Physical Activity Workshop Handouts

Contents

1) Outline for Presenters

a. Talking points for the workshop
b. Copy of the presentation notes that accompany the slides in the PowerPoint.

2) Handouts for Trainees

a. Slides
b. Handouts for workshop activities
c. Ideas for Program Development

Keys to Success

- **Work closely with the staff to adapt the workshops to their context and preferred approach**
- **For instance, framing the discussion in terms of "healthy habits for life" may be more appropriate than "obesity"**
- **Keep your workshop(s) interactive with lots of discussion**
- **Work with Program schedules, but try to find uninterrupted time**

NOTE: Slide #28 requires and internet connection to view. You may skip this slide if the workshop site does not have internet access.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY WORKSHOP

(NOTE: Bold Headings are MATCHED to the Slide Numbers in Presentation)

Overview of workshop

a) This workshop will provide you with an overview of physical activity for preschool children

b) We don't have to be exercise specialists to provide and support appropriate physical activity for children in our care

c) We will do some examples of ways we can get children moving toward a healthier weight

2) Objectives

a) Describe why plenty of active play is so important to young children

b) Explain in detail the components of a child care environment that promotes the development of active children

c) Describe the role of child care staff in helping children develop active lifestyles

d) List some things they can do in their classroom to help children develop physically active behaviors

3) REVIEW WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT OBESITY AND OBESITY PREVENTION

a) There are many factors involved in how much we weigh and the one we are going to talk about today is lack of activity

b) In Michigan, about 1 in 3 low-income children ages 2-5 years are overweight or obese.

(Source: Michigan DHS WIC Program)

c) Being overweight is a risk to physical and mental health

d) Food choices and physical inactivity contribute to weight gain

e) Child care providers can help keep children healthy

i) According to recent research, children are not as active as we think during the day at child care.

ii) Each child care center has different characteristics, which play important roles in promoting healthy weights through physical activity. For example, implementing policies for TV viewing and outdoor play, providing a quality play environment, and having adult physical activity role models.

4) ACTIVITY

a) HOW TO PLAY: Simon Says Stretching

The leader says "Simon Says before each stretch is performed have children hold each stretch for 10 seconds (you may even have them count for you). You can help preschoolers learn their body by naming the body part they are stretching.

Examples:
Reach for the sky (can also do this on floor)
Touch your toes
Downward Dog – hands and feet on floor with body shaped like a triangle alternate bending knees in to stretch calves
Wiggle fingers
Shoulder shrugs
Body Twists with hands on hips
b) HOW TO PLAY: Beach Ball High

Have a beach ball or balloons and have 2 or 3 going and everyone has to keep it up in the air.

5) What is Physical Activity?

Physical Activity is any body movement that works your muscles and requires more energy than resting (from the *"The 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans"*)
Example: Walking from your car to work is physical activity

6) Physical Activity

a) **What is moderate intensity activity?**
Physical activity that requires effort and gets your heart beating fast.
Ex. walking, bike riding on level terrain, mowing the lawn
(2) **What is vigorous intensity activity?**
Physical activity that may be challenging to an individual and make you sweat and breath heavily
Ex. high impact aerobics, jogging, biking uphill

7) "Early Childhood Obesity Prevention" fact sheet

a) We may think that young children are always moving, but as you can see, studies have shown there is a need for improvement.
b) Developing child care programs that include 60 minutes of physical activity daily for children ages 12 months and up in a full-day program is a feasible policy change that will get kids moving.

8) How Can Child Care Providers Help?

a) Set reasonable limits on behavior
  i) Instead of putting a child in timeout discuss with the child what s/he did wrong
  ii) Let outdoor time be children's FREE TIME and make sure they are safe but allow them to expend their energy
b) Be a Role Model
  Create an active play environment in your classroom
c) Although parents may not understand the importance of healthy eating and appropriate physical activity, encourage them through a variety of means such as newsletters, posters, center policies, posted schedules, and special events to promote PA at home
d) Teach with movement. Instead of sitting, create lessons that use movement. Children can

learn while they are moving their bodies.
Be aware of appropriate kinds of movement abilities preschoolers are capable of and be sure to have them use those skills throughout the day.

9) The Body and Brain

a) Our brain can be separated into 2 regions: motor and thinking regions. As adults the two parts of our brain work together but as children the brain is still developing especially the language areas.
b) One very important movement children need to do is cross the midline of their body. These movements help with reading and cognitive ability. You can do this by clapping high to the right side of your body, marching and tapping your hand on your opposite need, etc.
c) Preschool children are building a messaging system between their body and brain. For us adults, throwing and skipping are easy b/c our brains have built a memory of the movement with our muscles. Children are building the body and brain relationship, which entails training the brain through repetitive movements.

