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

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*

**Movement and Memories**

**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

Source: The Nemours Foundation

Academic Benefits

- School readiness
- Attention to task
- Executive function

*Physical activity benefits the whole child!*

Source: The Nemours Foundation

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

Sedentary  Light  Moderate  Vigorous

Source: The Nemours Foundation
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What about Infants?

Structured and Unstructured Play

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
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

- CDC

Integrating Physical Activity

- Circle time
- Transitions
- Outdoor play
- Indoor breaks
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RI Early Learning Domains

Source: center-elp.org

Scarf Tag

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 (popsicles or beanbags)

Preparation:
- Prepare a space outdoors with specific boundaries for the children. Alert 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

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 hopping the beanbag across a number.
- Children will learn to recognize and count numbers and quantities during play and other activities. (Cognitive Development)
  - Children will learn to count the numbers as they hop to the numeral the beanbag lands on.

Materials:
- Asphault or area to write on with chalk
- Chalk
- Beanbag

Preparation:

Source: healthykidshealthyfuture.org
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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 from 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

Music, Body, and Mind

• Language and literacy skills
• Physical skills
• Social and emotional skills
Music and You

Midline

Describe It!

• What does it look like?
• What does it feel like?
• What can you do with it?
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Physical Activity Calendar

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

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