

EDUCATOR'S

WORKBOOK

SCHOOL MILIEU



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Slides



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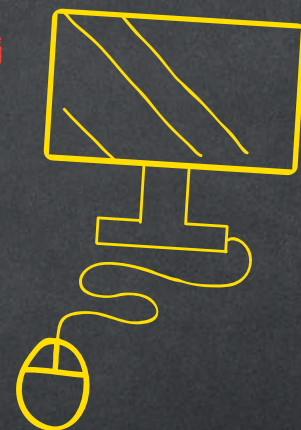




section 1



Training
Presentation
Slides



SECTION

1



MOTOR DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ACTIVE PLAY: TRAINING SESSION



OBJECTIVE OF THE TRAINING SESSION

The objective of the training session is to change current perceptions of **movement** and its impact on the child's learning process.

This training session provides important tools for educators. It will help them provide children with more opportunities to **initiate active play** and experience a variety of fun activities.



MODULE 1

- Active play to encourage optimal overall development
- Role of the educator in providing children with more opportunities to move
- Barriers and facilitators to active play
- Childhood stress and risk during active play
- Passion and quality of the learning environment
- Rules and children's behaviour
- Ways to be active



Lined writing area for notes.



THE IMPORTANCE OF DAYCARE

- Children spend an average of 20 to 25 hours per week in daycare.
- A school daycare is the only place that can get so many children to move at the same time for such a long period of time.



ARE CHILDREN RESTLESS?

Children between the ages of 5 and 17 don't do enough physical activity on a daily basis for optimal development.

Inactivity is associated with these outcomes:

- decrease in physical fitness levels
- low self-esteem
- poor academic results
- obesity
- aggressiveness



MOVING FOR PROPER DEVELOPMENT



Some barriers that prevent children from moving:

- Hectic pace of family life
- More time spent at work, less time spent with the family
- Ever-presence and increased number of devices in different areas of life
- Overscheduled days with little physical activity
- Obsession with safety and zero-tolerance to risk



Between 1981 and 1997, **child-initiated active play** has dropped by 25%, and a marked increase has been observed in time spent on **guided sedentary activities**.

Rules, encadrements and routines prevent me from moving the way I want to!"



The most effective way for children to develop to their full potential is through play, and especially through active play initiated by the child.

ACTIVE PLAY

Ideally, the children's day should include a mix of structured play and child-initiated active play (spontaneous games). Educators make this possible and help children to improve continuously. The educators are the directors, and the children are the main actors!



Elements of well being associated with physical activity and sports among young people



Kino Québec

Québec

IMPORTANCE OF ACTIVE PLAY OUTDOORS

Outdoor areas provide a variety of fun challenges.

Benefits:

- greater opportunity to burn off energy
- marked improvement in physical, language, cognitive and social skills
- prevention of myopia
- reduction in ADD symptoms
- better problem-solving skills
- improved stress management

CLIMBING ALLOWED

GENUINE ENTHUSIASM!



FIVE ELEMENTS OF A DEMOCRATIC AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

1

Sharing among educators/teachers and the children

2

Showcase the children's skills and strengths

3

Establish genuine relationships with the children

4

Support the children's play

5

Use a problem-solving approach to deal with conflicts



WORKSHOP 1a

BARRIERS AND FACILITATORS TO CHILD-INITIATED ACTIVE PLAY



STRESS BUILD-UP IN CHILDREN



I love challenges!
And taking risks
allows me to develop!

What can children do to burn all the energy that builds up throughout the day?

"Overprotection makes children more susceptible to stress. When children are overprotected, they are rarely exposed to new experiences and unpredictable events." [translation]
"Le stress sous la loupe" in Naitre et grandir

According to Dr. Pellis, "... the epidemic of attention-deficit disorders seen in children today is due in part to the increasingly rigid environment we are asking them to function in." [translation]

- From *Perdu sans la nature*,
F. Cardinal.



RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH ACTIVE PLAY

Sometimes I get hurt when playing, but that's ok. I learn from what happened and start over!



