

# National ECELC Newsletter

Volume 1 Issue 5  
September 2014



## Teacher Led/Intentional Physical Activity

Written by: Alexandra Hyman, Intern

Reviewed by: Brianna Holmes, MA and Katey Swanson, RD

### The National ECELC

Welcome to the National Early Care and Education Collaboratives Project (ECELC) Newsletter! We hope this newsletter is helpful as we offer supplemental information to help you prepare for the Learning Sessions and provide technical assistance to early care and education (ECE) providers. Topics within each newsletter will emphasize areas outlined in the *Let's Move! Child Care* goals including healthy eating, physical activity, screen time, and breastfeeding support. We hope you enjoy it!

-The National ECELC Team

Visit the *Let's Move! Child Care* website:

[www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org](http://www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org)

Physical Activity is the movement of the body that uses muscles that result in energy and calories burned. Benefits of physical activity include stronger bones and muscles, a leaner body, lower likelihood of becoming overweight, having a better outlook on life and lower risk of developing negative health conditions. Early care and education (ECE) programs should provide opportunities for structured (adult-led) and unstructured (child-led) physical activity, as both are important. Structured physical activity tends to get children active at higher levels of intensity and is also known as "breathless play", whereas, unstructured physical activity allows children to explore their environments and be creative while using their imaginations.

ECE programs should build opportunities for structured physical activity that supports age-appropriate motor skill development (jumping, skipping, hopping, etc) into their daily

classroom schedules. All of the equipment should be child sized and age-appropriate. There should be sufficient amount of equipment so that each child can participate without waiting.

Examples of structured (teacher-led) activities:

1. Try an active story time where children act out the book as someone reads aloud;
2. Encourage children to move like different animals during transition from one activity or room to another ;
3. Take brief 5-10 minute breaks during the day to stretch;
4. Have children jump out the date during group time. For example, if its the 15th of the month have the children hop on one foot 15 times; and
5. Have children cleanup using a travel skill such as speed walking, jumping or hopping, until all the materials are put away.

## References

[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)

[www.healthykidshealthyfutures.org](http://www.healthykidshealthyfutures.org)

[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/physical-activity/Childcare/ActiveEarlyDailyRoutines.pdf](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/physical-activity/Childcare/ActiveEarlyDailyRoutines.pdf)

[www.nemours.org/content/dam/nemours/www/filebox/service/preventative/nhps/paguide2010](http://www.nemours.org/content/dam/nemours/www/filebox/service/preventative/nhps/paguide2010)



## Exercise for Young Children

It is important to understand what children can do and what skills are appropriate for their specific age. ECE providers can play games and encourage the use of equipment that is age appropriate, while modifying activities to ensure all children are moving rather than having some children wait and watch. One example of this is modifying games so that no child is ever “out” or eliminated.

**Infants:** infants are able to explore their world and build their strength and skills through “tummy time.” Tummy time is the time an infant spends on his stomach (tummy) throughout the day. Also, spending time on their tummies builds the strength and coordination needed to reach movement milestones, including rolling over, sitting up and crawling.

**Toddlers:** Toddlers need at least 60-90 minutes of physical activity each day, including at least 30 minutes of structured (teacher-led) physical activity. ECE providers can capture children during physical activity by playing musical songs or music that is familiar to them. Use words to describe your movements and model activities so that the toddlers can copy your movements.

**Preschool:** Preschoolers should play actively several times a day- and best practices indicate preschoolers need at least 120 minutes of physical activity each day, of which 60 minutes should be structured (teacher-led) physical activity. Play music that will prompt children to move and dance. When children are playing outside, ensure that they have a variety of materials to choose from.

### Questions?

Please contact your  
State/Local Project  
Coordinator or one of our  
Content Specialists:

For health & nutrition  
information:

Katey Swanson, RD  
[katey.swanson@nemours.org](mailto:katey.swanson@nemours.org)  
202.649.4422

For early care and education  
information:

Brianna Holmes, MA  
[brianna.holmes@nemours.org](mailto:brianna.holmes@nemours.org)  
202.649.4425



Nemours is currently funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) under a five-year Cooperative Agreement (1U58DP004102-01) to support states/localities in launching early care and education learning collaboratives focused on childhood obesity prevention. The views expressed in written materials or publications, or by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