10) Using Activity Across the Curriculum

a) Art

Ask children to show their pictures they have created to the class and "act out" their picture. Examples include, painting a waterfall, making collages of transportation or animals, and demonstrating how things move.

b) Language Arts

Act out" stories, poems, words (slither, crawl, under, over, pounce, stomp…).

c) Math

Use different heights, shapes, pictures that demonstrate big & little, long & short, high and low, wide & narrow. Count when balancing and count while playing games involving numbers of objects, steps to get somewhere, or counting people.

d) Music

Use different movements for different types of music. Dancing, dramatic play to the music, dance up and down to the pitch of the music, movement to the words. Also use ribbons or instruments when teaching.

♦ *"Humans learn 10 percent of what they read, 20 percent of what they hear, 30 percent of they see, 50 percent of what they see and hear, 70 percent of what is discussed, 80 percent of what is experienced, and 95 percent of what you actively teach (Hannaford, 1995)*

11) Gross Motor Development (See Lists on PowerPoint Slides): 2-Year Old Children

The American Academy of Pediatrics has developed developmental milestones for 2-Year old children.

12) Gross Motor Development (See Lists on PowerPoint Slides): 3-Year Old Children

a) NAEYC has developed some appropriate gross motor practices for early childhood from ages 3-5
b) When planning activities to do with children of this age level keep these skills in mind and help 3 year old children develop these gross motor skills

14-15) Gross Motor Development (See Lists on PowerPoint Slides): 4-Year Old Children

Remember children are not always aware of their growth and this may cause some preschoolers to adapt and learn these developmental milestones at a different pace

16) Gross Motor Development (See Lists on PowerPoint Slides): 5-Year Old Children

At this age children begin to develop more complex movements and start putting movements together

17) Does anyone know how much PA 3-5 year old children need each day?

a) At least 60 mins of unstructured active play but <u>up to several hours</u> of free active play which may be outdoors or in an indoor play area

i) Examples: riding tricycles, a game of tag, climbing
ii) An indoor play area can consists of a big gross motor room, gym, pool, or rearrange the classroom to make space for children to actively play
iii) Unstructured activity help's children develop imagination, body awareness, and creativity

b) Daily structured physical activity, which are activities that are led by teachers or parents

i) This type of activity should be scheduled and according to the American Academy of Pediatrics structured activity should be in 10-15 min bouts
ii) Children develop movement skills that are building blocks for more complex tasks (ex: teaching children new moves like skipping and hopping may eventually lead to galloping and jumping with speed and agility

c) Benefits of PA

(i) Children receive the same benefits as adults from being physically active such as preventing chronic disease, heart disease, and diabetes.
(ii) Build muscle and burn calories
(iii) Research has shown that children perform better in school and may help kids make better health and lifestyle choices

18) ACTIVITY

HOW TO PLAY: BLOB TAG

Chose a few players (3-4) to be the "blob" while the rest of the players scatter. Have the Blob hold hands and then move around the play space attempting to tag other children. When players are tagged, they join hands with the other Blob members. When the blob is made up of 6 or more children, it will split into two and continue to tag other until no players are left.

19) Active Play and Inactive Time

a) Experts tell us that all children, even the youngest ones, need At Least 60 minutes of active play per day; many would say several hours per day. Some children may leave the child care center and not get anymore time to be active with busy family schedules.

b) Young children learn (mentally, physically, emotionally, and socially) through play

c) Gross motor skills are developed when children are engaged in active play (Preschool Gross Motor Skills)

20) Active Play and Inactive Time: Outdoor Play

a) According to research children tend to be more active when outdoors, so take children outdoors EVERYDAY. Remember: **"There is never bad weather just bad clothes!!!"** -Sweden Researchers

b) Outdoor Play benefits

i) Children learn through their senses and there are plenty of things to see, hear, smell, touch, and taste

ii) Inventing games promotes autonomy, decision making, and organizational skills.

iii) Inventing rules for games promotes an understanding of why rules are necessary. And although children are just playing to have fun, they learn: communication skills and vocabulary, as they invent, modify, and enforce rules; number relationships, as they keep score and count; and social skills, as they learn to play together.

c) If the playground is too wet but it is a nice day turnt he parking lot into a playground, draw with chalk, or go for a theme walk:

i) Sensory walks- focus on senses

ii) Weather Walks- Talk about weather

iii) Search-for-Life Walks- Look for evidence of life (nests, tree holes, burrows, animal tracks)

21) Active Play and Inactive Time: Structured Activity

a) **Structured** activity should be designed so all young children are **active participants**.

i) Teachers should provide sufficient equipment so each child can maximally participate.

ii) Teachers should not utilize or design games where children have to wait their turn to complete the activity.

Example: children do not have to wait for their turn for a ball; each child has his or her own piece of equipment to complete the activity.

iii) Teachers frequently enhance participation and avoid or modify activities where children are eliminated from play.

