

What are the benefits of physical activity and how can I, or my child, get involved?

Physical activity has been shown to improve fitness levels, decrease self-stimulating behaviors, and enhance general motor function for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Sports, exercise, and other physical activities can lead to improvements in symptoms, behaviors, mental health, and quality of life for individuals with ASD including sleeping and eating. It can also provide opportunities to meet others and develop strong friendships.

- Explore different kinds of physical activity to determine the right fit for you or your child. Some examples of activities to try include yoga, hiking, soccer, swimming, weight-training, baseball, martial arts, skiing, walking, bowling, skating, and tobogganing.
- Keep it simple. Before joining a program, buying specialized equipment, or paying for expensive memberships, try practical, daily adjustments. Try to increase the amount of walking by taking the stairs, getting off the bus one stop earlier, or parking your car further from your destination to help you gain a few extra steps.
- Search for free or reduced memberships, classes, or other community offerings.
- Expand your definition of health to include more than just diet and exercise. Healthy behaviors also include getting enough sleep, drinking enough water, and eating several servings of fruits and vegetables every day. A healthy lifestyle also involves understanding health conditions, scheduling medical appointments, managing medication.
- Find and connect to the professional supports, agencies, and resources that can help you and your child manage their health care needs.

RESOURCES

The Resource Centre (a Sinneave Family Foundation initiative) does not endorse or guarantee the exhaustive, complete, accurate or up-to-date nature of information provided and does not assume any risk for the outcome of information or referrals provided.

HEALTH AND FITNESS APPS FOR IPHONE OR ANDROID

Bodybuilding.com

This is an excellent resource for anyone, regardless of fitness level, that teaches you how to target each muscle group effectively. Click the muscle group you would like to target on the picture, and it will show you what exercises you can do.

Website: bodybuilding.com/workout-plans/

Breathe2Relax

Provides information on the effects of stress on the body and gives instructions and various exercises to help combat stress. This app is a great resource for when you are feeling sad and upset, and also helps to stabilize your mood and control anger.

Website: breathe2relax.soft112.com/

Workout Trainer

JEFIT Workout: Free personal trainer, workout plans, exercise and fitness tracker and gym log.

Website: jefit.com

Fitocracy

It is an online game and social network that aims to use “gamification” to help users improve their fitness. Users log their daily fitness and “level up”. Individuals can also compete with friends.

Website: fitocracy.com

HEALTH AND FITNESS GROUPS

Autism Asperger’s Friendship Society - Stepping Out

Social exercise group that focuses on overall health and wellness, in a structured but relaxed social setting. For individuals 11 - 25 years of age.

Phone: 403.246.7383

Address: 7720-D Fairmount Drive SE, Calgary, AB T2H 0X7

Email: brittany@aafscalgary.com

Website: aafscalgary.wildapricot.org/stepping-out

Beast Mode Fitness First Experience

This group is for young adults with ASD (18 to 30 years of age) and is designed to promote an interest in developing mobility, flexibility, strength training, cardio conditioning, teamwork, and social skills related to gym etiquette. The importance of creating a comfortable environment and encouraging a team atmosphere is a priority. This group takes place at the University of Calgary, Kinesiology Building.

Contact: Nick Lapointe

Phone: 403.220.4374

Email: nicholas.lapointe@ucalgary

Website: sinneavefoundation.org/sinneave_work_item/beast-mode-fitness

Canadian Association for Disabled Skiing (CADS) - Calgary

CADS lessons are available to people with a wide variety of diagnoses and skills. Ski/Snowboard School is organized into different groups, including a group that is inclusive of people with ASD. Please note that this group is for people who are able-bodied and have learning or behavioral challenges that interfere with their ability to learn new skills in group settings or attend to instructions.

Phone: 403.286.8050

Address: CADS Calgary, Canada Olympic Park, 88 Canada Olympic Road SW, Calgary, AB T3B 5R5

Email: info@cadscalgary.ca

Website: cadscalgary.ca

Calgary Recreation

A searchable online database of registered and drop-in programs around Calgary. Able to filter by “Category” (of activity), “Location”, and “Age Group”, and includes a map of locations.

Website: calgary.ca/CSPS/Recreation/Pages/Disability-information-Recreation.aspx

Disabled Sailing Association of Alberta

A great sports program that enables individuals of all ages and with various needs to participate in sailing activities in a safe and supportive environment. There are options to work or volunteer with the program, and participate in regattas and other competitions.

Phone: 403.225.8050 Lakeside Office 403.238.0689

Address: P.O. Box 36091, Lakeview Post Office, Calgary, AB T3E 7C6

Website: dsaalberta.org

Rocky Mountain Adaptive Sports and Recreation

Connected with Sunshine Village Ski and Snowboard School (Banff) and Canmore Nordic Centre, various programs and lessons are available. Winter sports include: downhill skiing, snowboarding, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and dog sledding. Summer sports include: hiking, road biking, mountain biking, golf, frisbee golf, tennis, horse riding, swimming, white water rafting, ropes course, and kayaking/canoeing.

Phone: 403.431.1354

Address: Rocky Mountain Adaptive, 2-201 Carey, Canmore, AB T1W 2R7

Email: info@rockymountainadaptive.com

Website: rockymountainadaptive.com

Special Olympics Calgary

Programs are open to individuals of all skill levels with an intellectual disability, ages 2 and up.

Contact: Nadine Chyz

Phone: 403.735.1022

Address: 14, 2180 Pegasus Way NE, Calgary, AB T2E 8M5

Email: info@specialolympicscalgary.ca

Website: specialolympics.ca

Sport 4 Life Cochrane

Sport 4 Life Cochrane (S4LC) is a non-profit organization that inspires commitment to physical literacy in children and youth through education and training, resources, mentorship, advocacy, and networking. This program serves other physical activity providers and promoters.

Address: Spray Lake Sawmills Family Sports Centre, 800 Griffin Road East, Cochrane, AB T4C 2B8

Website: sport4lifecochrane.com

Vecova Recreation Centre

A public facility that provides recreation and leisure opportunities to Calgarians of all ages and abilities. They have a warmer salt-water swimming pool that is more suitable for individuals with sensory processing differences. They also offer a variety of programs and services and provide a welcoming environment for individuals with special needs.

Phone: 403.284.2231
Address: 3304-33rd Street NW, Calgary, AB T2L 2A6
Email: recinfo@vecova.ca
Website: vecova.ca

William Watson Lodge Society

Operates the William Watson Lodge in Kananaskis that is fully accessible for individuals with disabilities. Can be used by families or groups.

Phone: 403.591.7227
Email: info@williamwatsonlodgesociety.com
Website: williamwatsonlodgesociety.com
Brochure: williamwatsonlodgesociety.com/upload/485385/documents/4A891A6DF5AB1610.pdf

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