



FOOD & FUN AFTERSCHOOL, SECOND EDITION

UNIT 2

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

GET MOVING!

A NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CURRICULUM
DESIGNED TO HELP CHILDREN DEVELOP HEALTHY
HABITS DURING OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

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CONTENTS

About Food & Fun Afterschool, Second Edition	1
Information for Leaders	3
Activity Options for Children	5
Connect With Parents	6
Resources	7
Activities	9
Active Day Cartoons.....	10
Warm Up, Cool Down	11
We Belong to Many Groups	12
Get Moving Relay.....	14
Worksheets	16
It's An Active Day!	17
Get Moving Activity Cards	21
Activity List for Leaders: Get Moving/Stay Still.....	21
Activity Cards: Get Moving/Stay Still	22
Activity List for Leaders: Very Active Moves/Moderate Moves	32
Activity Cards: Very Active Moves/Moderate Moves	33

ABOUT FOOD & FUN AFTERSCHOOL, SECOND EDITION

The Y is not only one of the nation's largest providers of childcare and afterschool programs—but we are also determined to be the healthiest. As part of our commitment to young people, the Y has adopted a set of Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) standards for early childhood and afterschool programs nationwide. The standards will build a healthier future for our nation's children by providing healthy environments rich in opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity and by supporting families to do the same at home.

The **Food & Fun Afterschool** curriculum is an ideal way to achieve the HEPA standards through activities and lessons designed to be easy to incorporate into your regular afterschool program schedules. Food & Fun includes 11 teaching units that encourage healthy behaviors through active play, literacy, math skills development, creative learning, and hands-on snack time activities. With more than 70 activities to choose from, the lessons make it simple to promote healthy eating and physical activity in your program every day! Food & Fun also gives you tools for engaging families in their children's health.

THE Y'S HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STANDARDS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD AND AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

- Implement an educational program for parents and child care providers with physical activity and nutritional information relevant to the health of their children.
- Ensure that children engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day (for full-day programs), including a mixture of moderate and vigorous physical activities that promote bone and muscle strengthening.
- Play will take place daily outdoors whenever possible.
- No access to television or movies.
- Limit digital device time to less than one hour per day. Digital device use is limited to homework or programs that actively engage children in activity.
- Serve fruits or vegetables at every meal.
- Serve all meals family style.
- No fried foods.
- Offer water at the table during every meal and have water accessible at all times.
- Serve beverages that do not have added sugars.
- Serve healthier beverages, including water, lowfat (1%) or nonfat milk, or 100% fruit juice (no more than one 6- to 8-oz serving per day).

The HEPA standards are based in part on years of research supported by collaborations with the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH), University of Massachusetts at Boston, the Healthy Out of School Time Coalition (HOST) and the National Institute for Out of School Time (NIOST). Through these collaborations, as well as the experience of Ys across the nation, the Y has learned the most effective ways to create healthy environments in out-of-school time settings.

Additionally, the Institute of Medicine's Early Childhood Obesity Prevention policies, the National Afterschool Association's "Standards for Healthy Eating and Physical Activity in Out of School Time Programs" and the Let's Move Child Care Standards played a significant role the HEPA standards.

Teaching about healthy behavior is most effective when your program environment is consistent with the HEPA standards, which are supported through the Food & Fun curriculum. The Food & Fun materials were created by the Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center on Nutrition and Physical Activity in collaboration with YMCA of the USA. In addition to afterschool programs, these materials are appropriate for use in a wide variety of out-of-school time programs, like summer camps, sports programs, extended day programs, and before school programs.

For more information on the HEPA standards, visit [Exchange](#). All Food & Fun materials, including parent engagement tools, tip sheets on implementing the HEPA standards, snack recipes, and can be downloaded on [Exchange](#). For more resources from the Harvard School of Public Health, visit www.foodandfun.org or www.hsph.harvard.edu/research/prc/projects/food-fun/.

UNIT 2

INFORMATION FOR LEADERS

BEHAVIOR GOAL

Children will be more physically active.

KEY MESSAGES FOR KIDS

- Moving your body is fun and helps your body be healthy and strong.
- All types of physical activities like playing, dancing, and sports are good for you.
- Do something active every day.

KEY INFORMATION FOR PROGRAM STAFF

It is important to create an afterschool environment where children are able to participate in physical activity every day. When regular activity is not part of their lifestyle, children are more likely to develop chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and osteoporosis when they grow up. Physical activity tends to decline as children enter the adolescent years, and inactive children and teens are more likely to grow into sedentary adults.

The goal is to engage all children in regular physical activity, regardless of physical or mental abilities, and for them to have fun being active. Many schools have reduced physical education and recess times so children come to afterschool programs ready to move! Children ages 6–17 need at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day. This can occur in 15 minute periods of activity throughout the day. They should participate in vigorous activity on at least three days per week. To help children meet this goal, provide all children with at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity every day. Offer at least 20 minutes of vigorous physical activity on three or more days per week.

In this unit, children will recognize that traditional forms of exercise, like sports, are not the only way to get moving. Free play, like running, jumping, and climbing on playground equipment is just as important as organized sports like soccer or softball. Children can also be active in their chores at home. They may walk a dog or help sweep floors. Finally, children and families should be encouraged to find active forms of transportation like walking to school or riding bikes to the park or store. It is important to keep in mind that people hold different values and understanding about exercise, so talking about all these different ways to be physically active is important.

