PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CURRICULUM

Child Health Initiative for Lifelong Eating & Exercise
This curriculum was created as part of the CHILE Project.

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CHILE includes 16 Head Start centers, families, local healthcare providers, and the surrounding community including local grocery stores.

http://hsc.unm.edu/som/prc/
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Head Start Teachers:

The Child Health Initiative for Lifelong Eating and Exercise (CHILE) Team is very excited to present you and your Head Start with the classroom physical activity curriculum. The purpose of the physical activity curriculum is to give Head Start children more opportunities to move and be active while they are in your care. Research suggests that America’s youth and young children are living sedentary lives. Children of today often have less opportunity to be physically active, both at home and in child care settings. This curriculum is just one part of the CHILE project that will help Head Start children engage in physical activity on a regular basis, and reverse current sedentary trends. We encourage you to promote Active Play Every Day at your Head Start through the use of this curriculum and all of the other wonderful play activities that Head Start children engage in. Use this curriculum to add 30 minutes of physical activity per day to your usual recess and activity schedule.

The CHILE curriculum has been designed to integrate physical activity with lessons that promote language development, literacy, mathematics, creative arts, social and emotional development and physical health and development. Be assured that Head Start children’s time will be spent in activities that not only teach fundamental learning domains, but enhance their learning through movement-based instruction.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES: Guidelines from the National Association of Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) state that preschoolers should engage in 60 minutes of structured activity per day, AND 60 minutes (and up to several hours) of unstructured activity per day. Adding 30 minutes of activity per day to the activities that Head Starts are already doing with children will help children reach those goals.

The CHILE Physical Activity curriculum is based on Safety, Movement, Set-Up-for-Success and Fun. Keep these concepts in mind at all times while you are encouraging children to be physically active.

SAFETY: Safety should be the number one priority when conducting CHILE Curriculum. In an unsafe environment, a child’s ability to engage in physical activity diminishes. Further, if a child injures herself, she will be less willing to engage in physical activity in the future. Teachers should supervise children at all times during active play and CHILE activities; fix, remove or prevent children from going near hazards; and regularly inspect and maintain active play areas and equipment to ensure safety.

MOVEMENT: Movement is critical to maximizing a child’s performance and love for physical activity. All games and activities included in the CHILE curriculum will facilitate maximum movement and engagement in physical activity. No child should be sent “out” of a game when tagged, nor stand in line for extended periods while waiting for a turn.

SET-UP-FOR-SUCCESS: Set-Up-for-Success is a concept that ensures children will successfully perform a physical activity and thus build their self-efficacy in gross motor function and life-long engagement in physical activity. Be aware of the skill levels of your students, and adjust each activity to fit their needs. Introduce new skills and activities gently and gradually so that children are able to extend their abilities and confidence. Wait until they have successfully mastered a new
activity before progressing to the next skill level. In this manner, Head Start children will be “set-up-for-success” when performing physical activities, playing games and engaging in movement.

FUN: Fun is paramount to the success of lifelong involvement in physical activity. All CHILE activities are designed to be fun for not only the Head Start children, but teachers, parents and caregivers of Head Start children so that physical activity can be enjoyable to everyone involved with the curriculum!

The curriculum is divided into three types of activities:

- Move ‘N’ Groove activities
- Exercise Breaks
- Game Time activities

A description of each activity is provided in the Description of CHILE Physical Activity Curriculum on the following page.

Track your physical activity success with the CHILE “Be Active!” calendar. Mark each five minutes of physical activity until you have reached the goal of 30 minutes everyday, in addition to recess, PE, and other previously scheduled activities. Read more about physical activity documentation on the following pages.

We hope you will enjoy working with the CHILE physical activity curriculum to encourage Active Play Every Day!

Sincerely,

the CHILE team!
SAFETY REMINDERS

It is important to keep the children in your classroom safe while they are being physically active. The following tips will help ensure that the lessons are implemented in a safe manner.

HOW CAN I SET UP TO MAKE THE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AREA AS SAFE AS POSSIBLE?

When activities are completed inside, make sure that the space is of adequate size so that children have enough room to move around without colliding with each other, walls, furniture, cabinets, shelves, or other objects. Also check to ensure that the floor is slip-resistant and free of trip hazards such as holes or cracks in the floor, uneven surfaces, and unsecured rugs or carpets.

Any outdoor space used for physical activity should be free of slip and fall hazards as well as trip hazards. Remove equipment or objects that children could collide with while engaging in activity. Any hazards should be detected before the activity is attempted and brought to the immediate attention of a director or site coordinator. Use the indoor or outdoor space for your lessons only when it is free of hazards.

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO AS A TEACHER TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE?

Always keep a watchful eye on children while they are engaging in physical activity, inside and outside. Actively supervise children and maintain good management so that children follow instructions and are always in the sight of a teacher or other qualified staff. Teach the children safety rules for moving and behaving in a safe manner while participating in activities. Strictly enforce safety rules.

