CENTER FOR EARLY LEARNING PROFESSIONALS

Professional Development ★ Technical Assistance ★ Resources

Promoting Physical Activity in Early Care Settings

Learning Objectives

- Understand the importance of physical activity for children's health and development
- Recognize the caregiver's role in supporting physical activity among young children
- Begin to plan ways to encourage and enhance physical activity in the early care setting

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Overview

- Physical activity recommendations
- Physical activity and development
- Physical activity throughout the day

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Movement and Development

"When we think of intellectual activity, we always imagine people sitting still, motionless. But mental development must be connected with movement and be dependent on it."

—Maria Montessori, *The Absorbent Mind*

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Movement and Memories

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Physical Benefits

- Weight management
- Gross motor development
- Healthy sleep habits
- Decreased risk of
  - Diabetes
  - Heart disease
  - Cancer

Source: The Nemours Foundation

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Social and Emotional Benefits

- Positive self-esteem
- Emotional regulation
- Stress management
- Peer and role modeling

center-elp.org Source: The Nemours Foundation 7

Academic Benefits

- School readiness
- Attention to task
- Executive function

Physical activity benefits the whole child!

center-elp.org Source: The Nemours Foundation 8

What Is Physical Activity?

- Any movement that causes our heart rates or breathing to go above resting
- Includes ALL activities in a person's day, not just *exercise*

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What about Infants?

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Structured and Unstructured Play

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Recommendations

- 2 to 3 occasions of active play outdoors per day
- Toddlers and preschoolers outside 60 to 90 minutes
- Ample opportunities for moderate-to-vigorous physical activity

Source: Caring for Our Children, nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/3.1.3.1

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Active Play at Child Care

Types of activity in preschool classroom:

- 73% of activity is sedentary
- 13% of activity is light
- 14% of activity is moderate to vigorous (MV)

Average of 48 minutes per day were active play opportunities, but 41% (@ 19 minutes) were sedentary and 41% (@19 minutes) were MV

Source: *Pediatrics*, Volume 135, Number 6, June 2015

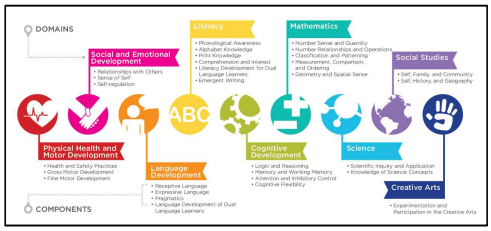
Knowing about Development

Integrating Physical Activity

- Circle time
- Transitions
- Outdoor play
- Indoor breaks

Photo Credit: Education Development Center

RI Early Learning Domains



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Scarf Tag

Outdoor Structured PA Activity 4
Setting: Large group, Outdoors
Purpose: To facilitate gross motor development by participating in a tag game.

Objectives:

- Children form relationships and interact positively with other children. (Emotional and Social Development)
  - Children will interact positively with others as they help each other throughout the game.
- Children develop the large muscle control and abilities needed to move through and explore their environment. (Health and Physical Development)
  - Children will move quickly through their environment and be able to stop when it is required of them.

Materials:

- Two scarves for every child
- Items to create boundaries (polyspots or beanbags)

Preparation:

- Prepare a space outdoors with specific boundaries for the children. Mark these boundaries to bring them to the children's attention. There must be enough room for the whole class to run around at the same time, comfortably.

Source: healthykidshealthyfuture.org

Counting Our Moves

Outdoor Structured PA Activity 8
Setting: Small groups
Purpose: To give children the opportunity to review counting and be physically active.

Objectives:

- Children develop the large muscle control and abilities needed to move through and explore their environment. (Health and Physical Development)
  - Children will perform complex movements smoothly by demonstrating their ability to hop from number to number.
  - Children will work on refined movements that show good coordination while they are tossing the beanbag onto a number.
- Children show understanding of numbers and quantities during play and other activities. (Cognitive Development)
  - Children will learn/recognize the numerals as they hop to the numeral the beanbag lands on.

Materials:

- Asphalt or area to write on with chalk
- Chalk
- Beanbag

Preparation:

Source: healthykidshealthyfuture.org

Beach Ball Questions

Circle Time PA Activity 4
Setting: Large group, circle time, Indoors or outdoors
Purpose: To facilitate emotional and social development by catching the beach ball and answering questions.

Objectives:

- Children form relationships and interact positively with other children. (Emotional and Social Development)
  - Children will interact positively with others as they throw and catch the ball and answer questions.
- Children develop the large muscle control and abilities needed to move through and explore their environment. (Health and Physical Development)
  - Children will refine movements and show generally good coordination as they throw and catch the beach ball.

Materials:

- A beach ball
- A marker to write questions on the beach ball, optional

Preparation:

- Prepare a space indoors for the children to gather in a circle to play the game.

Source: healthykidshealthyfuture.org

Planning Physical Activities

CENTER FOR EARLY LEARNING PROFESSIONALS

Promoting Physical Activity in Early Care Settings Online Module

Physical Activity Planning Guide

Instructions: Use this worksheet to plan two movement activities that include learning goals for both physical health and motor development and another RELDS domain. Begin by describing the movement activities in the first column, and then complete the next two columns, identifying how the activities will support learning goals in different domains. Complete the final column after the video discusses how to add planned language to movement activities.