Example: If a game does require elimination, children are immediately given the opportunity to re-enter the activity.

iv) Teachers should not use games or activities where children are required to passively sit, listen or wait.

b) Examples of structured activity may include: follow the leader, an obstacle course, games using balls, bats, bean bags, and scoops, using kicking and throwing targets (such as hula hoops) to help children meet the developmentally appropriate milestone we just discussed.

i) Through structured activities, parents and teachers can help children develop movement skills that are building blocks for more complex movement tasks

Example: teaching children new moves like skipping and hopping which may eventually lead to galloping and running, jumping with speed and agility.

22) Active Play and Inactive Time: Screen Time

Screen time can be described as the time spent viewing TV/video, computer, electronic games, hand-held devices or other visual devices.

23) Active Play and Inactive Time: Screen Time

a) Seeing people drinking and eating may encourage us to eat when we are not hungry!

b) Some parents use TV/computer-use as a convenient way to maintain child control, but children behave better when they are allowed to release their energy.

c) Keep screen time to a minimum on average less than one hour. Let children develop their creativity not passivity.

i) Child care centers are places where educational and developmental activities should occur and contribute very little to a child's well-being.

ii) It is best to keep TV turned off at child care centers or used only occasionally for educational programs only.

iii) According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), "a computer is a tool, just like a book, a pencil or a television. Computers can be used in developmentally appropriate ways beneficial to children, and like any other tool they can also be misused."

iv) Set screen-time limits for each child including how much time is allowed for screen time and how often it is available throughout the day

v) Make sure only appropriate educational software is available and children are being supervised and shown how to use the computer. Not all children may have access to a computer at home, so use this opportunity to teach these children what to do and how to use all the components of the computer.

24) ACTIVITY: Finding Fun in Physical Activity

Think of 3 ways you can increase the activity level in your classroom or decrease inactive time

a) Don't withhold PA as a punishment- Can anyone think of another way to discipline bad behavior?

b) Avoid sitting for long periods of time No more than 30 minutes unless eating or napping

c) Name some FUN classroom activities

25) Increasing Active Play in the Classroom

a) Increase Play

i)Teach new gross motor skills such as skipping, balancing, jumping, and walking backwards. You can do this by taping hula hoops to the wall and making throw target; kicking target can be cones, empty boxes; have a newspaper snowball fight in the classroom or big open room where kids can run around.
REMEMBER the developmental capabilities of preschoolers. Don't try and teach them the rules to soccer or basketball. THEY WON'T UNDERSTAND!
ii) Join in play with children. This can enhance their play and help them become more active while they are outside.
iii) Turn music on and have everyone create a dance move for the class to try.

b) Decrease Sitting
i) Incorporate activities during circle time.
ii) Explain Calendar Activity (have a dice with different activities have children take turns rolling dice and do the activity as many times as the day of the month).
iii) Create lessons that involve children moving around instead of just sitting and listening.
iv) Instead of sitting the children in front of the TV on a rainy day get them up and active by creating an indoor play space in the classroom where children can jump, run, and hop around.
v) Limit table toys activity and increase activity in centers.
For example, have a cd player with appropriate cds and have children pick a cd and dance.

26) Play Environment

a) Fixed play equipment such as climbing structures and slides are fun and are good for developing gross motor skills and stimulating children to go over, under, around, thru, and climb on, jump from, leap up on, run around, and other activities we can't even imagine
b) Safety is always a concern on the playground be sure to redirect children when telling not to do something on the playground (Climb the ladder instead of climbing up the slide; Run on the wood chips instead of the concrete)
c) Playground equipment is expensive but there are grant opportunities that may help. *PASS OUT HANDOUT!*
d) Portable play equipment such as balls, wheeled toys, jump ropes, hula hoops, etc tend to be less expensive
e) Create an indoor play space in your classroom by moving tables and chairs around so children can move around freely and be active when weather doesn't permit you to go outside
f) Spice up your play with Nature!
i) Creating a garden on your playground helps children to learn and care about the environment. In addition, gardens attract butterflies and other interesting insects that intrigue children.
ii) Trees that offer color, pinecones, or fruit can offer things to look forward to during seasons and can also e used as a learning experience.
iii) Children who experience school grounds with diverse natural settings are more physically active, more aware of nutrition, more civil to one another and more creative. (Bell and Dyment, 2006)
iv) Studies of children in schoolyards with both green areas and manufactured play areas found that children engaged in more creative forms of play in the green areas, and they also played more cooperatively. (Bell and Dyment, 2006)

27) Supporting Physical Activity

a) Children look up to adults for appropriate behavior. Children tend to model parent and teacher behaviors

b) How can you be a role model in physical activity for children?

i) Play with children on the playground by joining in their activity and stimulate their activity by making them be more active

ii) Give encouragement and make positive comments to children

iii) Support PA in the classroom by hanging posters or reading books that encourage children to be active

28) Video (For workshop sites with internet access): "Motion Moments: Preschool"

Source: NRC (http://www.nrckids.org/Motion_Moments/index.htm)

This video provides excellent tips about incorporating active opportunities for physical activity.

