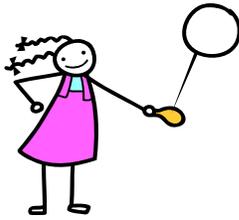


# Healthy Start For Life



For Preschool and Daycare  
Providers

Activities for Promoting Active Living for  
Young Children



# Healthy Start for Life

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# Healthy Start for Life

## Goals and Objectives

Research indicates that regular physical activity provides many short and long-term health and development benefits to toddlers and preschoolers.

Healthy Start for Life is rich in resources, which will:

- Help parents and childcare providers learn more about the nutrition and physical activity needs of preschoolers
- Suggest activities that promote positive attitudes towards healthy eating and active living
- Provide strategies to help tackle common preschool feeding issues, plan meals, and keep preschoolers active
- Help prevent childhood obesity, diabetes and other health problems in later life.

Healthy Start for Life, Activities Promotion, Healthy Eating and Active Living for Young Children was developed through a partnership of Vancouver Coastal Health, North Shore Community Resources – Child Care Resource Program and Dietitians of Canada. Funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

*Margaret Broughton, MSc, RD, Community Nutritionist, Vancouver Coastal Health created the manual and activity box. Dawn Lavender provided the desk-top publishing. Betty Holmes, RD, Community Nutritionist coordinated the project.*

October, 2005





## Healthy Start for Life Box

### **Build Your Own Box of Active Living Tools**

These are some of the resources in the Preschool Physical Activity Kit at North Shore Community Resources – Child Care Resource Program in North Vancouver. The kit is available for loan.

Where to Purchase	Item	Cost
Wintergreen	Activity Scarves	\$29.95
Ontario Best Start	Have a Ball Manual	\$32.00
BC Playthings	Skipping Rope	\$2.99 each
Chapters.Indigo	Moving and Learning	\$32.33
	Wiggles Wiggle Time	\$19.99
	The Jump Rope Book	\$8.99
	Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes	\$22.99



# Healthy Start for Life Box

## Activities for Promoting Healthy Active Living Habits For Young Children Evaluation

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Please write down the name of the activity you used and then rate its overall effectiveness. In the third column, note any comments or suggestions you have for improvements.

Activity	Rating					Comments
	very effective 1	2	3	4	not effective 5	
	very effective 1	2	3	4	not effective 5	
	very effective 1	2	3	4	not effective 5	
	very effective 1	2	3	4	not effective 5	
	very effective 1	2	3	4	not effective 5	
	very effective 1	2	3	4	not effective 5	

1. Was the format of this kit easy to understand and use?      Yes      No  
Please give suggestions for improvement: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you have any suggestions for activities or resources that should be added to this kit?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please mail or fax this form to Margaret Broughton, Community Nutritionist, West Community Health Centre, 990 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, West Vancouver, BC V7V 4C2, Fax: 604-990-6262

## **Section 1.0**

# **The Importance of Physical Activity**

**(For more information visit this website:**

**[www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/hcomm/nal/Toddlers-Preschoolers/DaycareToolkit.pdf](http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/hcomm/nal/Toddlers-Preschoolers/DaycareToolkit.pdf)**)

Insert: Pages 5-10 inclusive, pages 15-39 inclusive.  
DaycareToolkit.pdf

Website: [www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/hecomm/nal/Toddlers-Preschoolers/DaycareToolkit.pdf](http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/hecomm/nal/Toddlers-Preschoolers/DaycareToolkit.pdf)

## **Section 2.0**

# **'Have a Ball' A Toolkit for Physical Activity and the Early Years**

**(For more information visit this website:  
[www.beststart.org](http://www.beststart.org))**

Insert: No electronic copy of "Have a ball! Title page

Page 1, 2 and 7 used in this manual  
What\_research\_says.pdf

Pages 4-10 inclusive used in this manual.  
Factsheets\_parents.pdf

Website [www.beststart.org](http://www.beststart.org)

