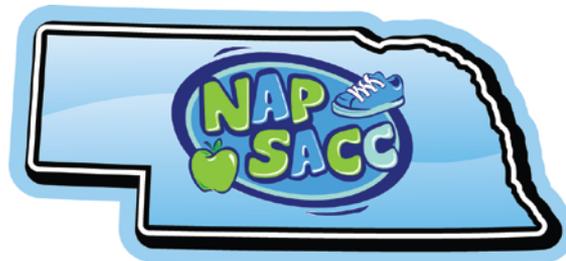


# Infant & Child Physical Activity



# Partnering Organizations:



Department of Health & Human Services

DHHS

N E B R A S K A



# Objectives

- Describe why plenty of active play is so important for young children.
- Explain in detail the components of a child care environment that promotes the development of active children.
- Describe the role of child care staff in helping children develop active lifestyles.
- List some things they can do in their classroom to help children develop physically active behaviors.



# What is Physical Activity?

- Any movement of the body that increases heart rate and breathing above what it would be if a child was sitting or resting.
- Examples: Running, Walking, Crawling, Climbing, Jumping, Dancing, etc.



# Physical Activity Best Practices



Age group	Time Recommended
Infants (0-12 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offer 3-5 minutes of tummy time two times per day or more.</li><li>• Decrease the amount of time infants are placed in swings, seats, exercisers, etc.</li></ul>
Toddlers (13-24 months)	90 minutes or more of indoor & outdoor physical activity each day is recommended.
Preschool (ages 2-5 years)	120 minutes or more of indoor & outdoor physical activity each day is recommended.



# Structured Activity Reminders

- Adult-led physical activity should be provided to preschool children **60 minutes or more** each day.
- Design it so all children can be active participants!
  - Provide sufficient equipment.
  - Avoid games or activities where children have to wait their turn to complete the activity or are required to passively sit, listen, or wait.
  - Enhance participation by avoiding or modifying games where children are eliminated from play.



# 3 Fundamental Movement Skills



- 1.) Locomotor skills** – move from one place to another  
Ex.) skipping, galloping, running, jumping
- 2.) Object control skills** – controlled movements  
Ex.) swing a bat, rolling a ball, catching, dribbling
- 3.) Stability skills** – improve balance & body control  
Ex.) turning, lifting, stretching, bending

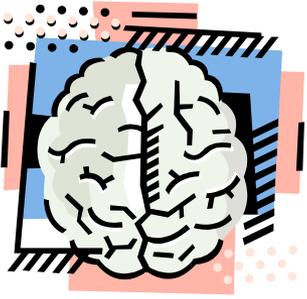


# How can Child Care Providers help?



- Talk about the importance of physical activity.
- Make classroom routines and transitions more active.
- Be a role model.
- Work with parents to encourage physical activity.
- Teach with movement.
- Understand children's level of play.
- Teach fundamental motor skills.
- Don't use physical activity as a punishment.





# The Body and Brain

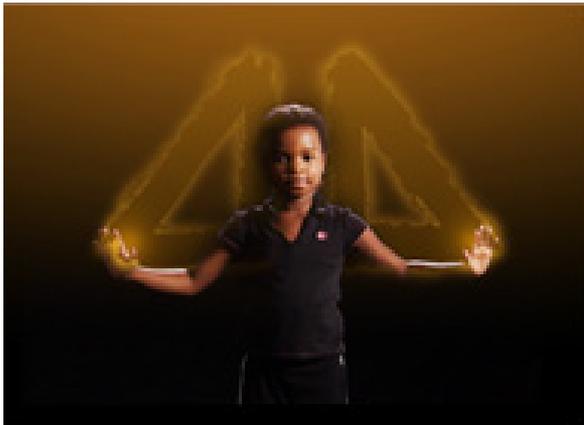
- The brain is separated into front and back regions.
  - “motor brain” and the “thinking brain”
- The body trains the brain.
- Movements that cross midline of body help reading and cognitive ability.

Examples: Clapping high to the right side of body or march and tap hand on opposite knee.