Don't forget proper hydration! Offer water before, during, and after all physical activity.

Refer to the "Physical Activity" tip sheet, available on [Exchange](#), for ideas on how to engage staff and children in physical activity at your afterschool program every day. Also see www.foodandfun.org for additional resources.

ACTIVITY OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN



ARTS & CRAFTS

1. Active Day Cartoon: All ages create healthy stories. Choose one of cartoon sheet options to best match the ages of children participating in this activity.



ACTIVE GAMES

1. Warm Up, Cool Down: Do these whenever you get moving!
2. We Belong to Many Groups: A physically active game that helps kids appreciate the similarities and differences they have with one another.
3. Get Moving Relay: Helps children identify activities that are “active” (gets the body moving) versus “not active” (body stays still).



SUGGESTED BOOKS

Jonathan and His Mommy by Irene Smalls takes children along a fun walkthrough the neighborhood, and can be used for an interactive circle time.

Salt in His Shoes by Delores Jordan tells the inspirational story of Michael Jordan and how perseverance led him to become a successful basketball player.

CONNECT WITH PARENTS

KEY MESSAGES FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

- Kids should get 1 hour or more of physical activity every day, all at once or spread out in 10–15 minute periods.
- Active families have fun and feel more energetic.
- Being physically active helps your body be healthy and strong.
- Be a good role model by getting regular physical activity yourself and planning active time as a family. Kids with active families are more likely to stay active as adults.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT OPTIONS

It is important to engage parents and caregivers on a regular basis in a variety of ways. Here are some ways that you can engage parents at afterschool:

- Have a conversation with parents at pickup
- Create a bulletin board with the key messages from each Food & Fun unit
- Involve parents in daily physical activities and snack time
- Hold regularly scheduled events each month
- **Start a walking club** for families to participate in weekly.
- **Dance!** Offer a dance class for families. Zumba is one popular dance class that parents and kids can enjoy together.
- **Suggest family fitness!** Make a list of family fitness classes that local YMCAs are offering. Distribute the list to parents and encourage them to attend!

Refer to the parent handouts and parent communications, available in English and Spanish on [Exchange](#), to reinforce the messages in this unit of Food & Fun:

- **Parent handout:** “Activate Your Family!” Send this handout home in a mailing, insert it into your next newsletter, or have copies available for pick-up at your program’s sign-out area.
- **Parent communications:**
 - Newsletter article: “Get Moving! Feel Great!” Insert this into your program newsletter.
 - Email message: “Healthy Habits Power Tips: Get Moving!” Email this message to parents and caregivers at the start of this unit.

RESOURCES



WEBSITES

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans describe the types and amounts of physical activity that offer substantial health benefits to children and adults.

www.health.gov/paguidelines/

The Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center on Nutrition and Physical Activity works with community partners to design, implement, and evaluate programs that improve nutrition and physical activity, and reduce overweight and chronic disease risk among children and youth. The Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center offers additional materials and resources on nutrition and physical activity on its website.

www.hsph.harvard.edu/prc/

Let's Move is First Lady Michelle Obama's initiative to provide parents with the support they need to make healthy family choices, provide healthier school foods, help kids to be more physically active, and make healthy, affordable food available in every part of the U.S.

www.letsmove.gov/index.html

Alliance for a Healthier Generation is a joint venture between the American Heart Association and the Clinton Foundation with a mission to reduce the nationwide prevalence of childhood obesity by 2015 and to empower kids nationwide to make healthy lifestyle choices.

www.healthiergeneration.org

Action for Healthy Kids is a nonprofit and volunteer network fighting childhood obesity and undernourishment by working with schools to help kids learn to eat right, be active every day and be ready to learn. Their website includes tools and fact sheets about childhood obesity, nutrition, and physical activity.

www.actionforhealthykids.org/

The Nemours Foundation's Center for Children's Health Media created KidsHealth to provide families with doctor-approved information that they can understand and use. Includes sites for parents, children, and teenagers and provides a variety of health information, including nutrition and fitness topics. Also available in Spanish.

www.kidshealth.org

http://kidshealth.org/parent/en_espanol/esp_land_pg/spanish_landing_page.html

National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) offers guidelines on activity for children and publishes curricula for in-school and out-of-school time.

www.aahperd.org/Naspe/

President's Fitness Challenge inspires children (and adults) to get moving each day. Use the guidelines and log charts to create a challenge within your center, or enroll children in the challenge through the web site.

www.presidentschallenge.org/home_kids.aspx

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) sponsor two programs for 9- to 13-year-olds. VERB is a national, multicultural, social marketing campaign which encourages tweens to be active every day. For information about the VERB campaign, which includes materials for parents, go to:

www.cdc.gov/youthcampaign/

WEBSITES FOR KIDS

The BAM! (Body and Mind) program, of the CDC, provides tweens with tips on nutrition and physical activity. Children can explore the over 30 physical activities, including the necessary gear and how to play. They can also find great ideas for healthy snacks and meals.

www.bam.gov

KidsHealth also has websites especially for kids, in English and Spanish.

<http://kidshealth.org>

MATERIALS

The CANFIT Physical Activity Pyramid is a fun, colorful guide to different types of physical activities kids can enjoy after school. Use it to think of new ways to get kids activity during your program or post it on your site's bulletin board.

<http://canfit.org/pdf/PAPyramid4AS.pdf>