

Highmark Healthy High 5 SPARK Active Recreation Fact Sheet

SPARK (Sports Play and Active Recreation for Kids)

- The Highmark Healthy High 5 SPARK Active Recreation Program provides youth with an inclusive, non-competitive experience regardless of their ability, size or gender.
- SPARK is a nationally recognized physical education/physical activity program designed to improve physical activity for children and teachers everywhere by disseminating materials and services to schools and organizations.
- SPARK programs are designed to meet activity recommendations for children ages 5 to 14.
- SPARK promotes quality, daily fitness-related activities for up to one hour per day and encourages kids to be “lifelong movers.”
- Through active participation in the SPARK Program, instructors report that students show an increase and improvement in activity levels, physical fitness scores, movement and manipulative skills, academic performance, enjoyment of physical activity, physical activity levels outside of school, self-esteem, discipline and responsibility.
- For more information about the Highmark Healthy High 5 SPARK Active Recreation program, visit www.paspark.org.

Physical Activity and Children

- Physical activity is any form of exercise and movement.
- It is recommended that children get at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity most days of the week.
- 36 percent of children get no exercise. (Center for Disease Control, 2000)
- 75 percent of children hop in a car for less than a mile. (CDC, 2000)
- Only 50 percent of children attend physical education class by age 17. (CDC, 2000)
- Physical inactivity has contributed to the 100 percent increase in the prevalence of childhood obesity in the nation since 1980. (CDC, 2000)