OPTIONS:

• Play video then discuss

• If you are short on time, play video until the "Q&A" part begins (at about 4:21)

29) Children with Special Needs Need PA Too!

Does anyone have any children in their classroom that have any special needs or disabilities that may prevent them

from getting less activity then other children?

i) As teachers, your goal should be to design activities where all children can be successful, small modifications can make it possible for all children to participate, gain skills, confidence, and feel like part of the group

ii) For many children it is important that they see someone else doing the activity

iii) For information to adapt activities to children with special needs: www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/human/pubs/nc15.html

30) ACTIVITY

HOW TO PLAY: Cooperative Hoops

Distribute hoops throughout the play area with plenty of room between. Each person stand in their own hoop. At the start of the music children begin to move around avoiding the hoops. Assign a specific locomotor movement at the start (walking backwards, hopping, skipping, etc) when the music stops, students must get back into a hoop as quickly a possible (only one per hoop). Now remove a few hoops and instruct the children to share hoops.

31) Educating Staff, Children, and Parents

a) Have any of you taken any trainings related to PA to help improve your skills and abilities in providing PA opportunities for children in child care?

b) Although, parents are the ultimate resource for supporting and modeling good health

behaviors, assistance and guidance from child care staff will be necessary. Supply parents with information that can help support activities they can do at home with their children.

32) Physical Activity Policy

Does your center have a written PA policy

a) A written policy on PA tells parents and staff that this is an important issue and helps build their support

b) Written policies maintain a sense of direction for the center and confirm to parents that this center is supportive of PA practices

33) TIPS for a Safe and Successful Program

a) Think about:

- i) Never eliminating a child from a game
- ii) Age and individually appropriate
- iii) Adapting games
- iv) Variety
- v) Present skills from simple to complex
- vi) Gender and racial equity

b) DON'T FORGET

- i) VARIETY – Short attention spans
- ii) WATER BREAKS
- iii) FUN!

34) ACTIVITY: Bringing NAP SACC into the classroom!

Have participants think of 3 goals or changes that they would like to make in their classroom related to the information we talked about today and fill in on handout.

Moving Children to Good Health

Physical Activity for Young Children

OBJECTIVES

- Describe why plenty of active play is so important to young children.
- Explain in detail the components of a child care environment that promotes the development of active children.
- Describe the role of child care staff in helping children develop active lifestyles.
- List some things they can do in their classroom to help children develop physically active behaviors.

Let's Review

- In Michigan, about 1 in 3 low-income children ages 2-5 years are overweight or obese.
- Being overweight is a risk to physical and mental health.
- Michigan children are in crisis.
- Poor nutrition and physical inactivity contribute to weight gain.
- Healthy lifestyle behaviors are formed early in life.

ACTIVITY

BEACH BALL HIGH

or

SIMON SAYS STRETCHING

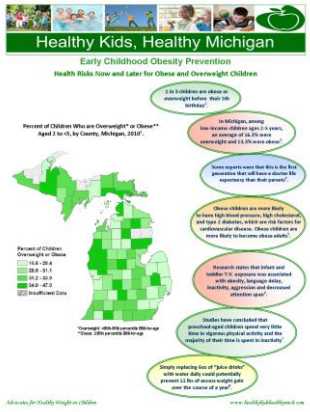
What is Physical Activity?

Physical Activity is any body movement that works your muscles and requires more energy than resting.

The 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

Physical Activity

- **What is Physical Activity?**
  - *Moderate Intensity*
  - *Vigorous Intensity*



How Can Child Care Providers Help?

- Set reasonable limits on behavior
- Be a role model for the children in your care
- Work with parents to encourage physical activity
- Teach with movement
- Understand children's level of play

NAP SACC

The Body and Brain

- The brain is separated into front and back regions and can be thought of as the "motor brain" and the "thinking brain"
- The body trains the brain

NAP SACC

Using Activity Across the Curriculum

Art: Ask children to show pictures they have created to the class and "act out" their picture.

Language Arts: "Act out" stories, poems, words (slither, crawl, under, over, pounce, stomp…).

Math: Use different heights, shapes, pictures that demonstrate big & little, long & short, high and low, wide & narrow. Count when balancing and count steps to get somewhere, or count people.

Music: Use different movements for different types of music. Dancing, dramatic play to the music, dance up and down to the pitch of the music, movement to the words.