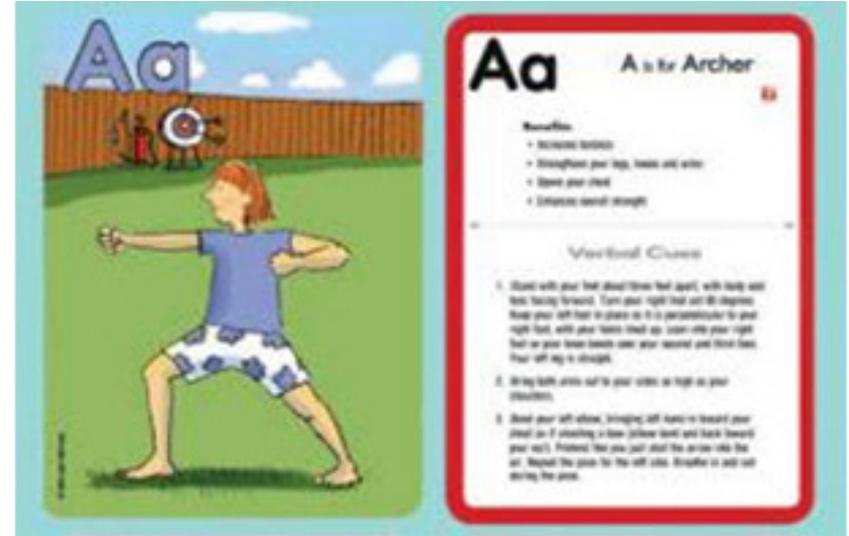
# Body Puzzles for the Mind

## Time for SMART MOVES:



# Humans Learn:

- 10% of what they read
- 20% of what they hear
- 30% of what they see
- 50% of what they see & hear
- 70% of what is discussed
- 80% of what is experienced, and
- **95% of what you actively teach.**



Source: Hannaford, 1995

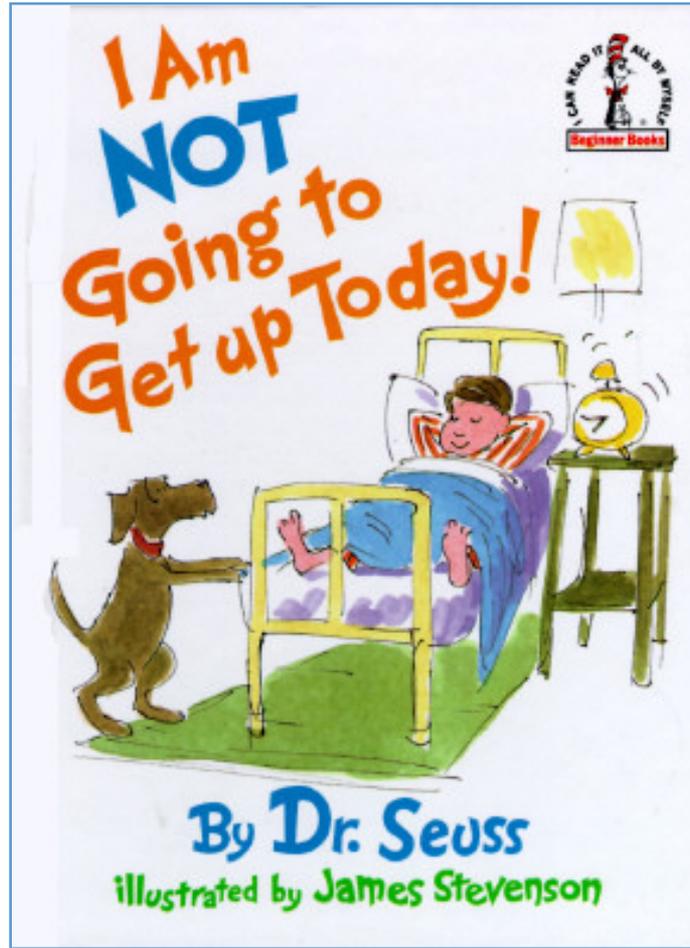


# How can we actively teach?

- **Art**: Ask children to show pictures they have created to the class and “act out” their picture.
- **Language Arts**: “Act out” stories, poems, words (slither, crawl, under, over, pounce, etc.).
- **Music**: Use different movements for different types of music.
- **Math**: Use physical activity, such as jumping, to count.  
Example: Count to five and exercise!



# An example of actively teaching language arts!



# Active Play and Inactive Time

- ✓ Crawling
- ✓ Throwing
- ✓ Running
- ✓ And much more...



- Children spend much of their day in child care facilities, so it's important that they spend time being active.
- Children learn (mentally, physically, emotionally, and socially) through play.
- Try to limit sitting time as much as possible.





## Increase Play

- Teach new gross motor skills: skipping, balancing, jumping, walking backwards, etc.
- Join in free active play with children indoors or outdoors.
- Turn music on and create fun dance moves.

# Active Play in the Classroom

## Decrease Sitting

- Incorporate activities during circle time.
- TURN OFF TV and incorporate structured activity.
- Limit table toy activities and increase centers that require children to move around, such as a dance center.



# Screen Time Best Practices



- No screen time is recommended for children under 2 years of age.
- For children 2 years of age and older, the amount of screen time recommended each week is 30 minutes or less.
  - When television or videos are shown, it's educational and commercial free.
- When screen time is offered, children are given the option to do an alternate activity.
- Screen time is rarely or never used as a reward.
- Televisions are stored outside of classrooms.



