

# Children in exercise facilities, gyms and recreation centres

---

Information for parents and caregivers



## Benefits

The benefits of physical activity in childhood extend well beyond the physical realm. The development and practice of physical skills also improves children's mental, social, and emotional abilities. These abilities stay with them right through to adulthood, so it's important that opportunities to develop physical skills are nurtured and encouraged.

Children need at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day, and providing your child with a variety of activities to learn and extend themselves helps to keep their interest up.

Facilities such as gyms and recreation centres are an excellent environment for kids, providing wonderful opportunities to develop their skills in a fun and safe environment.

## Having fun and keeping children safe

We know that children are more motivated to learn through play, games and having fun so it's really important that the experience is fun as well as safe.

FitnessNZ have developed *Guidelines for Children in Exercise Facilities* to ensure your child has fun in a safe environment when they use gyms or recreation centres. Only REPs Registered Exercise Facilities are required to follow these guidelines, so it is important to choose a REPs Registered Exercise Facility.

The guidelines recommended that all facilities that provide exercise programmes to children have systems and processes in place to ensure they are safe and supervised at all times. Supervision ratios vary depending on the age and activities of the children.

Everybody involved in the delivery of exercise programmes to children should be qualified and registered with the New Zealand Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs). Registration requires staff to be trained to understand children's exercise needs and includes a range of other requirements, such as an annual police check.

### What do I need to do?

As a parent or caregiver of a child attending a gym or exercise facility you may be asked to sign a form before your child visits the facility. The information collected on these forms helps ensure staff gain an understanding of your child's needs so they are able to provide safe and developmentally appropriate activities.

### For further information

If you have any questions, please feel free to speak to a REPs Registered Exercise Professional at the facility – they will be able to give you more information on activities or discuss your individual questions in more detail.

To obtain a full copy of the *Guidelines for Children in Exercise Facilities*, please contact Fitness New Zealand.



The Voice of the  
Fitness Industry

Fitness New Zealand  
PO Box 22-114  
Christchurch 8142  
fnz@fitnessnz.co.nz  
www.fitnessnz.co.nz  
0800-66-88-11

For a list of REPs Registered Exercise Facilities  
visit [www.reps.org.nz](http://www.reps.org.nz)

