

April 2006 Teacher FITNESS Activity PLANNER



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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Share BOOKS that show the importance of fitness. Offer children BOOKS ABOUT dancers, athletes, construction workers, farmers, and other Physically active PEOPLE.

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Statues
Jump UP

2 Family Bike Ride Trip to the Park	3 Stretching & Moving Exercises Tug of War	4 Class Walk Balloon Tennis	5 Fitness Freeze Aerobics Sweep	6 Leader of the Pack Bean Bag Balance	7 Over & Under Relay Fun with Bubbles-	8 Family Walk Jump Rope
9 Obstacle Course Bandanna Tag	10 Yoga Egg Hop	11 Gardening Egg Toss	12 Humpty Dumpty Egg Race Ribbon Dance	13 Class Walk Bunny Bowling	14 Duck, Duck, Bunny! Bike Day	15 Wheelbarrow Frisbee Toss
16 Family Walk Ball Toss	17 Yoga Outdoor playground climber	18 Musical Hugs Bikes & Trikes	19 Head, Shoulder, Knees & Toes Noodle Limbo	20 Class Walk Shuttle Race	21 Partner Twister Football Exchange	22 Family Walk Flying Feather
23 Family Walk Wash Family Car	24 Pantomime Stretch Bikes & Trikes	25 Gardening Musical Line Movements	26 Musical Hoops Hats on a Fence	27 Treasure Hunt Ball Toss	28 Teddy Bear Relay Teddy Bear Parade	29 Yoga Outdoor free play
30 Animal Relay Race Ribbon Dance						

Want more activity ideas? Visit www.everydaylearning.net

Use this "sample activity plan" as a guide for planning activities that you can do in your classroom. Adapt it to suit your schedule and physical activity preferences.

Remember:

-Preschoolers should accumulate at least 60 minutes a day of "structured*" and unstructured** physical activity. The structured play/exercise could be conducted in shorter increments throughout the day.

-Preschoolers should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time (except when sleeping). They should also develop competence in movement skills that are building blocks for more complex movement tasks (i.e. roll, kick, throw, catch).

-Encourage them to get moving with positive comments that focus on effort: "Wow, you zoomed down the slide!" "You almost made a basket!"

-Think about safety. Help children remember hats and mittens during cold weather.

*Structured Activities: Activities you direct or do with your preschooler to keep them moving. Also include activities that you might take your preschooler to like dance class or soccer.

**Unstructured Activities: Supervised free time for children to play actively on their own or with other children (e.g., outside on play structures, building forts, running and jumping)

Fun Fitness Planner Activities

Ball Toss

Hang hula hoops at different heights. Give the children footballs and balls to practice throwing

Balloon Tennis

Gather some wooden paint stirrers or a cardboard wrapping paper tube and taped them to sturdy paper plates to make a racket. Then blow up balloons and have the children try to keep the balloons from falling to the ground. Also, each child can have a balloon and see how long he/she can hit the balloon before it touches the ground. It gets out a lot of energy and uses those muscles.

Bike Day

Have a designated day of the week where your children can bring in a bike or tricycle. Safely block off a section of your parking lot or use a paved section of your play area for the children to ride their bikes. Have the children decorate their bikes and put on a bike parade with marching music. A great opportunity to invite parents into the classrooms!

Bunny Bowling

Obtain 10 half gallon milk cartons, or 2 liter bottles. Fill the bottles about 1/8 full with water and seal the lid. Then, decorate the bottles like bunnies, adding construction paper ears, and use permanent markers for the eyes and nose. Set the bottles up like they were bowling pins and have the children roll a ball to try to knock them over. If they don't knock over easily, remove some of the water.

Duck, Duck, Bunny!!!

Played like "Duck, Duck, Goose" except the children will hop around the circle, and say "Bunny" instead of "Goose."

Egg Hop

Cut out large egg shapes from colored paper. Laminate them and cut them out. Place them on the floor and ask the children to hop from one egg to another. These may also be used as seat markers for group time.

