn, or games that involve sitting out).


## SCREEN TIME

- During Before School Care, children may be offered recreational screen time for a maximum of 30 minutes (preferably less or none, and not offered at the same time as physical activity).
- During After School Care, children may be offered recreational screen time for a maximum of 60 minutes (preferably less or none, and not offered at the same time as physical activity).
- During Vacation Care, children may be offered recreational screen time for a maximum of 2 hours (preferably less or none, and not offered at the same time as physical activity).

Screen time for homework is not recreational screen time, so does not count towards these limits.

If individual recreational screen time activities are offered (e.g., video games and iPads) and per child time limits are used (e.g., 10 minutes per child) the TOTAL time the devices are offered must still meet the above limits.

Recreational screen time may include watching television for rest, videogames, and handheld devices. When television is used, educational content will be favoured. When videogames are offered, games that maximise children's active participation, and promote social interaction and movement, (e.g., active video games such as "Wii Fit" and "Let's Dance" and avoid games that

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involve long waits for a turn) will be prioritised. Recreational screen time will not be used as a reward.

YMCA South Australia are committed to promoting a healthy lifestyle to the children in our care, which incorporates encouraging more physical activity and less screen time. Children's Services Management will ensure that our *Activated OSHC* accreditation remains current. At least every 3 years our policy and evidence of training will be resubmitted on [ActivatedOSHC.org.au](http://ActivatedOSHC.org.au).

*Activated OSHC Accreditation Renewal: Required by 11/04/2026.*

#### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

Department / Area	Role / Responsibility
Children's Services Management	Is responsible for the development, monitoring, and review of the policy and related systems, ensuring content meets all legislated requirements. To facilitate policy awareness to all educators on the appropriate implementation and use of the policy.
Responsible Persons	YMCA nominated supervisor and/or service management will oversee the implementation and service adherence of the policy.  Nominated supervisor and/or person with management and control will seek individual community feedback and facilitate an active consultation process with service users as appropriate. Is responsible for addressing any instance of non-compliance with this policy and implementing strategies to help prevent non-compliance with this policy.  Responsible for ensuring suitable resources and support systems to enable compliance with this policy. Drive the consultation process and provide leadership and advice on the continuous improvement of the policy.
All employees, volunteers & students	Responsible for meeting the requirements outlined in this Policy. Responsible for raising concerns or complaints in accordance with this Policy.

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## 5. Monitoring Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier for reasonable cause or upon the request of the YMCA South Australia Board.

## 6. Version History

Version	Date	Description of changes	Effective Date	Review Date
1.0	11/04/2023	New policy developed in consultation with the 'Activated OSHC' project.	April 2023	