Active play involving a certain amount of risk doesn't necessarily mean exposing children to potential danger.

"There's a difference between protecting and overprotecting. Protecting means making sure the environment is safe. Overprotecting means stopping children from experiencing things because we're afraid they'll get hurt." [translation]

Monique Dubuc, *Naitre et grandir* magazine



PASSION AND QUALITY OF THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Four factors must be present for children to become passionate about physical activity:

1. Create an atmosphere of respect.
2. Encourage children to experience constructive emotions.
3. Suggest challenges that are within reach so participants can enter a state of Flow.
4. Encourage each person to take part in an activity for fun and satisfaction.

The message children receive must be consistent with what the staff members and administration are doing.



MODULE 2

- Review of Module 1
- Impact of motor skills on learning experiences
- Recommendations concerning active time and intensity
- Daycare schedules: what can we improve?
- Analysis of learning environments
- Parents' cooperation: available tools
- Ways to increase active play



FOLLOW-UP TO MODULE 1

- Action Plan (Workshop 1b)
- Active Play in a Small Area (Tool 2)
 - Analysis of Methods and Actions
- Materials Available in the Learning Environment (Tool 3a)
 - Questionnaire on Materials Available in the Learning Environment (Tool 3b)
 - List of Materials Promoting Active Play (Tool 3c)

ANALYSIS OF LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS



Physical environment:

What is available?

Sociocultural environment:

Which norms and beliefs are conveyed?

Political environment:

Which policies and rules apply?

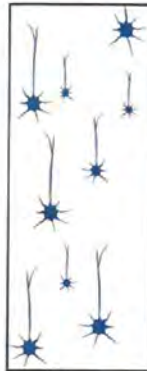
Economic environment: How much does it cost?

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FIVE ASPECTS OF OVERALL CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND THE SIX COMPETENCIES OF THE PRESCHOOL EDUCATION PROGRAM



WHAT IS MOTOR DEVELOPMENT?

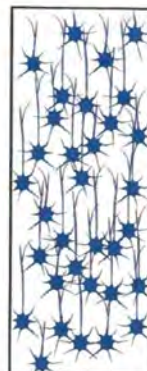
By the age of five, the brain has reached 95% of its adult size.



Birth



6 years



14-60 years

TYPES OF MOTOR SKILLS



Figure 4 - Types of motor skills

ESTABLISHING A PHYSICALLY ACTIVE LIFESTYLE



If children don't develop basic motor skills, they might feel inadequate when playing sports and give up.



OBSERVATIONS

Educators must be able to observe the following:

- The children's stages of fundamental motor skill acquisition
- Gross motor skills:
 - Is the child agile and confident?
 - Does the child have good posture?
- Motivation to take part in active play
- Level of participation in active play indoors and outdoors



Tool 4b - Workbook

A CHILD IS LIKE A TREE THAT GROWS.



What part of the tree needs to be the strongest?

The trunk!

A strong trunk helps to improve fine motor skills.



"Physical activity does not make one smarter, however, it puts the brains of those who learn in optimal conditions for learning."
John Ratey, 2011

JUMPING
ALLOWED

WHAT CHILDREN NEED BEFORE THEY CAN LEARN TO READ AND WRITE

- **Ocular motricity:** Proper eye coordination avoids skipping parts of words. It is important for eye movements to be coordinated with hand movements.
- **Muscle tone in the arm** at the level of the shoulder, elbow, wrist and fingers: muscle strength in the arm and shoulder is necessary on the side the child writes with.
- Proper **coordination-dissociation** of upper limbs: Fingers carry out complex and precise movements while the elbow extends slowly and the arm moves away from the body.
- **Inhibition:** Writing a word involves a series of accelerations and decelerations. The motion of the fingers is interrupted between words.



LEVEL OF INTENSITY OF ACTIVE PLAY

Sedentary or low-intensity activity:
requires little movement while awake.

Medium- or high-intensity activity:
high-energy activity that requires large movements and involves several parts of the body.



