

How do I know when my child is ready to start participating in sports?

Physical activity can start at any age, but readiness for sports participation will depend upon the individual child and the specific sport.

- Children will begin exploring sports at different ages based on their interest and exposure. In general, sports become an important part of physical activity and social development for children during elementary school.

- Most children are introduced to sports through local club participation and supporting your child's interest can help them explore new areas. Allowing them to sample a variety of sports over time can improve their physical and emotional development by exposing them to different movement patterns and social situations.



- The proper time for a child to begin participation in a specific sport depends on the demands of the sport and your child's development. For example, 4 and 5 year olds can move a soccer ball with their feet, but the physical or psychological development required to start participating in a different sport may not happen until older ages.

Want More Information?

- AAP statement on Organized Sports for Children, Preadolescents and Adolescents
- Aspen Institute Project Play

AMSSM
AMERICAN MEDICAL SOCIETY FOR SPORTS MEDICINE