Egg Toss

Supply the children with plastic eggs and an Easter basket. Place a piece of masking tape on the floor for a throw line. The distance from the basket to the line should vary with abilities. Have the children throw the eggs into the basket.

Fitness Freeze Aerobic

Do one or more of the following activities for ten to twenty seconds each: march, racewalk, skip, run, run on all fours, balloon or beach ball relay, jog slowly, run backward or sideways, hop on both feet, dribble a ball with your hands or feet. While you and the children are doing the suggested activities listed above, you or someone else yells "Freeze!" or blows a whistle. Everyone stops and stands still. Then someone yells "Go!" and everyone starts moving again until someone gives the next command. Note: If anyone tires, have them walk until they are ready to start the activity again. *Contra Costa Child Care Council*

Football Exchange

Using a football or any other ball, children lie on their backs leaning on their elbows and pass the ball to each other with their feet. *Contra Costa Child Care Council*

Fun with Bubbles

Kids love to make and chase bubbles. There are so many things you can do with bubbles, such as using bubble blowers or bubble wands. Bubbles are inexpensive and always a fun outside summer activity. Put your bubble mixture in a dish bin or a small blow-up wading pool. Bubble wands can be created by cutting shapes out of paper plates or using a strawberry basket. Make giant bubbles by creating a wand out of two straws and some yarn. Thread the yarn through the two straws and tie the ends together. Using the straws as handles, dip the straws and string into the bubble mixture. Carefully lift it out the bubble mixture and the large bubble will form. Make your own bubbles by combining one quart of water with eight tablespoons of dishwashing liquid and 8 tablespoons of glycerin (from a drug store). Shake mixture together and enjoy!

Gardening

Gardening not only increases a child's knowledge of nature and nutrition, but it is also a wonderful form of exercise with children. Decide whether you want to plant a square-foot garden, raised garden, or a conventional garden with rows, or a container garden made from empty milk cartons or flower pots. A garden need not be extensive or have dozens of kinds of plants. Parents or local organizations may even contribute soil or fertilizer to the project.

Here are some fun garden ideas to start with:

➤COLOR GARDEN

Plant colorful flowering plants such as yellow marigolds, red geraniums, white daisies, and purple petunias. As the plants blossom, enjoy the colors together.

➤PIZZA GARDEN

Plant a tomato and the herbs needed to make pizza sauce. Try a tomato plant (any variety that grows well in your area, except cherry) in the middle of your garden, surrounded by oregano, basil, and thyme.

➤BUTTERFLY GARDEN

Attract butterflies to your home with plants that provide food and shelter for them. Plants that are inviting to butterflies include the butterfly plant, asters, black-eyed Susans, coreopsis, purple coneflowers, sweet alyssum, and verbena.

➤MR. MCGREGOR'S GARDEN

Read *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* by Beatrix Potter before planting this garden with your child. Be sure to include carrots, lettuce, radishes, parsley, potatoes, and beans in this storybook garden.

Whichever type of garden you choose, consider the climate and growing season before planting. Use sturdy, well-made tools and equipment. Shovels and hoes with short handles are easier for children to use than full-size tools. Adapt projects to adults' level of experience and children's ages. Encourage children to do a share of all the garden chores with you: feeding plants, moving mulch, thinning, staking, weeding, and edging. Leave room for good old-fashioned digging too. Visit your garden with your children every day to make sure you don't miss its rewards: opening flowers, the first zucchini, fresh strawberries, buzz of honeybees, and whirl of hummingbirds.

Hats On A Fence

Gather some old hats, 3 or more beanbags, and a board (2x4 about 5' long). Place the board between two tables and place the hat on the board. Mark a line on the floor for the children to stand on while trying to knock off the hats with the beanbags.

Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes

Use music or not. Stand facing your children. Beginning slowly, call out the names of the three body parts that are in the title, asking your children to touch each part as they hear its name. Once they are successful at this, reverse - and mix up - the order of body parts or change the tempo at which you call out the body parts - sometimes slow and sometimes fast. Another possibility is to start out slowly and gradually get faster.