RECOMMENDATIONS

According to Bigras and colleagues, [translation] "When children initiate activities, the intensity of the activities increases, they take more steps, and their motor development improves."



ACTIVE TIME

CHILDREN 5 to 17 years:

- Total of at least 60 minutes of medium- to high-intensity activities each day
- Several hours of various low-intensity physical activities each day

SEDENTARY ACTIVITIES

- Minimal sitting for extended periods



RECOMMENDATION

SCREEN TIME

CHILDREN ages 5 to 11 years:

- Less than two hours a day in front of a screen

SCREEN TIME AND CHILDREN'S DRAWINGS



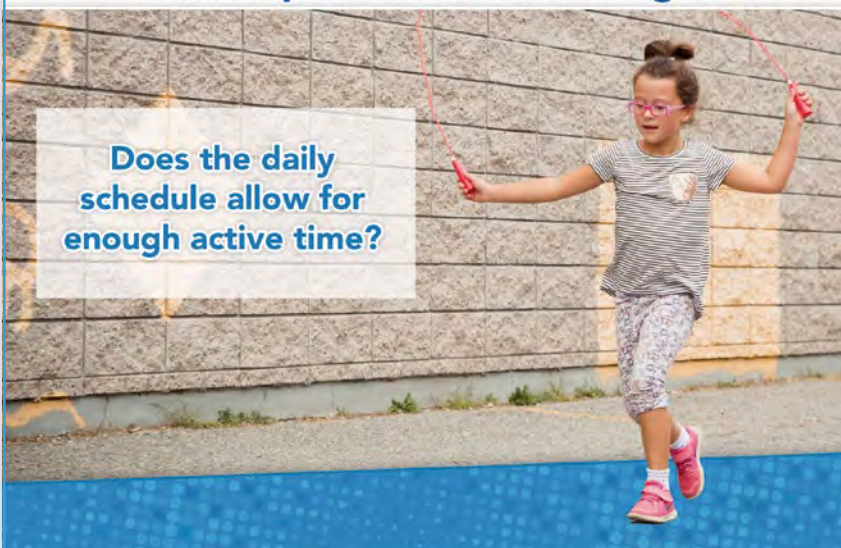
← Drawings by children 5–6 years of age who watch less than one hour of television each day.

Drawings by children 5–6 years of age who watch more than one hour of television each day. →



DAILY SCHEDULE Workshop 2a: What can we change?

Does the daily schedule allow for enough active time?



IDEAS FOR SIMPLE ACTIVE GAMES

- List of simple activities using readily available materials (tools in the workbook)
- Game summary cards

Developing my motor skills will help me sit still, tell my left from my right, and not confuse numbers and letters.



TOOLS TO HELP WITH PARENT COOPERATION

PLAY, EXPLORE, AND HAVE FUN
to develop strong foundations
that will last a lifetime brochure

Workbook

- Tool 9
– Communicating With Parents About Active Play
- Tool 10
– Information Letter to Parents



"A child is an unlimited human being who isn't worried about life. We, their parents, teach them to lose their spontaneity by encouraging them to plan and organize everything." [translation]

Pardus sans la nature
F. Cardinal



→ Section 2
Workshops



SECTION

2

OBJECTIVES

- Ascertain educators' opinions about increasing the amount of time spent each day on child-initiated active play.
- Become familiar with individual factors influencing educators' perceptions of increasing the amount of time dedicated each day to child-initiated active play.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Participants begin the workshop by identifying these factors on their own. Then they divide into small groups to discuss their ideas. This approach encourages discussion of different points of view and individual perceptions, and will allow educators to find solutions to barriers preventing children from being physically active due to restrictions in their environment.