## **Section 3.0**

### **Great Ideas for Great Balls of Fun!**

(For more information visit this website:

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

Insert: Great Ideas  
Great\_ideas.pdf

Have a Ball ..... with a Ball!  
Haveaballwithaball.pdf

Website: [www.beststart.org](http://www.beststart.org)

## **Section 4.0**

# **Healthy Start for Life**

**(For more information visit this website:**

**[www.dietitians.ca/healthystart](http://www.dietitians.ca/healthystart)**

Insert: Healthy Start for Life Keeping Active Together Planner  
Active\_Living\_Planner.pdf

Website: [www.dietitians.ca/healthystart](http://www.dietitians.ca/healthystart)

## **Section 5.0**

### **Parachute Play**

**(For more information visit this website:**

**[www.cfc-efc.ca](http://www.cfc-efc.ca))**



## Parachute Play

by Gail Szautner

A parachute is a wonderful addition to the play equipment in any child care centre. Beautiful and sometimes calming, a parachute can create soft, whispering sounds or loud, rippling noises, depending on how quickly it is moved. Parachutes are usually made of brightly coloured, lightweight nylon and are equipped with strong, reinforced handholds.



Why incorporate parachute play into your program? Because parachute games encourage cooperative, non-competitive play and reinforce turn-taking and sharing. While most gross motor activities for young children develop muscles in the lower body more than the upper torso, parachutes strengthen primarily shoulder, arm and hand muscles. When children work together to make the parachute billow, they also refine perceptual motor skills and develop a sense of rhythm. Language activities can also be incorporated into most parachute games. Parachutes are a lot of fun for both children and adults to play with, especially in large, grassy areas in the summertime. The opportunities to encourage children's overall development with this exciting activity make it an ideal choice for early childhood programming. Parachutes can be purchased from athletic supply warehouses, early childhood suppliers and army surplus stores (although the latter will be less colourful).

Here are some suggestions for parachute games:

**See-Saw Pull** -- From a sitting position, have the children pull the chute back and forth in a see- sawing motion.

**Make Waves** -- While gripping the parachute, everyone moves their arms up and down to make small and large waves.

**Ball Roll** -- Have the children try to roll balls into the hole in the centre of the parachute.

**Chute Lift** -- Ask the children to lift the parachute high over their heads and down again. Talk about the soft sounds and breezes that are created. Move the parachute faster and notice the different effects.

**Mushroom** -- From a standing position, lift the parachute from the ground to waist height, counting one (lift) and two (lift). On three (lift), have everyone raise the parachute high over their heads and then crouch down, pulling the parachute tightly behind them. A mushroom effect is created as the parachute settles.

**Parachute Tag** -- Lift the parachute high overhead. Call one child's name and have her run (skip, hop, twirl or crawl) to the other side before the parachute comes down and tags her.

**One Hand Run** -- Have each child hold the parachute with one hand, extending the opposite arm out for balance. Run around in one direction, then change and run around in the other direction. A variation would be to use music as the cue for changing direction (i.e. direction can be changed every time the music stops).

**Parachute Run** -- Have the children take turns running on the parachute as it lies on the ground, while the other children make waves. See how long the children can manoeuvre on the waves before falling down. The length of turns can be determined by songs that the children choose to sing (i.e. everyone's turn lasts the length of one song).

*Gail Szautner is the director of the Children's Choice Child Care Cooperative in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.*

This article first appeared in *Interaction* published by the Canadian Child Care Federation, Summer, 1994.



Posted by the [Canadian Child Care Federation](#), September 1996.

## **Section 6.0**

### **Active Play**

**(For more information visit this website:**

**[www.cfc-efc.ca](http://www.cfc-efc.ca))**



## ACTIVE PLAY

Growing children seem to have an almost endless capacity for active play, and, of course, this physical activity is important in the development of co-ordination and the growth of large muscles. Choose active play toys with the child's age, size and abilities in mind, and look for products that are rustproof, smoothly finished, sturdy and well-balanced. Not only will such toys promote physical growth; they'll also encourage social interaction and imaginative activity.