Another activity is to do the English version of Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes several times so students become familiar with the tune then, introduce the Spanish terms for the body parts one part at a time.

- Spanish Words:
 - cabeza = head
 - hombros = shoulders
 - piernas = knees
 - pies = toes (actually pies means foot or feet and dedos de pies is toes, but doesn't fit in the rhythm of the song)
 - ojos = eyes
 - orejas = ears
 - boca = mouth
 - nariz = nose

Humpty Dumpty Egg Race

After Reading "Humpty Dumpty," line the children up and give each one a spoon. Place a plastic egg onto each spoon and have the children walk or run to a designated finish line while trying not to drop the egg. If the egg drops, they have to begin all over again.

Jump Up

This station challenges children to increase vertical jumping ability. If a low ceiling is available, hang wiffle balls at different heights for children to jump and touch. A chalkboard may be hung on the wall. Although it requires more coordination, the children can mark on the board as they jump.

Leader of the Pack

Children form a line. The leader (in front) starts walking or jogging slowly. When the leader yells out "Leader of the Pack" the last child in line runs to the front of the line and becomes the new leader. Again, the group walks or jogs slowly until the new leader yells out "Leader of the Pack." *Contra Costa Child Care Council*

Musical Hoops

Place hoops on the floor in the center of the room. With music, start children marching in a big circle around the hoops. After about 30 seconds, turn off the music. Direct children to find a hoop and jump inside. Ask them jump out again and then remove a couple of hoops. Begin the music again and direct them to skip around the circle. Continue the game, changing the movement each time. No one is eliminated; they just get closer and closer together. *Contra Costa Child Care Council*

Musical Hugs

A very fun way to celebrate friendship! Have the children dance to lively music, and when you pause the music, the children have to find a partner to hug. Often 2, 3, or more children hug each other until you turn the music back on. Have the children dance again, until the next pause in the music.

Musical Line Movements

To work on balance by traveling along lines on the floor; and by starting and stopping a variety of locomotor movements with control. You will need upbeat music, boom box and lines to move on. Children find a spot on any line on the floor. Allow a reasonable amount of time, then instruct them to "freeze." Start the music. The children walk forward, following lines on the floor. Stop the music. The children freeze like statues. Comment on the "great statues" as they freeze without moving. As the activity continues, challenge students to travel on the lines using different locomotor skills.

Noodle Limbo

You will need one or two pool noodles for this activity. The parent or caregiver and one child hold the noodle at either end, while the other children move under the noodle. They can walk, crawl, or wriggle under the noodle. They can also jump over it. Try to get the "traffic" flowing in one direction so they don't bump into each other. Rotate helpers. With large groups you may want to set up more than one limbo noodle. *Contra Costa Child Care Council*

Over - Under Relay

Divide the children into teams (6 - 8 children per team) and give each team a bean bag. Children stand in line and pass bean bag over - under - over - under down line to last child, who then runs to front and repeats movement. Continue until first child is back at front of line - all sit down.

Ribbon Dance

Give children a scarf or a long, trailing piece of crepe paper. Play music and dance with your ribbon.

Pantomime Stretch

As a cool down and "calm down", parents/caregivers and kids sit on the floor and act out silly fantasies such as opening arms and legs like an alligator's jaws and eating up healthy food that kids suggest. Close legs and arms in front as if to gobble up the food. Invent your own scenarios and let the kids give suggestions along the way. *Contra Costa Child Care Council*

Partner Twister

Scatter enough hula hoops around the room for one for each pair of mom and child. Have everyone skip around the room together until you whistle and call out two body parts, such as "foot and elbow". Moms and kids find any hula hoop together, and each put their foot and elbow inside of it. This is a great way for children to learn their body parts. *Contra Costa Child Care Council*

Shuttle Race

Place two boxes 10 feet apart. Put several interesting objects in one of the boxes. On the signal "go", your child runs and takes an object from one box and places it in the other. Repeat until the box is empty. You may wish to talk about the objects in the box first, so his curiosity will not interfere with playing the game.