Resource: http://www.movingandlearning.com/

Gross Motor Development

Two Year Old Children

- Walks alone
- Stands and Walks on tip toes
- Able to pull toys behind while walking
- Carries large toy or several toys while walking
- Walks up and down stairs holding on to support
- Climbs into and down from furniture unassisted
- Able to kick a ball
- Begins to run

From CARING FOR YOUR BABY AND YOUNG CHILD: BIRTH TO AGE 5 by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Gross Motor Development

Three-Year Old Children

- Walks without watching feet, walks backward, runs at an uneven pace, turns and stops well
- Climbs stairs with alternating feet, using hand rail for balance
- Jumps off low steps or objects; does not judge well in jumping over objects
- Shows improved coordination, begins to move legs or arms to pump a swing or ride a tricycle

Bredekamp, S. & Copple, C. (Ed.) (1997). *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early childhood Programs*, Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Gross Motor Development

Three-Year Old Children

- Forgets to watch the direction of their actions and bumps into objects
- Stands on one foot unsteadily; balances with difficulty on the low balance beam (four inch width and watches feet)
- Plays actively (trying to keep up with older children) and then needs rest; fatigues suddenly and becomes cranky if overtired

Gross Motor Development

Four-Year Old Children

- Walks heel-to-toe, skips unevenly, runs well
- Stands on one foot for five seconds or more, masters the low balance beam, but has difficulty on the two-inch-wide beam without watching feet
- Walks down steps, alternating feet, judges well in placing feet on climbing structures
- Develops sufficient timing to jump rope or plays games requiring quick reactions

Gross Motor Development

Four-Year Old Children

- Begins to coordinate movements to climb or jump
- Shows greater perceptual judgment and awareness of own limitations and/or the consequences of unsafe behaviors, still needs supervision crossing a street or protecting self in certain activities
- Exhibits increased endurance, with long periods of high energy (requires more liquids and calories), sometimes becomes overexcited and less self-regulated in group activities

Gross Motor Development

Five-Year Old Children

- Walks backward quickly; skips and runs with agility and speed; can incorporate motor skills into a game
- Walks a two-inch balance beam well, jumps over objects
- Hops well, maintains an even gait in stepping
- Jumps down several steps, jumps a rope

Physical Activity Guidelines for 3 to 5 year olds

- At LEAST 60 minutes and up to several hours of daily, unstructured active play
- 60 min daily of structured active play
- Teachers and Parents should help facilitate children's movement skills

NASPE: *Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for children Birth to Five Years*

ACTIVITY

BLOB TAG

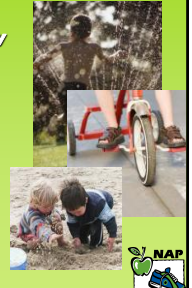
HOW TO PLAY:

Chose a few players (3-4) to be the "blob" while the rest of the players scatter. Have the Blob hold hands and then move around the play space attempting to tag other children. When players are tagged, they join hands with the other Blob members. When the blob is made up of 6 or more children, it will split into two and continue to tag other until no players are left.

Active Play and Inactive Time

- Children spend much of their day in child care facilities, so it's important that they spend time moving their bodies!
- Children need a total of at least 60 minutes of active play time EACH day!
- Try to limit sitting time as much as possible.

Active Play and Inactive Time: Outdoor Play



- "There is no bad weather, just bad clothes!"
- Children are more active outdoors
- There are learning benefits to outdoor play

Active Play and Inactive Time: Structured Activity

Structured activity should be designed so all children are active participants

- Provide sufficient equipment so each child can maximally participate.
- Avoid games where children have to wait their turn to complete the activity.
- Enhance participation by avoiding or modifying games where children are eliminated from play.
- Avoid games or activities where children are required to passively sit, listen or wait.

Active Play and
Inactive Time: Screen Time
Screen time can be described as the time spent viewing TV/video, computer, electronic games, hand-held devices or other visual devices.
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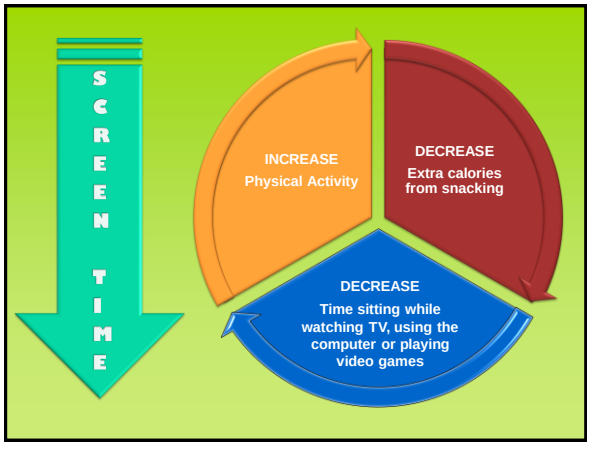
SACC


SCREEN TIME
INCREASE
Physical Activity
DECREASE
Extra calories from snacking
DECREASE
Time sitting while watching TV, using the computer or playing video games

ACTIVITY
Finding Fun in Physical Activity
NAP
SACC

Increasing Active Play in the Classroom

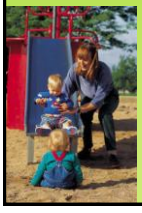
Increase Play

- Teach new gross motor skills: skipping, balancing, jumping, walking backwards
- Join in free active play with children indoors or outdoors
- Turn music on and create fun dance moves

Decrease Sitting

- Incorporate activities during circle time
- TURN OFF TV AND ELECTRONICS and incorporate structured activity
- Limit table toy activities and increase centers that require children to move around (Ex. dance center)

Play Environment



- Fixed play equipment like climbing structures and slides are fun and help children develop a variety of motor skills.
- Portable play equipment, like balls, tricycles, and tumbling mats, encourage children to use their imaginations and be active.
- Try and find indoor space for active play when the weather is bad.

