



Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care

ACTIVE PLAY AND INACTIVE TIME

Here's Why...

Children spend much of their day at child care facilities, so the amount of physical activity they receive while in care is especially important. Children need time to move their bodies! They need at least 120 minutes of active play time every day and are happiest when they aren't sitting more than 30 minutes at a time (except for nap time and eating). Movement is essential to all parts of child development, not just physical or motor development; be creative and incorporate physical activity into all sorts of lessons and activities!

Choices You Make for Your Facility

- ① A daily outdoor play schedule allows teachers to bring children outside at specific times both in the morning and afternoon. Kids are more active when they are outside!
- ① Storytelling, books and rhymes can all incorporate activity. Children can act out the movements and the rhymes.
- ① Kids love to dance! Turn on some music and get your classrooms going! Encourage movements such as marching, hopping, skipping, twisting their hips, etc.
- ① Limit TV use to special occasions only. It is not essential to learning and often takes the place of much needed active play time.
- ① Limit seated time and provide plenty of opportunities throughout the day for children to move.



Checklist

- We provide at least 120 minutes of active play time to all children, every day.
- We provide opportunities for outdoor active play two or more times a day.
- We provide teacher-led physical activity to all children two or more times per day.
- We ensure that children are not seated (excluding nap time) for periods of more than 30 minutes.
- We do not withhold active play for children who misbehave; we reward good behavior with extra active play.
- We rarely show television or videos.



Getting Support From the Parents

- ① Talk to parents about activities that the children did that day.
- ① Encourage parents to spend time enjoying active play with their kids at home.
- ① Encourage parents to have “TV-free” days at home.
- ① Inform parents of the facility’s TV viewing practices.
- ① Invite parents into the center to help plan “TV-free” days or to play with the children.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.communityplaythings.com/c/Resources/Articles/OutdoorPlay/MakingTheMost.htm>

<http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/peappropriatepractice/AppropriatePractices3-5.pdf>

<http://movingandlearning.com/Resources/Activities.htm>

<http://betterkidcare.psu.edu/AngelUnits/OneHour/OutdoorPlay/OutdoorPlayLessonA.html>

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Getting the Kids on Board

- ① Children enjoy movement; it doesn’t take much to get them on board!
- ① Credible physical activity curricula (eg., Color Me Healthy and Be Active Kids) provide a number of fun activities involving movement for children.
- ① Playing with the children (throwing balls, tossing bean bags, etc.) shows them that you are interested in what they do.
- ① Turn on music and ask the children to make up their own dance moves.
- ① Reinforce good behavior with stickers or extra active play time.
- ① Ask the children to come up with a list of activities that involve body movement. When you are tempted to turn the TV on, turn to the list instead for some ideas.



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PLAY ENVIRONMENT

Here's Why...

Kids love variety, especially in their play. Fixed and portable play equipment that stimulates a variety of gross motor skills (large muscle movements) are important. Kids need to move their bodies in many different ways in order to develop muscles, build strong bones, and grow. Safety is always important, so make sure your kids are active and safe!



Choices You Make for Your Facility

- Inventory your fixed equipment to see that it meets safety standards.
- Make ALL equipment available to children at all times
- Observe the children to see if what is on the playground presents opportunities for children of different ages.
- When possible, add fixed equipment that is appropriate for the range of children you serve.
- Provide portable play equipment for children outdoors and during indoor time. This may include balls of all sizes and textures, hoops, scoops, wagons, wheeled toys, push carts, etc.
- If possible, provide bicycles or tricycles for children to use. These can make fun indoor toys as well (in a gym or large multipurpose room).



Checklist

- Fixed play equipment (swings, slides, climbing equipment, or overhead ladder) is extensive and varied.
- Portable play equipment that stimulates gross motor skills (such as wheeled toys, balls, and tumbling mats) is available at all times for all children to use.
- Outdoor play spaces include running spaces and a track/path for wheeled toys.
- An indoor play space is available that allows for all activities including running.



Getting Support From the Parents

- ① Communicate with parents about why the facility supports a variety of fixed equipment on the playground.
- ① Share the importance of balls and other equipment for the motor development of young children.
- ① Use the parent handouts on physical activity.
- ① Let parents know how their child uses certain kinds of equipment to help reinforce this practice at home.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.nccic.org/poptopics/playgrounds.pdf>

Getting the Kids on Board

- ① Providing opportunities is all it takes for children to engage in active play!
- ① Allow children of similar ages onto the playground at the same time. This will encourage greater access to the equipment.
- ① Add new, small equipment on a regular basis.
- ① Play group games that are inclusive of the whole class; various types of relay races and "Red light, Green light."
- ① Encourage more sedentary children through new and different equipment. All children can find something active they love to do.





