



Image Via <https://www.connectability.org.au/the-importance-of-physical-activity-for-children-with-disabilities/>

## Great Exercises for Kids With Disabilities

While physical activity is crucial for the health of all people, children can especially benefit from exercise. However, not all children have the same abilities and can participate in the same activities. If you have a child with a disability, you may be wondering how to keep them active and engaged. Keep reading for some helpful tips, courtesy of [Camp Gencheff](#).

### Why Focus On Fitness?

A person's physical fitness does more than keep their body in shape. [Staying active is important](#) for overall health as it provides cardiovascular and strength benefits. Moreover, exercising can ease depression, anxiety, pain, and stress. Specifically for children, kids with physical disabilities that engage in physical activity have more opportunities to socially integrate with their peers, and maintain good health. Perhaps, most importantly for the little ones, exercise can be a fun and beneficial experience in more ways than one.

### Before You Get Started

Before you start your child on any new exercise routine, begin with a visit to their primary health care provider. You will want to discuss the types of exercises your child might benefit from the most. Some signs to watch for, is that it's too intense, or not a good fit for them. The nice thing

about exercise programs is their flexibility and ability to be modified for individual needs and abilities. Your doctor may suggest a physical health exam before they sign off on new activities.

It can also help to have a few simple pieces of equipment on hand to see what your child is most interested in. This might include anything from exercise balls and bands to adaptive products, like [a wheelchair workout kit](#), which Enabling Devices explains works the upper body and core. There is also accessible cardio and strength equipment, as well as much more available. Your children might also get excited about exercise if they have a smartwatch to track their movements in progress. This can be an added motivation bonus.

## Fun Activities for Mobility-Impaired Children

Most children aren't going to want to go to the gym and watch the boring grown-ups pump iron. But, you can get them interested in exercise with these fun activities.

- **Yoga.** Yoga is one of the most adaptive types of physical activity out there, and even individuals who use wheelchairs can do it with ease. With pose names like Downward Dog and Corpse, kids may even chuckle a bit while stretching. [Harvard Health notes](#) that yoga, coupled with mindfulness, improves self-esteem, classroom behavior, anxiety, and academic performance. It's also a great way to facilitate an [atmosphere of wellness](#) in the household.
- **Swimming.** Almost everybody loves the water, and, given its buoyancy and ability to be warmed to a comfortable temperature, it's no wonder that hydrotherapy and aquatic exercises are popular among adults and children with disabilities. [Water-based exercises](#) can help improve physical function and overall well-being in children with cerebral palsy and other mobility-limiting conditions.
- **Boccia.** Older kids and teens interested in a group activity might enjoy Boccia. This [ball-throwing game](#) comes to us from the ancient Romans and is played professionally throughout Europe. Those using power chairs can easily play with a flat surface, a few balls, and a willingness to learn.
- **Fencing.** When you think of fencing, you probably think of people with swords running and dancing around each other. However, fencing doesn't require using your feet and, like Boccia, it's a game that has been played since Roman times. Fencing is featured [at the Paralympic games](#) and is adaptable for those with limited mobility.

Giving your children an opportunity to keep their bodies healthy is essential no matter their abilities. Even children with severe physical limitations can benefit from things like stretching and aquatic aerobics. Before you get started, open up a conversation with their doctor. While you want to make sure they are getting enough exercise, your primary goal is to ensure that they can do so safely.

*For year-round programming and respite care that services children and adults with intellectual and physical disabilities, visit [Camp Gencheff](#) today!*