For toys that are especially effective in sparking all three areas of development, you might want to look at the growing number of plastic play equipment sets marketed by toy manufacturers. These brightly coloured units are tough enough to withstand every bit of the active and imaginative play they invite, from one child alone or a group of kids together. No anchorage of any type is required to ensure their stability, and this factor, coupled with their lightweight modular plastic construction, makes them extremely portable. In most cases, the kids themselves can shift the unit from place to place outside. Moreover, this portability provides another big plus; with the approach of winter, all but the very largest of these sets can be moved indoors, with very little disassembly, to extend and even expand their play potential. Of course, you'll want to scrub away the summer's dust and hose away any insects which may have taken up residence in corners or hollow support pieces! Chlorine bleach rids plastic of unpleasant odours. If you decide to move a large piece of play equipment indoors for the winter, make sure you have an even larger play space available, with adequate head room and a carpeted floor surface, several layers thick if possible. Expect to supervise play even more closely indoors than you do outside to ensure safe fun. We're sure you'll be pleased with the way in which these large play units provide an outlet not only for excess physical energy but for flights of imaginative fancy as well.

Other toys encourage active indoor play for older children. A ping-pong set, yo-yos, and foam balls for basketball, golf, or just throw-and-catch can provide great fun for most children and can be used without undue threat to furniture and furnishings as long as some simple rules for appropriate behaviour are followed. And, once spring rolls around again, remember to reintroduce those traditional items that are available year after year - skipping ropes, marbles, jacks, and sidewalk chalk for hopscotch.

Sports toys are useful for children not yet ready for "the real thing". Once again, it is important to take into account the child's skill level, weight and height, and chose items that function like the professional equipment they resemble.

A safe, uncluttered environment is important for all active play, whether indoors or out. For little ones, you will want to check the back yard periodically for sharp sticks, larger stones, abandoned gardening tools, and any litter that may have accumulated. Make sure that kites are flown in wide open spaces well away from hydro lines. Knee and elbow pads and/or helmets are recommended for roller skaters, skate boarders and cyclists.



Posted by: [the Canadian Toy Testing Council](#), September 1996.

## **Section 7.0**

# **Moving and Growing: Exercises and Activities for Two, Three and Four-Year Olds**

(For more information visit this website:  
[www.cfc-efc.ca](http://www.cfc-efc.ca))



## MOVING and GROWING: Exercises and Activities for Two, Three and Four year olds.

### MOTOR DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

To increase body awareness, ask your child to

- name his body parts
- lift, hide, or move different parts of his body; melt like an ice cream cone; pop like popcorn;
- move body parts in different ways - waving, shaking, swimming, tapping, rubbing, patting, pointing, wiggling, clapping, grasping; for example, swing and sway arms
- like an elephant's trunk or shake tail like a wet dog;
- place an object (bean bag, fluff ball, paper ball) between his feet or hands; under his body;
- Follow actions of the verse "Me"

## **Me**

*Two little eyes  
That open and close  
Two little ears but just one nose  
Two little shoulders  
One on each side.*

*Two little arms to open wide  
Two little hands  
Busy all day  
Two elbows that bend  
They're made that way.*

*Two little feet so sturdy and strong  
And two little legs  
That run all day long.*

## **What Can Body Parts Do?**

Have your child stand in front of you and imitate your movements. Select a part of your body to exercise. For example, talk about the actions feet can do.; feet can wiggle, curl and stretch, tip toe, stamp, kick, tap, circle, walk, run, hop, skip or, better still, can even dance around the room.

## **Action Poems**

Have your child perform the movements as directed by these poems. Read the poem aloud, talk about the words and actions, then read again while performing.

Memorizing the poem makes it more fun.