The CHILE lessons (including Move ‘N’ Groove, Game Time, and Exercise Breaks) were designed with safety in mind. Be aware of the specific instructions that are included in the lessons to ensure the safety of the children.

Finally, keep up to date with the safety standards at your Head Start. If not already required, consider taking a course in basic lifesaving skills and first aid.

IT IS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO PHYSICALLY COMPLETE SOME OF THE LESSONS. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Some of the lessons can be very challenging for adults. If you are unable to lead a particular lesson, consider asking a volunteer or teaching assistant to lead that particular activity. If this is not an option, select another lesson. Consider trying lessons before you implement them in your classroom if you have any concerns.

I HAVE A CHILD IN MY CLASSROOM WITH SPECIAL NEEDS. I AM CONCERNED THAT HE OR SHE IS NOT ABLE TO COMPLETE THE ACTIVITY. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Do not ask a child to do something he or she is unable to do. Familiarize yourself with students’ medical history or physical limitations. If a child is able to complete some of the lessons provided, implement these lessons first. Consult with experts at your Head Start first to see if some lessons can be modified so that a child with special needs is able to complete them in a safe manner. Please exercise caution. If you have any doubt, do not ask a child to complete a lesson that could result in injury.
DESCRIPTION OF CHILE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CURRICULUM COMPONENTS

MOVE ‘N’ GROOVE

Activities are designed to encourage movement through music and dance. Encourage children to move and groove as they please. Enjoy watching children spin, turn, dance, wiggle and shake with delight! Move ‘N’ Groove activities are designed to be used in the classroom to encourage children to shake out extra energy they may have. These activities are short and will work very well if included during times of the day when children are less active, like transition times. You are also encouraged to use the Move ‘N’ Groove activities for children’s performances at family or other Head Start events.

EXERCISE BREAKS

Much like the Move ‘N’ Groove activities, Exercise Breaks are designed to be short in duration, and require a small space and little-to-no equipment. Exercise Breaks are a great way to transition children from one activity to the next and help them to be more focused throughout the day. Exercise Breaks can be performed in the classroom, outside, or in a large room such as a gymnasium or meeting room. You can use Exercise Breaks with your teachers and parents during meetings also. You’ll be surprised at how much more effective meetings will be when participants get the opportunity to move!

GAME TIME

Game Time lessons are physical activity lessons that are comprised of 4 parts: Warm-Up, Activity 1, Activity 2 and Cool Down. Game Time lessons usually require teachers to lead games that have rules children must follow. Game Time activities often require more space than an average classroom provides, so teachers are encouraged to teach Game Time lessons outside or in a large room such as a gymnasium or meeting room.

Use lessons from any or all of these components to complete 30 minutes of physical activity per day in addition to previously scheduled activities such as recess and physical education.
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DOCUMENTATION

CHALLENGES

Adding 30 minutes of physical activity to the already full Head Start day can be a challenging task. When starting a new physical activity program, writing down what you have done can be both rewarding and encouraging. Use the CHILE “Be Active!” calendar as a tool to remind you to complete 30 minutes each day, and as a visual reward to remind yourself and the class how successful you are at reaching your goal each day.

USING THE CALENDARS

The CHILE “Be Active!” calendars can be posted on a wall in the classroom, or they can be stapled into a booklet for each module. Each “page” represents a week (Monday through Friday), and each day has six boxes worth five minutes each. When all six boxes are full, 30 minutes have been completed! There is an additional box on each day, labeled “More!” where teachers can document bonus time spent in physical activity (more than 30 minutes). Children can help teachers fill in the calendar by placing a sticker on the calendar each time the class has completed five or more minutes of physical activity. Keeping track of physical activity during each day is much more effective than trying to remember at the end of the week or the month.

Keep in mind that the CHILE program is designed to ADD 30 minutes of physical activity to the usual Head Start day.

DETAIL

Lessons have been labeled with numbers in case specific activities need to be tracked. Start with the code for the general type of activity: GT = Game Time; EB = Exercise Break; MG = Move ‘N’ Groove. Then add the number of the activity or lesson so that it can be referenced. For example, if you complete Game Time Lesson 1, all four parts, you should write GT #1. If you complete only activity 2 of Game Time Lesson 2, then you would write GT2, part 2. This information should be written on the calendar on top of the stickers you have placed there, in a manner that signifies how much time you spent on that particular activity.

SUBMITTING CALENDARS

Your Head Start may require you to turn in completed physical activity calendars so that the information can be tracked. We suggest that calendars be turned in on a weekly basis to ensure that they are completed in a timely manner. Calendars can be collected by the health or education coordinator, or other staff person as designated by the Head Start.

CALENDAR TEMPLATE

See the end of this section for a sample calendar that can be photocopied as needed for documentation.
REFERENCES

The CHILE Game Time, Exercise Breaks and Move ‘N’ Groove curriculum is a compilation of physical activities adapted from the following resources:

- http://www.p comercial.com

Adapted from http://www.preschooleducation.com/gparachute.shtml