

# LET'S GET PHYSICAL!

## Growing Healthy Bodies & Strong Minds

Eat right, exercise and have fun! Learn how to reinforce healthy food choices and increase moderate to vigorous physical activity through engaging, hands-on activities using inexpensive equipment, music, and homemade play props. Discover what is known from research about the brain and its connection to movement, food, and cognitive development. Make a difference in your children's future by making fitness and nutrition a fun part of everyday.



**Playing is Learning!**

### Nationwide Health Crisis

- 75% of kids get less than 20 minutes of vigorous exercise per day.
- 1 in six kids ages 2 to 19 is overweight.
- Obese and overweight children are at much greater risk to develop diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and experience depression than children of normal weight.
- We have the first generation of children who will have a shorter life span expectancy than their parents.

### Too many PlayStations & Not Enough Playgrounds

- Screen time = TV (21 hours) + Video Games, Computer, Internet = 30 to 40 hours per week
- Promotes unhealthy eating choices/snack while watching TV
- Contributes to being sedentary—lack of physical activity
- Perform worse in school—have shorter attention spans, spend less time reading, and vocabulary is not as highly developed
- TV viewing makes for ADHD—1 million kids under the age of six on some type of medication
- American Academy of Pediatrics recommends NO TV before age 2, and no more than 1.5 to 2 hours a day, limited to educational programs

### The Importance of Motor Development

- Most efficient time to learn fundamental motor skills (jumping, galloping, etc.)
- Capacity to learn and the motivation to practice motor tasks is high (PLAY)
- Gross and fine motor skills can be taught with guided practice
- Components of physical fitness—cardio, muscular strength & endurance, flexibility & lean body mass
- Skills acquired transfer into adulthood

### The Connection between the Body & the Brain

- Importance of crossing the midline and cross lateral movements
- Head to Toe (Cephalocaudal development)
- Center-Out (Proximodistal development)
- Vestibular System=Inner Ear = Balance (spin, swing, exercise ball)
- Proprioception=Touch & Feeling=nerves from joints & muscles
- Central Nervous System development=higher order thinking
- Body teaches the brain—exercise is "Miracle Gro" for the brain—affects brain's plasticity and function

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### Food for Thought

- Drive by eaters—fast food nation—drink less sugar
- Child not in charge of nutrition—adults are! Chat 'n Chew—no TV
- Food Pyramid—colors of the rainbow

### The Teacher's Role & Responsibility

- Preschoolers should accumulate at least 30 minutes daily of structured physical activity.
- Preschoolers should engage in at least 30 minutes and up to several hours per day of daily, unstructured physical activity.
- Be intentional about movement and provide opportunities for physical activity throughout the day (limited space, circle time, outdoor play)
- Increase moderate to vigorous physical activity--elevating the heart rate and breathing.
- The amount of physical activity a classroom has during "movement time" is directly related to how active the teacher is. Be a role model. Adults teach by what they do and what they DO NOT DO!
- PE—shift from sports skilled approach to fitness skilled approach. DDR keeps kids interest in getting fit

### Techniques for Promoting Good Nutrition & Physical Activity

- Integrate physical activity and nutrition throughout the day in other curricular areas while addressing: Language Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Creative Arts, and Social/Emotional Development.
- Instant Activity with Music & Songs
  - Song: *Crave your F.A.V.* (CD: "This is My Body")
  - Song: *Stir the Soup* (CD: "This is My Body")
  - Song: *This is My Body* (CD: "This is My Body")
  - Song: *Make Me Feel Great* (CD: "I'm Moving, I'm Learning")
  - Song: *My Heart Says Thanks* (CD: "I'm Moving, I'm Learning")
  - Song: *Mix It All Up* (CD: "I'm Moving, I'm Learning")
  - Song: *Tarzan* (CD: "Dr. Jean & Friends")
  - Song: *Tony Chestnut* by The Learning Station (CD: "Tony Chestnut & Fun Time Action Songs")
- Low Organized/Cooperative Group Games
  - Super Hero Warm Ups (Book: "Play Power: Games & Activities for Young Children")
  - Mingle, Mingle, Mingle
  - Exercise Family (Book: "Play Power: Games & Activities for Young Children")
  - Scrambled Eggs & Icebergs (Book: "That Was the Best Party Ever!")
  - Hit the Deck (Book: "Play Power: Games & Activities for Young Children")
  - No more Duck, Duck Goose-- My Fruit & Veggie Basket and Pizza Delivery
- Simple Equipment/Loose Materials
  - Balloons (Book: "That Was the Best Party Ever!")
  - Parachute (Book: "Play Power: Games & Activities for Young Children")
  - Hoops (Book: "That Was the Best Party Ever!")

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Bean Bags/Paper Wads (Book: "Play Power: Games & Activities for Young Children")  
Beach Balls (Book: "That Was the Best Party Ever!")  
Streamer Ribbons (Book: "That Was the Best Party Ever!")  
Juggling Scarves  
Movement Dice  
Homemade Equipment: Bread Bag Jump Rope, Six-Pack Plastic Net, Floppy Flippers



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## Resources

Carlsson-Paige, N., Taking Back Childhood: Helping Your Kids Thrive in a Fast-Paced, Media-Saturated, Violence-Filled World

Dennison, P.E., & G.E. Dennison. Brain gym. Ventura, CA: Edu-Kinesthetics. [www.braingym.com](http://www.braingym.com)

Sanders, S.W. Active for life: Developmentally appropriate movement programs for young children.

National Association for Sport and Physical Education. Appropriate practice in movement programs for children ages three to five. Active start: A statement of physical activity guidelines for children birth to five years. [www.aahperd.org/NASPE](http://www.aahperd.org/NASPE)

Connor, Bobbi. Unplugged Play: No Batteries. No Plugs. Pure Fun

Elkind, David. The Power of Play: How Spontaneous, Imaginative Activities Lead to Happier, Healthier Children

Guernsey, Lisa. Into the Minds of Babes: How Screen Time Affects Children from Birth to Age Five

Hirsh-Pasek, K. & Golinkoff, R. M. Einstein Never Used Flash Cards: How Our Children Really Learn and Why They Need to Play More and Memorize Less

Louv, Richard. Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder

Mitchell, T., Church, T., Zucker, M. MOVE YOURSELF

Pollan, Michael. In Defense of Food (Eat Food. Not Too Much. Mostly Plants.)

Ratey, John. SPARK: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain  
American Academy of Pediatrics: [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

American Heart Association: [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)

MyPyramid.gov: [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)

Discount School Supply: [www.discount-schools.com](http://www.discount-schools.com)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: [www.smallstep.gov](http://www.smallstep.gov)

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