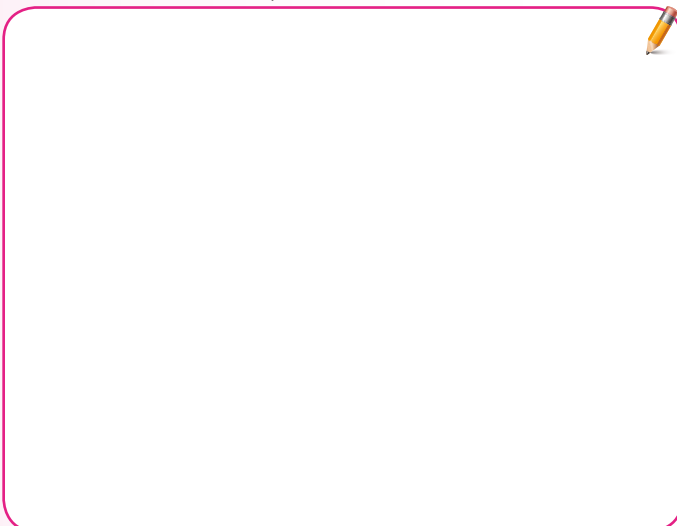
1. What are the "barriers" to child-initiated active play?



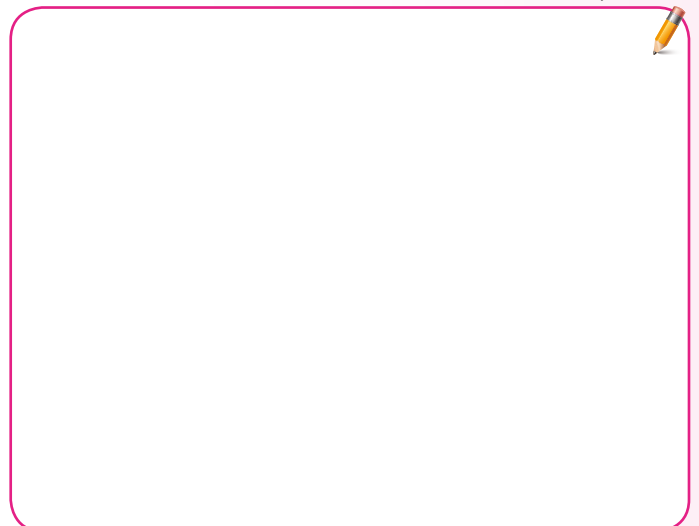
2. What are the "facilitators" to encourage child-initiated active play?



3. Which "facilitator" can you use more often to encourage child-initiated active play?



4. Which barriers are easy for you to overcome, and how can you make a difference? Provide examples.



OBJECTIVE

- Explain observations and find ways to implement ideas.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Working individually, choose an aspect from Workshop 1a that you can elaborate on and implement by setting a timeframe in which to get it done.

1. Explain your observations.



2. What would I like to continue doing (i.e., what is working well)?



3. What would I like to improve in order to have a bigger impact with the children?



4. What would I like to begin/try/innovate?



5. How can I achieve these goals, and what is the timeframe?



2a

DAILY SCHEDULE

ANALYSIS OF DAILY PLAN TO INCREASE ACTIVE TIME

OBJECTIVES

- Identify times during the day when the daily plan could influence the children’s active time.
- Identify times during the day when the children can play outside.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Working in small groups, analyze the times during the day when the children are more sedentary and when they are more active.
- Identify the children’s average level of activity at different times during the day by placing a checkmark in the appropriate circle.
- Identify potential solutions.

	SEDENTARY	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
BEFORE CLASS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TRANSITION	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DURING CLASS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
RECESS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TRANSITION	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
LUNCH	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DURING CLASS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
RECESS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
AFTER CLASS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:



DOES THE DAILY SCHEDULE ALLOW FOR ENOUGH ACTIVE TIME?

OBJECTIVES

- Determine the most effective actions for increasing the children's active time.
- Focus on long-term, sustainable actions.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Describe the ideas and methods you have implemented to increase the children's active time.
- Explain the impact of these actions on the experiences of the children and educators.

1. Describe the ideas and actions you have implemented regarding child-initiated active play. Overall, did you feel comfortable with this, or did you have trouble integrating active play into the daily schedule?



2. Provide an example of plans you have implemented to promote several aspects of the children's overall development (cognitive, social/moral, physical/motor, emotional and language development).



