



# Physical Activity!

## Tips & Information

### Real-life challenges... ...and how to overcome them

- It gets dark too early to play outside. ➡ Offer physical activity at the start of the afterschool day.
- Sometimes the weather is too cold. ➡ Use indoor space — see the next point too.
- We don't have enough space for physical activity. ➡ Convert cafeteria or classroom areas into space for dance or fitness. Find a local park. Take a walk or jog around the block. Develop relationships with school administrators who may be able to provide additional space.
- It's hard to make time for physical activity with everything else on our schedules. ➡ Make physical activity a formal part of your daily schedule.
- Some kids just don't want to participate. ➡ Offer structured free play with a variety of physical activity stations that kids can choose from.

#### What is moderate activity?

Games, sports, and recreation that are equal in intensity to brisk walking:

Hopscotch	Yoga
Playground play	Gymnastics
Swinging	Ballet
Kickball	Shooting baskets
Frisbee	Swimming for fun
Walking	Volleyball
Bike-riding	Baseball, Softball

#### What is vigorous activity?

Games, sports, and recreation that are more intense than brisk walking:

Running games (tag)	Karate
Jogging	Tae kwon do
Jumping rope	Jumping jacks
Basketball game	Skipping
Football game	Push-ups, pull-ups
Soccer	Swimming laps
Aerobic dancing	Water basketball

#### Success story!

One program offered a variety of different active games and fitness activities that students could rotate through, and after a month of trying different stations, the kids voted on their favorites. The winning activities appeared more often in structured play time. Empowering children to make their own decisions is a great way to get everyone involved! The most popular stations were basketball, four-square, hula-hoop, and jump rope. Even better— the site director said that **NONE** of the kids sat out!





## Did you know?

- ★ Each child should get at least 1 hour of physical activity everyday. Providing at least 30 minutes of daily activity in your afterschool program is a good goal.
- ★ Kids should get 20 minutes of **vigorous** physical activity 3 times per week.
- ★ Many children today do not engage in enough physical activity. Physical activity tends to decline as kids enter the teen years, and inactive children may be less physically active as adults.
- ★ Staying active protects everyone — even kids — from developing heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke and osteoporosis. Exercise helps make bones stronger. Plus, inactive children, when compared with active children, weigh more and have higher blood pressure and lower levels of heart-protective high-density lipoproteins (HDL cholesterol). (<http://www.americanheart.org/>)

- Many schools have limited time for physical education and recess so children come to after school programs ready to move!
- Regular physical activity helps children focus both in and out of school.
- Recreational play, like running, jumping, and climbing on playground equipment is just as important as skill-based instruction.
- Physical activity can be broken up into periods of 10-15 minutes.

### Did you know?

Kids who are active often do better in school!

## Want to know more? Check out these other resources.

The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) offers guidelines on activity for children and youth, and publish curricula for in and out of school time.

<http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/>

The Primary School site links to a ton of fun games that can be played indoors and outdoors. Great if you need activity ideas!

<http://www.primaryschool.com.au/health.php>

President's Fitness Challenge inspires children to get moving each day. Use the guidelines and log charts to create a challenge at your site or enroll children in the challenge online.

[http://www.presidentschallenge.org/home\\_kids.aspx](http://www.presidentschallenge.org/home_kids.aspx)

The BAM! (Body and Mind) program provides information on various health topics, nutrition, and physical activity.

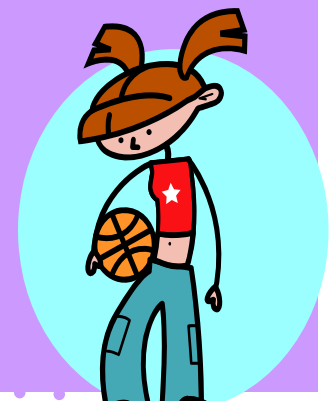
[http://www.bam.gov/sub\\_physicalactivity/index.html](http://www.bam.gov/sub_physicalactivity/index.html)

The Harvard School of Public Health publishes an online nutrition news and resource newsletter.

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/staying-active/>

Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition (We Can!) provides families and communities with helpful resources to help prevent childhood overweight.

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/>



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