

Physical Activity



Real-Life Challenges... And how to overcome them

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.

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, and see the next point.

We don't have enough space for physical activity...

Convert cafeteria or classroom areas into space for dance and 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.

What is **MODERATE** activity?

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

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|-----------------|--------------------|
| 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:

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|---------------------|--------------------|
| 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 |

Check out this real-life 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.

Recreational play, like running, jumping and climbing on playground equipment, is just as important as skill-based instruction.

Many schools have limited time for physical education and recess so children come to afterschool programs ready to move!

Physical activity can be broken up into periods of 10-15 minutes.

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 weigh more and have higher blood pressure and lower levels of heart-protective high-density lipoproteins (HDL cholesterol). (www.americanheart.org)

Regular physical activity helps children focus both in and out of school.



Want to know more? Check out these other resources:

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

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

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

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.presidentschallenge.org/home_kids.aspx

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.bam.gov/sub_physicalactivity/index.html

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

http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/staying_active/

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

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

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