Describe the Movement Activity (e.g., setting, material(s))	Physical Health & Motor Development Learning Goal(s)	Learning Goal(s) from Additional RELDS Domains	Planned Language (vocabulary, questions, etc.)

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Music, Body, and Mind

- Language and literacy skills
- Physical skills
- Social and emotional skills

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Music and You

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Midline

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Describe It!

- What does it look like?
- What does it feel like?
- What can you do with it?

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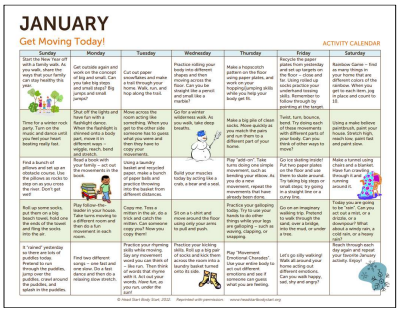
Promoting Physical Activity in Early Care Settings

Physical Activity Calendar



JANUARY

Get Moving Today!

ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Start the New Year off with a family walk. As you walk, share the ways your family can stay healthy this year.	Get outside again and work on the concept of big and small. Can you take big steps and small steps? Big jumps and small jumps?	Cut out paper snowflakes and make a trail through your house. Can you hop hop along the trail.	Practice sitting your body into different positions and moving across the floor. Can you be straight like a pencil and small like a marble?	Make a hopscotch pattern on the floor using paper plates, and work on your balancing and hopping skills while you help your body get fit.	Recycle the paper plates from yesterday and set up targets on the floor. Use a sock for. Using rolled up socks practice your underhand tossing skills. Remember to bend your knees, be pointing at the target.	Rainbow Game – find as many things in your house that are different colors of the rainbow. When you get to each item, jog in place and count to 10.
Time for a winter rock party. Turn on the music and dance until you feel your heart beating really fast.	Shut off the lights and have a family Flashlight dance. When the flashlight is shined onto a body part, move it in different ways: wave, wiggle, reach, bend and stretch.	Move across the room from one something. When you get to the other side someone has to guess what you were and you have to copy your movements.	Go for a winter walk in your yard. As you walk, take deep breaths.	Make a big pile of clean socks. Move quickly as you pick up a sock and run them to a different part of your home.	Twist, turn, bounce, bend. Try doing each of these movements with different parts of your body. Can you do 10 of other ways to move?	Using a make believe paintbrush, paint your house. Stretch high, reach low, paint fast and paint slow.
Find a bunch of pillows and set up an obstacle course. Use the pillows as rocks to step on as you cross the river. Don't get wet!	Dance with your family – act out the movements in the book	Using a laundry basket and recycled paper, make balls out of paper balls and practice throwing into the basket from different distances.	Build your muscles today by acting like a crab, a bear and a seal.	Play "wild-on" Take turns doing one simple movement, such as bending your elbow. As you do a new movement, repeat the movements that have already been done.	Go to a skating rink! Put two paper plates on the floor and use them to skate around. Try taking big steps or little steps. Can you do it in a straight line or a curvy line.	Make a tunnel using chairs and a blanket. Have fun crawling through it and running around it.
Roll up some socks, put them on a big beach towel, hold one the ends of the towel and shake the socks into the air.	Play Follow-the-leader in your house. Take turns being in a different room and then do a fun movement in each room.	Copy me. Toss a mitten in the air, do a trick and catch the mitten. Can someone copy that? When you copy that?	Sit on a t-shirt and move around the floor using only your arms to pull and push.	Practice your galloping today. Try to use your arms and legs in things while your legs are galloping – such as waving, clapping, or snapping.	Go on an imaginary walking trip. Pretend to walk through the sand, over a bridge, into the mud, or under a tree.	Today you are going to be "who" do you act out a mitt, or a dizzle, or a downpour? What is a downpour? It's like a cold rain, or a heavy rain?
It 'rained' yesterday so there are lots of puddles. Pretend to run through the puddles, jump over the puddles, crawl around the puddles, or splash in the puddles.	Find two different songs – one fast and one slow. Do a fast dance and then do a relaxing slow stretch.	Practice your rhyming skills while moving. Say a rhyming word or word you can think of – like run. Then think of a word that rhymes with it. Act out your words. Have fun, as you run, under the sun!	Practice your kicking skills. Kick up a big pair of socks. Can you kick them across the room into a laundry basket turned onto its side.	Play "Movement Mirrors" Partners. Use your entire body to act out different emotions and see if someone can guess what you are feeling.	Let's go silly walking! Walk all around your home acting out different emotions. Can you walk happy, sad, shy and angry?	Reach through each day again and repeat your favorite "moving" activity. Enjoy!

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Self-Assessment

1. Assess
2. Plan
3. Take action
4. Learn more
5. Keep it up!

Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC)

www.gonapsacc.org

Review

Contact Information

Center for Early Learning Professionals
401-736-9020
www.center-elp.org