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SUPPORTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Here's Why...

Fundamental motor skills such as jumping, catching, or kicking are learned as children get older. Children look to adults for encouragement and instruction on how to use their bodies. Being physically active with children helps advance these skills and teaches them more complex movements such as skipping, hopping, dribbling, and throwing—skills that they will need to participate in activities as they get older. If children do not learn these skills at the appropriate age, they will be at a disadvantage in later years and may be more likely to develop

sedentary lifestyles. It is important to help children learn how to use their bodies so that they will have the tools they need to be healthy and active later in life.

Choices You Make for Your Facility

- ① Being physically active together allows staff to teach children how to play together.
- ① Encourage, but don't force, a child to engage in active play.
- ① Active playtime should be a happy time. This is a great opportunity for staff to interact with children and make them feel special.
- ① Encourage staff to incorporate physical activity into lessons and circle time each day. In addition to being good for their bodies, it helps them learn more effectively.
- ① Remember to always make activity fun and exciting so children look forward to moving their bodies and learning new movements.
- ① Create and enforce a physical activity policy for the center that shows your support for daily physical activity.



Checklist

- Our staff often join in active play and encourage children to move more during play time.
- We provide visible support for physical activity in classrooms and common areas through use of posters, pictures, and books.



Getting Support From the Parents

- Parents' attitudes and actions influence children's interest in physical activity. Talk with parents about ways to be good role models for children when it comes to being physically active.
- Share positive comments with parents about children's active play that you observe during the day.
- Share ideas for games and activities that parents can use at home.

Getting the Kids on Board

- Pick one child a week to share an active play idea and have the whole class participate.
- Ask the children to try a new play activity at home and report back.
- Stimulate their imagination and boost their activity: Give children a special prop and have them create a game with it. See how many ideas they come up with.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.movingandlearning.com/>

<http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/peappropriatepractice/AppropriatePractices3-5.pdf>





Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care

NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY EDUCATION

Here's Why...

Nutrition and physical activity are important parts of good health. Enjoying and learning about food and physical activity in childhood leads to healthy behaviors for a lifetime. Many adults would like to learn more about these issues as well. Your facility is a great place to offer nutrition and physical activity training for both parents and staff. The more information people receive, the more likely they are to make healthy choices. Learning can be fun and helpful for both kids and adults!

Choices You Make for Your Facility

- ① Provide staff with training in both nutrition and physical activity. Take advantage of your community resources, such as Cooperative Extension, your CACFP representative, and child care health consultants. Also, try your community center, public school system or local university for training information and opportunities.
- ① Staff can teach children about the taste and smell of foods. The children should feel the textures and learn different colors and shapes of foods. Children are more likely to try new foods if they have had the opportunity to touch and smell them first.
- ① Fun nutrition activities like making simple snacks can be a great way to teach kids about food and nutrition.
- ① Staff can teach children about body movement and development. The children should know their bodies and ways to move to be healthy.
- ① Fun physical activities, like dancing, can be a great way to teach children about physical activity and get children moving!



Checklist

- We offer training for staff on both nutrition and physical activity at least two times a year.
- We provide both nutrition and physical activity education to children through a standardized curriculum at least one time a week.
- We offer both nutrition and physical activity education to parents at least two times a year.



Getting Support From the Parents

- Keep parents informed about the fun nutrition and physical activity education activities that take place in your facility. These activities can be announced through newsletters or parent meetings.
- Send home easy recipe ideas that parents and children can make together.
- Send home family physical activity ideas.
- Send home the NAP SACC parent handouts.

For more information, please visit:

<http://betterkidcare.psu.edu/AngelUnits/OneHour/Garden/GardenLessonA.html>

http://www.iowa.gov/educate/component/option,com_docman/task,doc_view/gid,510/

<http://www.iptv.org/rtl/downloads/TNactivity1.pdf>

<http://www.nfsmi.org/Information/Newsletters/meme2007-02.pdf>



Getting the Kids on Board

- Use mealtimes for very informal education about food.
- Give children the opportunity to make their own snacks. This teaches them about healthy food in a fun way!
- Make physical activity education fun through active play. Kids love to move and learn new skills!