Statues

To get your child moving, put on a piece of up-tempo music and invite him to move while the music is playing and to freeze into a statue when you pause it.

Stretching & Moving Exercises

- **Lazy-Day Rest**

To relax the body.

Position: Lie on your backs on the floor, legs slightly apart, and arms limply at your sides.

Action: Take a deep breath, hold, relax. Pull your toes towards and then away from your bodies, hold, relax. Pull your tummies in, hold, relax. Pull seats together, hold, relax. Make a tight fist with your hands, hold, relax. With your hands at sides, shrug your shoulders, hold, relax. Smile while turning your head from side to side. Frown and repeat action.

- **Small Ball**

To relax the body and stretch muscles.

Position: Kneel on the floor with your legs together.

Action: Rest your seat on your legs, lower your head to the floor, and tuck your hands to your side on floor, pointing backward. Take two or three deep breaths and blow it out. Relax.

- **Wash the Dishes**

To stretch the shoulder muscles.

Position: Stand facing your child, holding her hands.

Action: "Wash the dishes, dry the dishes, turn the dishes over." Swing your arms side to side while singing the rhyme. On the word "over", swing your arms up overhead and turn your child around in a full circle so your arms are crossed. Repeat arm swings and rhyme and on word "over," return your child to original position (arms uncrossed). Repeat several times.

- **Angel-in-the-Snow**

To stretch the muscles of the arms and legs.

Position: Lie on your backs.

Action: Pretend to be in the snow and move your arms and legs "in" and "out" several times like an angel.

Sweep

Place the open end of a box towards the starting point 8 feet away. Give your child a broom or hockey stick to sweep or hit a ball or similar object into the box. Repeat several times.

Treasure Hunt

You will need small plastic gold coins, inexpensive beaded necklaces, small rings, play money, and a treasure box decorated by the children. A map made by the teacher for the children to follow. Inexpensive treasures that can be found in any party store.

The teacher must first hide the treasure filled box in a good hiding place in the yard. Next, the teacher will prepare a creative map for the children to follow, i.e. outside, start at the tree in the bike area. Look up and find another clue. The second clue might have a rhyme or just say now walk twenty-five steps until you come to the playhouse. Repeat with other stations. Finally when the kids come to the place where the treasure is buried or hidden, they will open it and take turns sharing the treasure inside. It's great fun and always a success!

Teddy Bear Relay

Divide the children into even teams. Each child stands with his/her team in a line with one child in front of the next. The first child in line is the leader. Each team needs a teddy bear. The teddy bear is placed at the children's feet to start. After the signal to start the children will pass the bear over their head to the person behind them until the bear gets to the end of the line. Then the person at the end of the line runs to the front and passes it back through the line. The children repeat this until the leader is the last person in line, the game ends when the leader returns to the front of the line with the bear.

Teddy Bear Parade

Have the children line up, or walk around in a group, with their teddy bears in wagons or on their shoulders. Play marching music and have a parade outside or through your school. Afterwards have a Teddy Bear Picnic on the floor or outside with each child's favorite teddy bear. You can either pretend to eat, or have healthy snack or lunch picnic style.

Yoga

Be a Cat, Be a Tree. Your children will enjoy these two creative movement exercises. They are both based on yoga, an ancient form of exercise and meditation. Invite your children to stretch their bodies and let their imaginations soar!

The Cat:

Start on your hands and knees. Look up. Curve your shoulders up. Hold the stretch for three counts as you purr like a happy cat. Now look down at the floor and arch your back up. Hold the stretch for three counts as you hiss and growl like an angry cat.

The Tree:

Stand on one leg. This is the tree trunk. Place the other foot at the knee of your standing leg. Now raise your arms high above your head, with the fingers touching. Count slowly to five as you imagine the sun shining down on you. (Note: Children who have trouble balancing can stand on two feet or lean against a wall.)