Supporting Physical Activity

- Children look to adults (especially parents and teachers) for appropriate behavior.
- Adults can show children how to live a healthy active life.
- Teachers can show children that being active and healthy is fun and rewarding.

Children with Special Needs Need Physical Activity Too!

- All children benefit from exercise and should be included in the classroom activities.
- Small modifications can make it possible for all children to participate, gain skills, confidence, and feel like part of the group.

- For information on how to adapt activities for children with special needs, log on to the NC State website http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/human/pubs/nc15.html

ACTIVITY

COOPERATIVE HOOPS

HOW TO PLAY:

Distribute hoops throughout the play area with plenty of room between. Each person stand in their own hoop. At the start of the music children begin to move around avoiding the hoops. Assign a specific locomotor movement at the start (walking, hopping, skipping, etc) when the music stops, students must get back into a hoop as quickly as possible (only one per hoop). Now remove a few hoops and instruct the children to share hoops.

Educating Staff, Children, and Parents

- Being active in childhood can lead to physical activity habits that last a lifetime.
- If children hear the same health messages at home and at the child care facility, they'll listen!

Many adults would like to learn more about being active, and your facility is a great place for parents and staff to learn!

Physical Activity Policy

- A written policy on physical activity tells parents and staff that this is an important issue and helps build their support.
  - A written policy on physical activity helps guide the decisions and choices you make every day.

Tips for a Safe and Successful Program

THINK ABOUT:

- Never eliminating a child from a game
- Age and individually appropriate
- Adapting games
- Variety
- Present skills from simple to complex
- Encourage participation but accept when a child does not want to participate

DON"T FORGET….

- VARIETY
- WATER BREAKS
- FUN! FUN! FUN!

ACTIVITY

Bringing NAP SACC into the classroom!

Q&A

Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan

Early Childhood Obesity Prevention

Health Risks Now and Later for Obese and Overweight Children

1 in 3 children are obese or overweight before their 5th birthday[2].

In Michigan, among low-income children ages 2-5 years, an average of 16.3% were overweight and 13.3% were obese[3].

Some experts warn that this is the first generation that will have a shorter life expectancy than their parents[4].

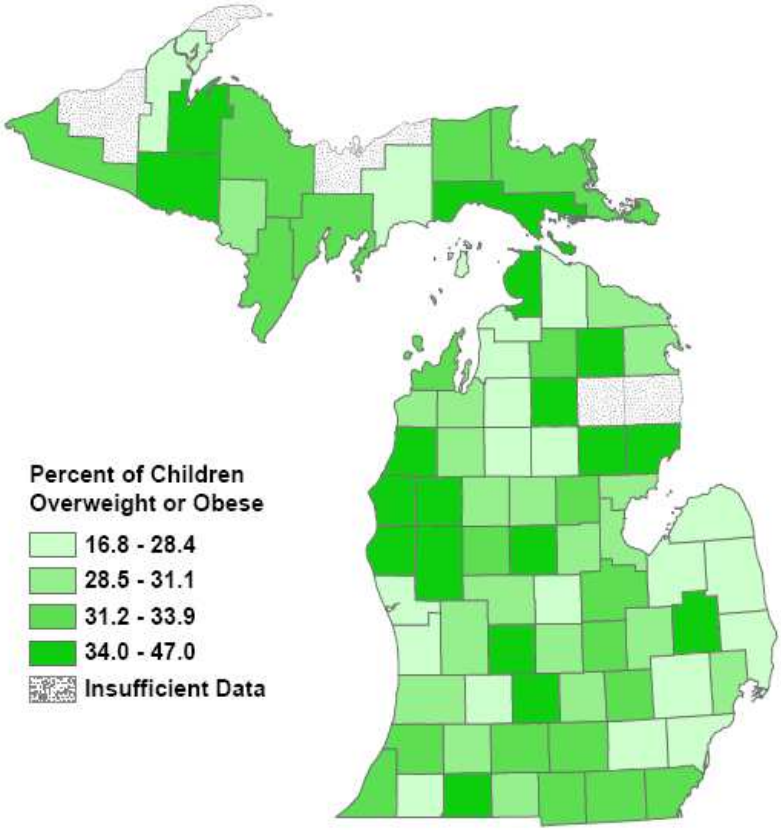
Obese children are more likely to have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and type 2 diabetes, which are risk factors for cardiovascular disease. Obese children are more likely to become obese adults[5].