3. How did children react to these changes?



4. In general, what effects did you observe (e.g., among the children, team members, work environment)?



5. Based on what you have learned, are you now in a position to modify the structure of your activities and easily follow through on what you have put into place? If so, describe how.



RULES AND BEHAVIOURS EXPECTED FROM CHILDREN IN THE ENVIRONMENT

RULES THAT ENCOURAGE OR PREVENT ACTIVE PLAY

OBJECTIVE

- Clearly define the rules and instructions in your environment regarding active play.

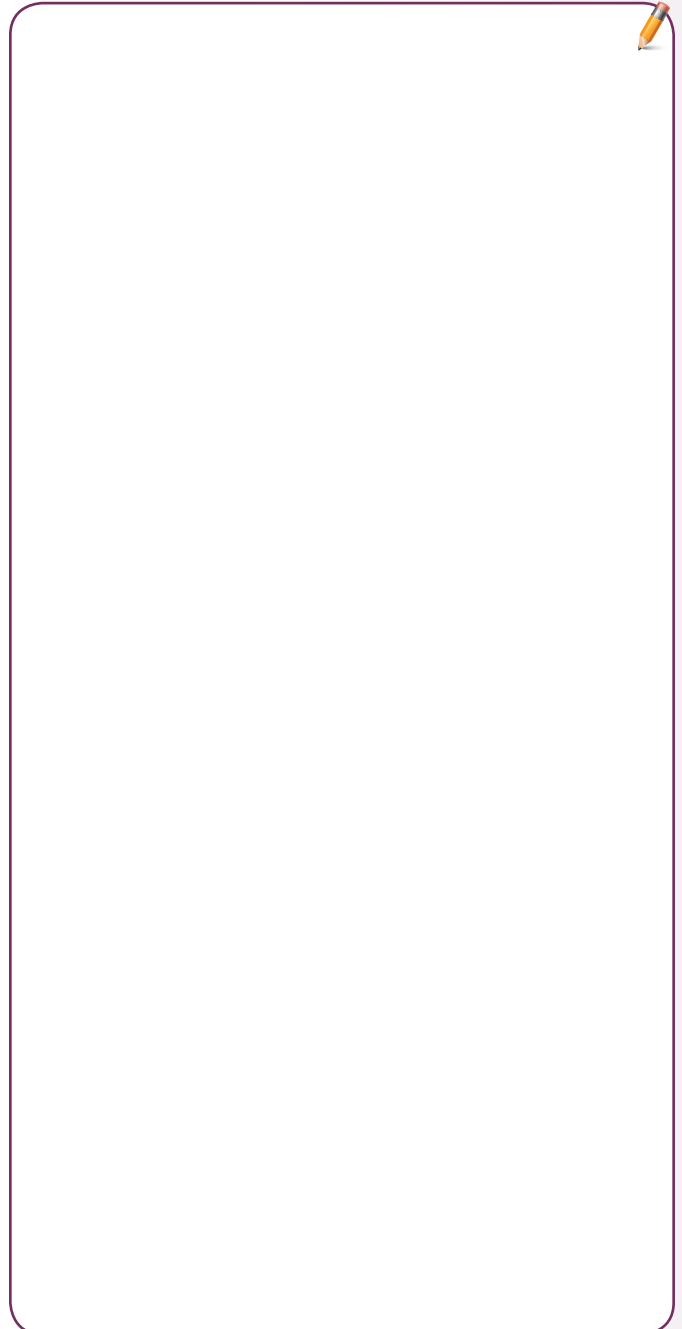
INSTRUCTIONS

- List the rules that encourage or prevent active play.
- Divide into small groups. Identify and discuss the beliefs, instructions, rules and adult interactions with the children in their environment.

Rules that encourage active play.



Rules that prevent active play.



3b

RULES AND BEHAVIOURS EXPECTED FROM CHILDREN
IN THE ENVIRONMENT

VIDEO ANALYSIS

OBJECTIVE

- Identify factors that impact children's active time.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Working in a large group, analyze and interpret key elements and identify connections with Workshop 3a.
- Watch the videos. From your perspective as an educator, write down what you observe about the children, the environment and how the activity is conducted.

