



10 Top Tips for Parents & Educators

PROMOTING PHYSICAL WELLBEING

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

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PROMOTING PHYSICAL WELLBEING

Physical activity isn't only beneficial for our bodies; it also plays a role in promoting mental wellbeing. With both the Euros and the Olympics this summer, it's an opportunity to engage young people in regular exercise which can reduce stress, improve mood and boost self-esteem. Despite these benefits, many children face barriers to participating in physical activity.

- 1 MAKE IT FUN**
Incorporate activities that children enjoy, such as playing games or dancing. Encourage participation in team sports or group activities to foster social connections and a sense of belonging.
- 2 MIX MOVEMENT WITH LEARNING**
Educational settings can incorporate movement breaks and physical activities to enhance focus, concentration and cognitive function. Embedding exercise into the curriculum can also reinforce learning and stimulate creativity. 'Lesson walks' with textbooks and resources can benefit older learners.
- 3 CREATE OPPORTUNITIES**
Provide clear chances for physical activity throughout the day, both indoors and outdoors. Schools can encourage active play during breaks and at lunchtimes, while limiting screen time at home can help keep children up and about.
- 4 PROVIDE POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT**
Praise and encourage children for their efforts and achievements in physical activity. Recognise their progress and celebrate their successes to reinforce positive behaviours. Educators could do this in several ways, such as applauding their efforts at assemblies or celebrating their accomplishments in newsletters.
- 5 VARIETY IS KEY**
Introduce a selection of physical activities to keep children engaged and prevent boredom. From swimming and cycling to yoga and martial arts, trying different types of exercise can help children to discover what they enjoy most.
- 6 ENJOYMENT OVER COMPETITION**
Encourage children to focus on the enjoyment of physical activity rather than winning or achieving perfection. Emphasise effort, improvement and having fun rather than outcomes, to minimise the amount of stress that children can sometimes associate with sports and other competitions.
- 7 SET REALISTIC GOALS**
Help children set achievable physical activity targets based on their interests, abilities and preferences. Celebrate their progress and successes to maintain motivation and enthusiasm.
- 8 MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE**
Ensure that children have access to safe, suitable spaces for exercise at home, at school and in the community. Advocate for inclusive environments which accommodate diverse needs and abilities. Be a change maker in your community if facilities aren't already available.
- 9 LEAD BY EXAMPLE**
Parents and carers can be positive role models by prioritising their own exercise and involving children in their fitness routines. Gentle walks, bike rides or sports activities can be wonderful opportunities for bonding and staying active together.
- 10 ENCOURAGE PERSISTENCE**
Help children develop resilience and perseverance by encouraging them to overcome challenges and setbacks in physical activity. Teach them the importance of perseverance and the value of effort in achieving their goals.

Meet Our Expert
Adam Gillott is a learning and development specialist who, as well as working for Minds Ahead, is associate vice principal for personal development of a large secondary school in Burnley. He was asked to be part of an expert research group for the Department for Education, one of only three school leaders to be asked to do so.

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A recent Sport England study found that less than half (47%) of children in the UK currently meet the Chief Medical Officers' guidelines of taking part in an average of 60 minutes or more of sport and physical activity a day. While this figure may see a rise during the Euros, taking this chance to get children and young people engaged in regular exercise could cement the increase in a more permanent way.

However, it can be tricky to know where to start, or how best to encourage young people to stay active – so, our Wake up Wednesday guide is here to offer some tips. This week, we're sharing expert advice on how to promote exercise and the importance of physical wellbeing for the younger generation.

Please [click here](#) to download the guide.