Research states that infant and toddler T.V. exposure was associated with obesity, language delay, inactivity, aggression and decreased attention span[6].

Studies have concluded that preschool-aged children spend very little time in vigorous physical activity and the majority of their time is spent in inactivity[7].

Simply replacing 6oz of "juice drinks" with water daily could potentially prevent 11 lbs of excess weight gain over the course of a year[8].

Percent of Children Who are Overweight* or Obese Aged 2 to <5, by County, Michigan, 2010[1].**



*Overweight: >85th-95th percentile BMI-for-age
**Obese: ≥95th percentile BMI-for-age

Finding Fun in Physical Activity

Try these easy and fun ways to increase your classroom's activity level and laugh your way to physical fitness!

☺ The hokey pokey
☺ Follow the leader
☺ Simon says
☺ Parades—use instruments or act like animals
☺ Dancing—have each child create a dance move for everyone to try
☺ Parachute Play—Keep any type of objects on the parachute
☺ Clapping and stomping to the beat of the music
☺ Children's Music that Calls for Movement, Participation, Dance and Exercise

Brainstorm some fun, creative ideas for your classroom and share them with the group. Try doing a couple of the favorites together.

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Our Classroom is Moving Toward Physical Activity Excellence

Our classroom goals are:

1.

2.

3.

Activity: Over, Under, Around, and Through

Purpose of Activity: To explore a variety of traveling skills while helping children to understand the concepts of moving over, under, around, and through objects.

Activity cues: Move body slowly, under control.

Suggested Grade Level: Pre-K

Materials Needed: A variety of different objects including cones, boxes, tunnels, chairs, empty 2-liter plastic soda bottles.

Description of Idea

Scatter obstacles throughout the movement space and ask children to find and explore as many ways possible to travel around, over, under, or through the obstacles. Ask that they think about which objects are better for traveling over, under, around and through and place an emphasis on children traveling under control. Also, ask children to think of a variety of ways to travel when they are moving from one obstacle to the next(gallop, sliding, crawling, hopping, etc.)

Teaching Suggestions: Obstacles should be spaced throughout the movement space so there is penty of space between and around objects.

Variations: For those teachers who do not have tunnels, a tunnel can be made by draping a sheet or blanket over several chairs.

Assessment Ideas: As children move through space and around obstacles ask them to point out which objects are best to go under, around, over, and through. Use a checklist to record children's understanding of the concepts.

Adaptations for Students with Disabilities: This activity works well for children with disabilities with few adaptations. For children in wheelchairs set up a broom stick between two chairs or poles for children to roll under. For some children who are more mobile, mats may need to be placed on the floor around the objects.

Activity: Snowball Throw

Purpose of Activity: This activity will give the students the opportunity to learn and practice the overhand throw at a target.

Activity cues: Depending upon the skill level and experience of children use appropriate throwing cues (see PE Central throwing cues)

Throwing Cues (overhand)

- *Point non-throwing side/shoulder to the target (i.e., if left handed thrower, point right shoulder/side towards target)*
- *Throwing arm way back behind head*
- *Step with your opposite foot towards target (i.e., if throwing with left hand, step towards target with your right foot)*
- *Follow through by letting your throwing arm come across the opposite side of your body*
- *To get the feel of the full throwing motion throw at something that is far away or throw hard*

Suggested Grade Level: PRE-K

Materials Needed: Cut snowman targets from large sections of cardboard and decorate by having students draw and paint on the cutouts. Tape snowmen on wall Plastic grocery bags (rolled into balls and taped) are used for snowballs. Use restraining line, such as a jump rope, to keep students about 5'away from the target.

Description of Idea

This activity brings the fun of throwing snowballs inside where it is warm, and no one gets cold! Students throw the "snowballs" at the snowman to see if they can hit different parts of the target.

Assessment Ideas: Observation of technique. Success ratio of balls that strike the target

Adaptations for Students with Disabilities: Move target closer to the students if they don't have the strength to throw the balls to the target. Using the plastic grocery bags, you can roll the balls into smaller sizes for students with smaller hands. The rolled bags also allow for better gripping.

Activity: Safari Adventure

Purpose of Activity: To enhance the skills and understanding of fast and slow.

Suggested Grade Level: PRE-K

Materials Needed: Hoops & cones. Optional: pictures of animals

Description of Idea

First you start out with the kids moving around like animals in general space. You must tell them that they must learn how to move like the animals in order to look for them in the wild. Ask them to practice moving slow like an elephant, or fast like a tiger. Then, when they have accomplished this task, have them pretend that the cones are the wild animals, having them search for them with their pretend binoculars. After this, it is time for children to use hoops to catch the animals. They will go around putting the hoops over the cones and pretending that they catch them. Remember to ask them what animal they have caught.