Observations





Section 3



Tools



SECTION

3

QUESTIONNAIRE ON MOTOR DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ACTIVE PLAY

OBJECTIVE

- Identify tendencies in active play and motor development in the environment.

INSTRUCTION

- In the box beside each question, write down the corresponding number of points for each answer: **Never (0) - Rarely (1) - Often (2) - Always (3).**

Never (0) Rarely (1) Often (2) Always (3)

1. Do the children have an opportunity to take on small challenges (e.g., are they encouraged to step out of their comfort zone slightly)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. During free play, do the children have an opportunity to choose high-energy games?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Does the educator take part in physical activities with the children to set a good example and be a good role model?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Are both the girls and boys encouraged to be physically active and to choose high-energy activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Do the children have access to an outdoor area where they can safely play high-energy games?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Do the children have access to an indoor area that is big enough for them to play active games?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Is there enough space and equipment for all the children to play at the same time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Is the equipment safe, age-appropriate and adapted to the needs of the children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Are the children encouraged to use both sides of their body on a daily basis (e.g., when throwing, kicking or catching)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Are the children encouraged to play in different areas so they will be exposed to a variety of motor and sensory experiences?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Are the children allowed to run in your classroom and in other areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Can the children play at high-intensity levels only when the educator is directing the activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Are the children encouraged to participate in activities that develop their motor skills every day? (Add one point to each box that you check off.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Run	<input type="checkbox"/> Take giant steps	<input type="checkbox"/> Dribble	<input type="checkbox"/> Kick objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> Gallop	<input type="checkbox"/> Jump	<input type="checkbox"/> Strike objects	<input type="checkbox"/> Throw in different ways
	<input type="checkbox"/> Hop on one foot	<input type="checkbox"/> Take side steps	<input type="checkbox"/> Catch	<input type="checkbox"/> Keep their balance

Write down your total points here: _____ Refer to the conclusions below based on your results.

- Between 48 and 37 points:** The daily plan strongly encourages the children's active play and motor development.
- Between 36 and 25 points:** The daily plan generally encourages the children's active play and motor development.
- Between 24 and 13 points:** The daily plan does little to encourage the children's active play and motor development.
- Less than 12 points:** The daily plan does nothing to encourage the children's active play and motor development.

BACKGROUND

- It can be difficult to play outdoors every day because of the weather. What can the children do indoors when it is very cold, raining heavily or on very hot days?

OBJECTIVE

- Find simple, pleasant activities to increase active play indoors.

INSTRUCTION

- Educators undertake to use the strategies described below with the available space and equipment.

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Create a space in the middle or corner of the room where the children can play actively (e.g., temporarily move the tables and chairs out of the way to maximize space).
- Create an active daily routine. Include active time during your morning activity. For example, you can do toning exercises with the children (imitate a dog stretching, pedal your legs in the air, climb an imaginary ladder, sit and then stand up with arms above the head to touch the clouds, etc.).
- Prepare activities that you can do at any time. Make wait times, routines and transitions more active. For example, the children can walk like a crab on their way to the sink to wash their hands, hop on one leg around the table before sitting down to eat, etc.
- Avoid crowding the area where you are carrying out the activity.
- Use hallways and stairways safely.
- Include active play in your plan to develop a variety of motor skills (e.g., jumping, throwing, crawling, rolling).
- Use your imagination! You can transform any sedentary activity into active play (e.g., make a puzzle while stretched out on your stomach, sit under the tables to draw, paint a wall, draw while standing on one leg).
- You can be active too! Children learn a lot through imitation. When they see us moving, they want to move as well.
- The children can create an obstacle course indoors using objects in your environment.
- Dedicate one room to high-energy activities and another to more quiet activities.
- Dance to music.
- Give the children free time.
- Have fun while moving!
- Use an activity cube for ideas.
- Use several different strategies: Use gestures when reciting nursery rhymes, ask the children to act out the story you are telling, walk to the table on tiptoes, on their heels, using giant steps, backwards, etc.

