

PLAY POWER!

Active Play to Keep Children Moving, Motivated & Fit



Playing is Learning!

Get ready, get set, and have fun as you join in cooperative group games, exercise with the parachute, and use simple equipment to help children develop fitness, enhance self-concept, improve coordination, and refine motor skills indoors and outside. By encouraging and participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity, teachers demonstrate the importance of health and fitness through their actions as well as their words!

Nationwide Health Crisis

- One-third of children and teens in the U.S.—about 25 million—are considered overweight and obese
- At risk for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and other metabolic disorders
- 25% of young people do not participate in physical activity—schools eliminating PE and recess
- 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, Movies, Video Games, Computer, Internet
- Young children's "screen time" = 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
- See violence as an acceptable form of play and way to settle conflicts.

The Importance of Motor Development

- Most efficient time to learn fundamental motor skills (jumping, galloping)
- Capacity to learn and the motivation to practice motor tasks is high (PLAY)
- Gross and fine motor skills can be taught with guided practice
- 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)
- 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. It actually affects the brain's plasticity and function

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The Teacher's Role & Responsibility

- Children should accumulate at least 60 minutes daily of structured physical activity.
- Children should engage in at least 60 minutes and up to several hours per day of daily, unstructured physical activity.
- Young children should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time except when sleeping.
- Be intentional about movement and provide opportunities for physical activity throughout the day (limited space, circle time, during transitions, outdoor play)
- Intentionality—when adults are consciously aware that specific acts support an aspect of children's development— they do them more often and become better at it.
- Studies have shown that the amount of physical activity a classroom has during "movement time" is directly related to how active the teacher is. Be a role model and have fun! Adults teach by what they do and what they DO NOT do.
- Increase moderate to vigorous physical activity--elevating the heart rate and breathing.
- Keep kids interest into getting fit—video games controlled by bike and dance pads (DDR)
- PE should shift from sports skilled approach to fitness skilled approach
- Integrate physical activity throughout the day in other curricular areas while addressing: Language, Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Creative Arts, and Social/Emotional Development

Techniques for Promoting Physical Activity

- Instant Activity with Music & Songs
 - Rhythm Sticks for marching; develops beat awareness and promotes language and reading
 - Song: *The Mack Chicken Dance* by Greg & Steve (CD: "Big Fun")
 - Song: *Tooty Ta* by Dr. Jean (CD: "Dr. Jean & Friends")
 - Song: *Tarzan* by Dr. Jean (CD: "Dr. Jean & Friends")
 - Song: *Tony Chestnut* by The Learning Station (CD: "Tony Chestnut")
- Low Organized/Cooperative Group Games
 - Mingle, Mingle, Mingle
 - Exercise Family
 - Scrambled Eggs & Icebergs
 - Super Hero Warm Ups
 - Snickers 'n Hoots
 - Hit the Deck
 - Confusion
 - No more Duck, Duck, Goose, Musical Chairs or Relays
- Simple Equipment/Loose Materials
 - Balloons
 - Parachute
 - Hoops
 - Bean Bags/Paper Wads
 - Streamer Ribbons
 - Juggling Scarves



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- Movement Dice
- Homemade Equipment: Bread Bag Jump Rope, Six-Pack Plastic Net, Floppy Flippers
- Obstacle Courses
- Movement Stations



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Resources

Krull, S. *Play Power: Games & Activities for Young Children. That was the Best Party Ever!*

How to Give Birthday Parties Kids Will Never Forget www.playfulconnections.com

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

Dennison, P.E., & G.E. Dennison. *Brain gym.* Ventura, CA: Edu-Kinesthetics.
www.braingym.com

Hannafor, C. *Smart moves: Why learning is not all in your head.*

Healy, J.M. *Your child's growing mind: Brain development and learning from birth to adolescence*

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

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*

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

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*

Ratey, John. *SPARK: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain* (available 1/10/2008)

Action Based Learning: www.actionbasedlearning.com

American Academy of Pediatrics: www.aap.org

American Heart Association: www.americanheart.org

American Public Health Association: www.apha.org or www.apha.org/nphw/2006

Brain Connection: www.brainconnection.com

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov

MyPyramid.gov: www.mypyramid.gov

Choosy Kids: www.choosykids.com

Peaceful Playgrounds: www.peacefulplaygrounds.com

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: www.smallstep.gov

Discount School Supply: www.discountschoolsupply.com

Play Power or Playful Connections: www.sharronkrull.com

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