Thumper, bumper,	Bouncing, bouncing,
Rough and tough,	up and down
Crasher, smasher	Bouncing, bouncing,
That's enough!	turn around
Lightly, sprightly,	Bouncing, bouncing,
Soft as mice	be a clown
Creeping, sleeping...	Bouncing, bouncing,
That's nice!	hit the ground!

## Over and Under

You can do these activities with your child encouraging, "over" and "under" movements. After your child does the activity, reverse roles.

For example,

- Adult lies on floor. Child walks over adult. Reverse roles. Child lies on floor, adult walks over child.
- Adult balances on hands and feet facing floor. Child crawls under the bridge made by adult's body. Reverse roles. This is an interesting challenge for the adults. Try your best!
- Adult stands. Child crawls through legs. Adult's turn!
- Adult sits on floor with legs apart and straight. Child jumps over one leg and then the other leg. Reverse roles.
- Adult holds rod or wooden dowel at a low height. Child jumps or hops over the rod. Next!

Explore "over" and "under" by providing ropes, poles, hoops, blankets, and climbing equipment that enable your child to walk, run, climb and jump "over" and "under."

## Zoo Loo

Move your bodies to imitate animals' movements. Musical accompaniment from percussion instruments or records will stimulate you to

- slither along the ground like a snake;
- stomp along like a big black bear;
- hop like a kangaroo that never stops;
- crawl along like a slow old turtle carrying his heavy house on his back;
- fly like a bird so high in the sky;
- climb like a monkey up in a tree;
- gallop like a horse crossing in a field.

## Pathways

Create pathways with obstacles such as cones and chairs that your child can follow by walking, running, or steering a riding toy. Masking tape and rope pathways also provide challenges. Tape a pathway in a straight, angular, or curved pattern. Encourage your child to move, steer a riding toy, or push an object along the selected pathway.

# YOU and ME 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.

**Note:** This is a good coordination exercise and excellent lead in to jumping jacks.

## Rocking Chair

To strengthen abdomen, legs, and arms and increase balance.

**Position:** Sit on seats with your legs bent and your hands out to the side for balance.

**Action:** Tuck your legs into your bodies, wrap your arms around them, feet off the floor and rock forward, backward, side to side.

# GAMES

## \* Active Games for Two or Three of You

### Shuttle Race

Place two boxes 3 metres 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.

### Sweep

Place the open end of a box towards the starting point 3 metres away. Give your child a broom or hockey stick to sweep or hit a ball or similar object into the box. Repeat several times.

### Bean Bag Hit

Standing facing each other 3 metres apart. Place a large beach ball in the center between you and your child. Each person has a bean bag and tries to move the ball by throwing the bean bag at it to the other person's side.

### Magic Carpet Ride

Child grasps sides of a gym mat, towel, or piece of thick plastic, while sitting in the middle of the mat. You pull the carpet around the area. This works best on a tile floor. You can also hold child by the feet if he lies down and legs are in the air.

**Note:** This game can be varied to include several children with one child sitting in middle of mat and other children holding side and moving mat around. Adult assistance will be needed.

## Long, Long, Long Jump

The object of the game is to jump together as far as you can. You broad jump first. Your child starts where your heels landed and broad jumps. Continue taking turns. How far can you jump working together?

## Simon Says

Stand facing each other. Your child says "Simon says do this" and performs an action. Adult imitates. However, if your child says "Do this" you must not imitate action. If you do, you change roles.

## \* Passive Games for Two or Three of You

### Number Shapes

To stretch muscles, increase balance and strengthen parts of the body, have your child form number shapes with his body. Diagram of these figures should be made to give visual clues. Attach examples to the floor or hold up for your child to view. The four-year old child does not know what they look like in various shapes so let him look in front of a large mirror so he can make his body the same shapes as in the picture.



- [Exercises and Activities for the First Two Years](#)
- [Exercises and Activities for Five and Six year olds](#)

This article was published by the Canadian Institute of Child Health and Government of Canada - Fitness and Amateur Sport.



Posted by the [Canadian Institute of Child Health](#).

Insert