

Energy Balance

Early Childhood Health Lesson



Objective: Learn the concept of balancing the amount of energy consumed and the energy used.

WE CAN! MESSAGES

Engage in 60 min. moderate activity on most, preferably all, days of the week.
Reduce sedentary activity.
Limit screen time to less than 2 hours daily.
Decrease intake of WHOA and SLOW foods.
Increase intake of GO foods.

NATIONAL PRE-K–2ND GRADE HEALTH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Identify that healthy behaviors impact personal health.
Demonstrate healthy practices and behaviors to maintain or improve personal health.

ADULT MESSAGE

Increase families daily physical activity and intake of GO foods, while reducing screen time and the intake of SLOW and WHOA foods.

DEVELOPING PRESCHOOL READINESS SKILLS

Learn body awareness, gross motor development, listening skills, and directionality.

PROGRAM CONTENT

Themed lesson plans incorporating art, literacy, movement and music support a multi-disciplinary approach to teaching young children and adults.
Program Length: 70 minutes

INTRODUCTION/DISCUSSION

Materials: Name stickers, markers

Welcome families with name stickers and “hello” song. Begin by asking families why everyone needs to eat. Once families answer that food gives our body nutrients and energy, ask families what foods they like to eat to get their nutrients and energy. Then ask families to describe how they use their energy (physical activity movement should be encouraged, but mention that energy is used throughout the day, even during sleep). Begin to talk about how WHOA foods have a lot of energy (reminding adults that energy is just another word for calories) and that when we eat WHOA foods, our body has a lot of energy to use. What happens if we can’t use all the energy? **Our bodies are smart and will store the energy.** For adults, explain that this is how bodies gain weight, **storing the extra energy as fat.** Children need calories to help them grow and learn, but they should be eating nutrient-rich foods to gain those calories.

The main communication message is that we should balance the Energy IN (calories we consume) with the Energy OUT (calories you burn to keep your body going and carry out your activities). Emphasize that physical activity helps to maintain a healthy weight and is also very important for building heart, bone, and muscle strength.

Visual References: Chart with GO, SLOW, and WHOA foods as images and chart with text. Chart with images of physical activity options and suggestions.

Key Teaching Methods

- Increase daily GO food/drink intake, while decreasing SLOW and WHOA food/drink intake.
- Increase physical activity.
- Decrease drinking regular soda and juice drinks, while increasing water and fat-free or low-fat milk intake.

ART ACTIVITY: SEESAW COLLAGE

To help reinforce the concept of energy balance, children will select images of their favorite physical activities to glue on one side of a seesaw graphic and then select healthy GO foods to place on the other side.

Materials: Seesaw graphic, masking tape, glue, images of physical activities, and GO foods.

Set-up: Tape copy of seesaw graphic at each setting. In the middle of the table, separate piles of physical activities images and GO food images. Have children select images from each pile. Help families discuss how to balance their choices on the seesaw.

Clean up: Give children a 5 minute warning. Always let children know that you are transitioning and ending the project soon. After the warning, sing a clean-up song to focus children and encourage participation in the clean-up process. One example: "Clean up, clean up one, two, three. I'll help you and you help me. Clean up, clean up one, two, three. I'll help you and you help me."

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: MOVEMENT/MUSIC

Weekly Structure: Warm-up, Active Play Time, Movement/Music (song/activity), Cool-down. Children should do at least 60 minutes (1 hour) or more of physical activity each day.

Warm-up:

Marching Movement Song

We're marching, marching, marching
We're marching in a circle
We're marching, marching, marching until it's time to stop!
We're jumping, jumping, jumping
We're jumping in a circle,
We're jumping, jumping, jumping until it's time to stop!
(add hopping, stomping, running, tiptoeing, etc.)

In and Out Circle Song

Let's go in and in and in
And out and out and out
And in and in and in and in
And out and out and out!





Active Play Time:

Do 5 or 10 minutes of each exercise

- Playing Tag
- Hopscotch
- Jumping Jacks
- Jumping (one foot, together then apart, front to back)

Movement/Music: Family Balance Challenges

Children will learn balance and develop coordination skills as they play Simon Says and Animal Freeze Dance.

Simon Says: Families will be led through a series of poses and body positions that help highlight balance.

Animal Freeze Dance: When the music plays, families will hop like a bunny, swing like a monkey, tiptoe like a giraffe. When the music stops, families will be asked to hold or balance in their positions.

Cool-down:

It is important for the body to cool down gradually.

- Breathing—Place hands on belly or lower back. Inhale and fill the lungs. Feel the abdomen and ribs inflate. Exhale and empty the lungs. Feel the chest and abdomen relax.
- Yoga Moves
 - Downward Dog—Have the children make a bridge with their bodies. From here you can kick one leg up at a time and start to stretch body long.
 - Tree Pose—Have the children balance on one leg, bending their other leg at a 90 degree angle, stretching their hands above their heads.
 - The Horse—Stand in place for 30 seconds with a wide stance and knees bent (like a halfway down squat position).

GROUP STORYTIME

Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andrede

From Head to Toe by Eric Carle

Elephants Cannot Dance! by Mo Willems

HEALTHY SNACK

Offer sliced apples with low-fat yogurt and cinnamon dip. An educator-led discussion will give children and adults the opportunity to discuss strategies for incorporating GO food snack choices into their daily diet while increasing their physical activity.

Encourage children to wash hands with soap and warm water before eating snack. **Hand Washing Strategy:** Wash hands for 20 seconds to fight off all germs and then rinse well under running water. Sing the ABC Song while you wash.

REVIEW FAMILY HANDOUT

Goal: Add 10 minutes of physical activity and one GO food every day.

Fact of the Week: Added sugars in foods and drinks provide extra calories, but no additional nutrients.

At-Home Strategies:

- Eat a low-fat, high-fiber breakfast—it may make you less hungry later in the day.
- Add a few minutes of physical activity whenever you can!
- Decrease intake of WHOA and SLOW.
- Increase intake of GO foods.
- Ask stores to sell more GO foods.
- Set screen time limits for the whole family. More importantly, enforce the rule!

LESSON VISUALS

- Energy Balance Seesaw image
- Three pages of low and high energy activity images
- Page of fruit and vegetable images