# ACTIVITY

Complete the “Finding Fun in Physical Fitness” Worksheet.



# Play environment

- Fixed play equipment like climbing structures and slides are fun and help children develop a variety of motor skills.
- Portable play equipment, like balls, tricycles, and tumbling mats, encourage children to use their imaginations and be active.
- Try and find indoor space for active play in case of inclement weather.



# Supporting Physical Activity



- Children look to adults, especially parents and teachers, for appropriate behavior.
- Adults can show children how to live a healthy active life.
- Teachers can show children that being active and healthy is fun and rewarding.
- Support PA through learning materials and visuals, such as posters, pictures, and books.



# Outdoor Play

- Children are more active outdoors.
- There are learning benefits to outdoor play, such as learning through senses, inventing games, and social skills.
- Example types of nature walks:
  - Theme walks, sensory walks, weather walks, search-for-life walks, new information walks, etc.



# Outdoor Playtime Best Practices

Age group	Amount of Outdoor Playtime
Infants (0-12 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Infants are taken outdoors two times per day or more.</li><li>• Infants may be taken outdoors for different activities, including a walk in a stroller or tummy time on a blanket or mat.</li></ul>
Toddlers (13-24 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide 60 minutes or more each day.</li><li>• Provide outdoor playtime 3 times per day or more.</li></ul>
Preschool (ages 2-5 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide 90 minutes or more each day.</li><li>• Provide outdoor playtime 3 times per day or more.</li></ul>



# Outdoor Play

**Spice up your play area with NATURE!**

**“Playscapes for all children need to be more than playgrounds. They should be ‘habitats’ – places where children can live.”  
– Mary Rivkin**

- **Add a garden**
- **Add trees to make some shade**
- **Add flowers and plants**
- **Add tree “cookies, stumps, or logs**
- **Add a bird feeder**
- **Add a sandbox**
- **Add a pathway**



# Examples of Outdoor Classrooms in Nebraska





Photos courtesy of  
UNL Children's Center  
and  
SCC Child Development Center  
Lincoln, NE

# Special Needs Accommodations

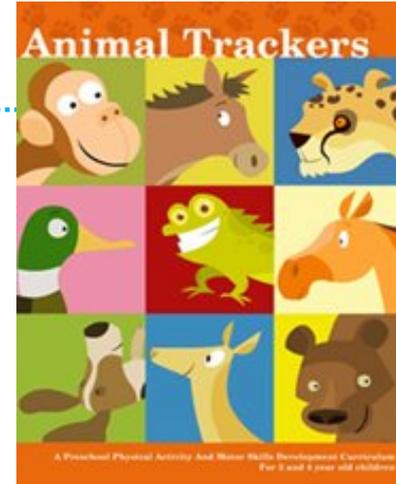
- All children benefit from exercise and should be included in the classroom activities.
- Small modifications can make it possible for all children to participate, gain skills, confidence, and feel like part of the group.

For publications on how to adapt activities for children with special needs and find inclusion strategies, go to the North Carolina State University website:

<http://fcs.ces.ncsu.edu/child-care-development/>



# Physical Activity Education for Staff, Parents, & Children



- How often are staff provided with physical activity training opportunities?
- How can we offer physical activity education experiences to the parents of the children at your center?
- Examples of Physical Activity education curricula for children:
  - Animal Trackers
  - I am Moving, I am Learning
  - Healthy Habits for Life



# Physical Activity Policy



- A written policy on physical activity tells parents and staff that this is an important issue and helps build their support.
- A written policy on physical activity helps guide the decisions and choices you make every day.



# Suggested Topics to Include in a Policy

- Amount of time provided each day for indoor and outdoor physical activity.
- Professional development on children's physical activity.
- Limiting long periods of seated time for children.
- Teacher practices that encourage physical activity.
- Education for families on children's physical activity.
- Not withholding physical activity as punishment.
- Planned and informal physical activity education.



# Physical Activity Props

- Bean Bags
- Ribbon Wands
- Scarves
- Parachute
- Hula Hoops

Let's take time to brainstorm some new ideas for increasing physical activity using these props!



How could you create a similar prop inexpensively?  
Example: Use a blanket instead of a parachute.



# Tips for a Safe & Successful Program



## THINK ABOUT:

- Never eliminating a child from a game
- Age & individually appropriate
- Present skills from simple to complex
- Adapting games
- Encouraging participation

## DON'T FORGET

- Variety
- Water breaks
- FUN! FUN! FUN!



# ACTIVITY

Complete the “Physical Activity Classroom Goals” Worksheet.

