

# Move to the Beat

## Early Childhood Health Lesson



**Objective:** Learn how important daily physical activity is for maintaining health.

### **WE CAN! MESSAGES**

Kids should engage in at least 60 minutes or more of moderate-to-vigorous activity each day.  
Reduce sedentary activity.  
Limit screen time to less than 2 hours daily.

### **NATIONAL PRE-K–2ND GRADE HEALTH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

Identify that healthy behaviors impact personal health.

### **ADULT MESSAGE**

To maintain a healthy weight, being physically active is just as important as eating right.

### **DEVELOPING PRESCHOOL READINESS SKILLS**

It is important for children to develop listening and counting skills, build gross motor skills, and body awareness.

### **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. Lead families in hand-clapping rhythms that imitate various heartbeats. Ask families if they have ever heard this beat inside their own body. If yes, ask what families think is making that beat. If no, have children run around the room and stop suddenly, close their eyes and place a hand on their chest. Children should be able to feel their heart beating. Explain to families how the heart is a part of your body that never stops (not even during sleep). The heart is a muscle that needs to be kept strong and healthy; how can we do that? We can move our bodies every day.

**Visual References:** Energy Meter chart, images of actual-size adult heart, child heart and the circulatory system, and fun family activities that exercise the heart muscle.

### **Key Teaching Messages**

- Daily physical activity improves lung capacity, bone density, muscle strength, brain function, heart strength, and blood vessels while also lowering stress levels and reducing the risk of developing obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.

- Being active every day is good for your body!
- High-fat and high-calorie foods that do not have beneficial nutrients can increase a person's body weight, increasing their risk of developing high blood pressure, diabetes, and other conditions.

### ART ACTIVITY: HEART DRUMS

Each parent and child will receive a drum to decorate. Using glue sticks and various collage materials, each unique drum will help children connect drum beats to healthy heartbeats in their body.

**Materials:** Various containers for drums (coffee cans, plastic containers, shoe boxes), glue sticks, collage materials, fabric squares, and textured paper.

**Set-up:** Place a drum (i.e., shoe box, coffee can, or plastic containers) and glue stick at each seat. In the center of each table place one to two handfuls of the materials (ribbons, feathers, felt, pipe cleaners, and pom-poms, etc.). They can be placed in piles or spread across the table. Have a marker in hand to write the children's names on their artwork when they are finished. Designate an area for projects to dry.

**Clean-up:** Give children a 5 minute warning. Always let children know that you will be 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:

Educators should continually highlight how much fun the families are having as they move together. Educators discuss strategies to reduce screen time and incorporate more activities for families throughout the day.

**Drum Circle:** Educators and children try out a variety of slow and fast beats on their drums to illustrate how heart rates can change. Then educators and children stand and repeat various beats with their feet and hands. Songs: I've Been Working on the Railroad and Bingo.

**Drum Beat Dance:** Educators and parents tap out a variety of slow and fast beats on the drums while the children dance to the rhythms. Educators encourage children to imitate large and small animal movements. Examples: slide like a snake, fly like a bird, hop like a kangaroo, swim like a fish, climb like a bear.

**Heart Beat:** Have children run in place for twenty seconds, then place their right hand over their heart to feel their increased heartbeat. Then have children lie down on floor and remain quiet while listening to their heartbeat return to a normal rhythm.

**Songs:** My Heart, I Love You (See next page)

Educators stress the **We Can!** message: Be active and have fun!

### 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

*Thump, Thump, Rat-a-Tat-Tat* by Gene Baer

*The Animal Boogie* by Debbie Harter

*From Head to Toe* by Eric Carle

### HEALTHY SNACK

Offer healthy mini-sandwiches (e.g., whole wheat crackers, low-fat cream cheese, and bananas). An educator-led discussion will give children and adults the opportunity to learn about different ways to do physical activities and incorporate them during their day.

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:** 60 minutes (1 hour or more) of daily activity!

**Bonus:** Replace three WHOA foods with three GO foods.

**Fact of the Week:** Physical activity habits established in childhood may last a lifetime.

### At-Home Strategies:

- Walk to school, walk to work, and take the stairs.
- Listen to music and dance around the house.
- Substitute fried foods with fresh, steamed, roasted, grilled, baked, or boiled foods.
- Cook with vegetable oil instead of butter, margarine, or lard.
- You don't have to meet your daily physical activity goal all at once. Many little activities add up!
- Reduce screen time to increase activity time!

## SONGS

### My Heart

My heart is a muscle that's pumpin' blood,  
Pumpin' blood, pumpin' blood  
My heart is a muscle that's pumpin' blood  
To make my body healthy.

### I Love You

I love you, You love me.  
We're a happy family.  
With a great big hug and a kiss from me to you.  
Won't you say you love me too?



## LESSON VISUALS

- Human Heart
- Body outline with heart
- Low, moderate, and high activity images