Variations: Use smaller hoops and deck rings.

Assessment Ideas: At the end, ask for a child demonstration. Ask a student to move like an elephant, or a tiger, to see if they have learned how to move at different speeds, fast and slow.

Adaptations for Students with Disabilities: Any one can do it, if the student is in a wheel chair they can still go around looking for the animals slow, and fast.

Activity: Jump the River

Purpose of Activity: The purpose of this activity is to give children the opportunity to practice the skills of jumping and landing while emphasizing swinging the arms when jumping, and landing in a balanced position without falling.

Activity cues: Swinging the arms from back to front when jumping, landing in a balanced position without falling

Suggested Grade Level: PreK

Materials Needed: Something to jump over (jump rope, hoop, tape lines on the floor). Provide at least one object to jump over per child.

Description of Idea

Conduct this activity in a large indoor or outdoor space with marked boundaries so that children know where they can and cannot move. Before beginning the activity scatter the jump ropes or hoops throughout the space so they lay flat on the floor.

- Explain to the children that they are taking a walk in the woods and may need to cross a stream or river. Ask children to walk throughout the space and when they come to a river (rope, hoop, or tape line on floor) they need to jump over the river without getting their feet wet. Children should work independently of their classmates during this activity.
- To assist children in learning the fundamentals of jumping, teachers should initially ask children to takeoff on two feet and to swing their arms forward when they jump.
- When landing, children should land on two feet spreading their feet about shoulder width apart so they have a wide base of support when they land. After landing children should proceed to and jump over the next river.
- Emphasis should be placed on landing on both feet at the same time without falling over.
- Give children plenty of time to move throughout the space and jump over all the rivers.
- For safety reasons, suggest that children not get closer than two giant steps from each other, especially when they are swinging their arms to take off and when landing.
- After 3 to 5 minutes of jumping children may need a brief rest period (30 to 60 seconds) before continuing the activity.

Jump the River cont'd

Variations:

- Vary activity by asking children to see how high they can jump and how far they can jump when traveling over the river. Emphasize landing on balance without falling over.
- More experienced children may like the challenge of clapping their hands as the fly through the air, or turning in the air before they land. Whatever the variation, teachers and children should not lose sight of the main objective of landing in a balanced position.
- Do not feel limited to only jumping over hoops or jump ropes. This can be a great classroom integration activity and can have many variations. For example, ask children to draw or paint their own rivers on large sheets of paper. Make sure they draw fish, trees, and other objects in and alongside their river. Tape children's drawings to the floor and pretend that the class is going on a trip. When children reach the different rivers scattered throughout the room they must swing their arms and jump over the river, landing on the other side without falling over.
- Teachers may also want to integrate this idea with a book they read to children about rivers or ways people travel.
- More experienced children may want the challenge of taking off from one-foot and landing on two-feet, or jumping off of one-foot and landing on one-foot. The focus should still be the same-swing arms when jumping and land without falling.

Assessment Ideas: The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE, 1995) has developed benchmarks in this area that suggest that by the time a child completes kindergarten he/she should be able to jump and land while being under control. This suggests that children this age should be able to jump in different directions both on the ground and off of low obstacles, and to stay on balance and not fall when landing. Participating in activities such as "Jump the River" will provide children with opportunities for skill practice. Teachers can use this time to observe children's jumping and landing skills and record their progression toward reaching benchmarks in this area.

Adaptations for Students with Disabilities: Children with special needs who are not movement restricted should have little difficulty participating in this activity. Children who have movement restrictions can still participate, but depending on the ability level of each individual child, teachers may need to hold the child's hand to help them land on their feet without falling. Children in wheelchairs or those who have severe movement restrictions will not be able to participate in this activity.

Activity: Bean Bag Scavenger Hunt

Purpose of Activity: To give students an opportunity to build upon their developing skills: bending, reaching, grasping, spatial awareness, listening, sharing, safety, etc.

Prerequisites: Has understanding of playground rules, is of appropriate age to play on playground and has learned about colors.

Suggested Grade Level: Preschool

Materials Needed: 20+ Multi-colored Bean Bags, Bucket/Bag to store Bean Bags, Playground area

Description of Idea

Before class begins hide beanbags on the playground area. If you have a multi-colored playing area that is terrific. Try to match the colored beanbags with the equipment on the playground. Hide some high, medium and low. Don't burry beanbags and don't place them where students may get hurt retrieving them.

When they find them all you can allow the boys in the class to hide them from the girls and vice versa. Gives all students an opportunity to hide and match beanbags on the playground.

Assessment Ideas: Observe students perform loco/nonlocomotor movements and spatial awareness competence as well as their ability to identify the colors they have found. Observe how students share, take turns on playground equipment and listen to rules while playing.