Active play is foundational to physical and mental health for children. Healthy weight and healthy growth and development are by-products of active play.

Active play happens when children run, jump, bounce, leap, skip, gallop, throw and catch, climb, dance, and use wheel toys.

Communicate often with families about characteristics and benefits of active play in your program for young children.

1. Frequently and intentionally remind yourself that you are in a partnership with parents.

2. Empower parents to recognize the skills their children display when they play.

3. Ask about parent’s dreams for their child’s physical well-being and health. Draw a parallel to those dreams and the child’s active play.

4. Know what is developmentally appropriate for a child so you can give parents valid information about active play.

5. Talk with parents about the uniqueness of early childhood relationships. This matters when you explain how valuable play is to help children develop social and emotional competence and their physical growth and development.

6. Tell parents why you set out specific equipment or choose active play activities in your schedule/curriculum. Explain what you expect to happen.

7. Explain to parents how you will intentionally choose opportunities for active play that lead to skills attainment.

8. Explain how early childhood skills look when children are playing.

9. Talk with parents about how their child’s play demonstrates that the child has attained a skill.

10. Take careful notes to document active play. Show progress over time. (Share with parents daily, and in portfolios.)
11. Recognize your biases about weight. Deal with those prior to trying to explain your strategies to parents.