

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY WORKSHOP

1) 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) 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.

4) REVIEW

- 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) More than 1 in 10 preschoolers are overweight
 - i) Some reasons why overweight children are on the rise is because young children are less active due to fewer opportunities for active play, ore TV viewing, and spending lots of time in cars
- 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. 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.

5) What is Physical Activity?

- a) *Physical activity is any bodily movement, produced by muscles and burns energy.*
 - i) *Example: Walking from your car to work is physical activity*

(1) What is moderate intensity activity?

- (a) *Physical activity that requires effort and gets your heart beating fast.*
 - (i) *Ex. walking, bike riding on level terrain, mowing the lawn*

(2) What is vigorous intensity activity?

- (a) *Physical activity that may be challenging to an individual and make you sweat and breath heavily*
 - (i) *Ex. high impact aerobics, jogging, biking uphill*

6) How do you think you can help with this childhood obesity epidemic?

- a) Set reasonable limits on behavior
 - i) ***What are some reasonable limits on behavior?***
 - (1) *Instead of putting a child in timeout discuss with the child what s/he did wrong*
 - (2) *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
 - i) ***How can you be a role model?***
 - (1) *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.
 - i) Be aware of appropriate kinds of movement abilities preschoolers are capable of and be sure to have them use those skills throughout the day.

7) 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 knee, 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. Where as children are building the body and brain relationship, which entails training the brain through repetitive movements.

8) Using Activity Across the Curriculum

a) Art

- i) 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

- i) Act out” stories, poems, words (slither, crawl, under, over, pounce, stomp...).

c) Math

- i) 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

- i) 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 what 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)

9) ACTIVITY

a) Pass a Movement

- i) The children sit in a circle and one child begins by doing an action that is “passed” to the child to his right or left. The first child might, for instance, bend at the waist and straighten. Each child in succession must then do the same.

b) Pass a Beat (Music)

- i) The first child claps out a rhythm (e.g., 1-2-3 at a moderate tempo). The object is for each child in the circle to repeat the rhythm *exactly*, keeping an even

tempo all the way around. Even the interval between each child should be in keeping with the rhythm being passed.

c) Group Balance (Gross Motor Activity)

- i) The children form a standing circle and place their hands on the shoulders of the children beside them. They must then maintain a steady balance through challenges to stand on only one foot, lean in various directions, rise on tiptoe, etc.

10) Gross Motor Development

a) 2-Year Old Children

- i) The American Academy of Pediatrics has developed developmental milestones for 2-Year old children.
(1) See List on PowerPoint Slide

b) 3-Year Old Children

- i) NAEYC has developed some appropriate gross motor practices for early childhood from ages 3-5
(1) See List on PowerPoint Slides
- ii) 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

c) 4-Year Old Children

- i) See List on PowerPoint Slide
- ii) 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

d) 5-Year Old Children

- i) See List on PowerPoint Slide
- ii) At this age children begin to develop more complex movements and start putting movements together

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

a) *At least 60 mins of unstructured active play but up to several hours 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 consist 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**
 - (1) Children receive the same benefits as adults from being physically active such as preventing chronic disease, heart disease, and diabetes.
 - (2) Build muscle and burn calories
 - (3) Research has shown that children perform better in school and may help kids make better health and lifestyle choices

5) ACTIVITY

- a) **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.

6) 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)

7) 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**
- (a) Theme walk ideas
 - (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)

8) 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.
 - (a) **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.
 - (a) **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.
 - (1) Through structured activities, parents and teachers can help children develop movement skills that are building blocks for more complex movement tasks

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

9) Active Play and Inactive Time: TV Use and TV Viewing

- a) **Did you know that for every 2 hours per day or more of TV a child watches, the risk of obesity jumps 23% and the risk of diabetes increases 14%?**
- b) Not only is TV a low energy activity, seeing people drinking and eating may encourage us to eat when we are not hungry!
- c) Some parents use TV as a convenient way to maintain child control, but children behave better when they are allowed to release their energy.
- d) It is best to keep TV turned off at child care centers or used only occasionally for educational programs only. Child care centers are places where educational and developmental activities should occur and contribute very little to a child's well-being.
- e) Keep use to a minimum on average less than one hour (including computer use) Let children develop their creativity not passivity.

10) Active Play and Inactive Time: Computers

- a) **Do you limit children's computer time in your classroom?**
 - i) According to 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."
 - ii) Set limits on how long each child can spend on the computer and how often it is available throughout the day
 - (a) Example, each child is only allowed 20 minutes a day if they would like to play on the computer. You can also only offer computer time during certain times of the day
 - iii) 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.

11) ACTIVITY: Finding Fun in Physical Activity

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

- i) Don't withhold PA as a punishment- **Can anyone think of another way to discipline bad behavior?**
- ii) Avoid sitting for long periods of time No more than 30 minutes unless eating or napping
- iii) **Name some FUN classroom activities**

12) INCREASE & DECREASE PLAY in Classroom

INCREASE Play	DECREASE Sitting
Teach new gross motor skills: Skipping, balancing, jumping, walking backwards (Throw targets: hula hoops on wall; Kicking targets: cones, empty boxes; Snowball fight in classroom; Running thru newspaper)	Incorporate activities during circle time (Calendar Activity: Have a dice with different activities have children take turn rolling dice and do activity as many times as the day of the month)
Join in free active play with children outdoors and indoors	Turn TV off and do structured activity
Turn music on and create fun dance moves	Limit table toys and increase activity in centers (dance center, etc)

12) 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

13) Play Environment

- a) Spice up your play with Nature!
- b) 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.

- c) Trees that offer color, pinecones, or fruit can offer things to look forward to during seasons and can also be used as a learning experience.
- d) 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 Dymont, 2006)
- e) 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 Dymont, 2006)

14) Pictures of Play Environments that include green areas

15) 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*

16) Children with Special Needs Need PA Too!

- a) Does anyone have any children in their classroom that have any special needs or disabilities that may prevent them from getting less activity than 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

17) 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 as possible (only one per hoop). Now remove a few hoops and instruct the children to share hoops.

18) Physical Activity Education

- 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.

19) Physical Activity Policy

- a) **Does your center have a written PA policy**
 - i) A written policy on PA tells parents and staff that this is an important issue and helps build their support
 - ii) Written policies maintain a sense of direction for the center and confirm to parents that this center is supportive of PA practices

20) 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!**

21) 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.