ACTIVE PLAY IN A SMALL AREA

SIMPLE IDEAS FOR ACTIVE PLAY

TRANSITION
ACTIVITIES

- Move from place to place in different ways: on one foot, taking side steps, on all fours, hopping with feet together, following the lines on the floor, imitating an animal, at different speeds, etc.
- Include gestures when singing songs.
- Play "Simon Says."
- Give the children small challenges (e.g., pick up the toys on the floor and put them away as quickly as possible).
- During wait times: jump in place, stand on one leg, etc.

SANDBAGS

- Toss a sandbag into a bin or other type of container.
- Toss and catch a sandbag (individually or with another child).
- Hide several sandbags around the room and ask the children to find them.

Children love playing the same games over and over again, so you don't have to invent new ones every day!



HOOPS

- Make a train: The children stand in single file. Each child places a hoop around their waist. They must hold on to the hoop of the child in front of them.
- The children explore the hoops with their bodies. Ask the children to stand inside the hoop, outside the hoop, walk around the hoop, walk on the hoop, sit inside the hoop, jump inside the hoop, etc.
- Toss sandbags into a hoop.

SPONGES

- The children make sculptures using sponges (group activity).
- The children move around while balancing one or more sponges on their head, arms, back, while crawling on all fours, etc.
- Fill a bucket by wringing out sponges: Use one empty bucket and one filled with water. The children soak their sponges in the bucket filled with water and then wring them out in the other bucket, trying to fill it.
- Paint using sponges.
- Have snowball fights using sponges as snowballs and mats as shields. During the summer, the activity can be played outside using wet sponges.

SCARVES

- The children toss a scarf into the air and must sit down before, at the same time as or after the scarf falls to the ground.
- The children toss a scarf into the air and try to catch it using their head, back or another part of their body.
- The children make a tail with the scarf and try to catch another child's tail before someone catches theirs.
- Dance of the scarves: The children dance around as they toss their scarves into the air.

MATERIALS AVAILABLE IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

INVENTORY OF MATERIALS PROMOTING ACTIVE PLAY

OBJECTIVE

- Determine which materials are available in the learning environment to encourage active play.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Make a list of the materials in your classroom (small toys, mats, furniture, etc.) and in the yard.
- Write down its function and location, and include an image if possible.

Materials	Function	Location	Image

OBJECTIVE

- Determine the quality, quantity, availability and location of the materials to make them accessible and encourage their use during active play.

INSTRUCTION

- Answer the following questions after completing your inventory.

1. Are there enough materials to promote motor skill development for each child?

Yes No

2. Are the materials of good quality?

Yes No

3. Are the materials stimulating and age-appropriate?

Yes No

4. Can the educators and children easily access the materials?

Yes No

5. Do all educators know where the materials are located and what they can be used for?

Yes No

6. Is the storage system set up in a way that allows the children to find, use and put away the materials on their own?

Yes No

7. Is there a system in place for rotating the materials among the groups?

Yes No

8. Does each classroom have an area with no furniture and carpets so the children can use small materials and initiate active play?

Yes No

THE FOLLOWING LIST IS BASED ON FUNDAMENTAL MOTOR SKILLS:

Walk, run and move from place to place in different ways

Balls (several different sizes and textures), objects to push or pull, cones, rhythmic music, rope, blocks, inclined planes, floor balance beam, carpets of different thicknesses, chalk for drawing lines on the ground, jumping balls, skateboards, balance boards

Crawl or roll

Tunnel, table, chair, blanket, cylinder, soft carpet, bench, inclined plane (wedge-shaped cushion), outdoor play module

Jump

Carpet to absorb the impact, wall bars, step, hoop, bench, rope, small obstacles, trampoline, stickers for marking the ground

Climb

Chair, stairs, inclined plane (wedge-shaped cushion), ladder, wall bars, suspended rope, climbing wall, outdoor play module

Catch, throw, kick, strike

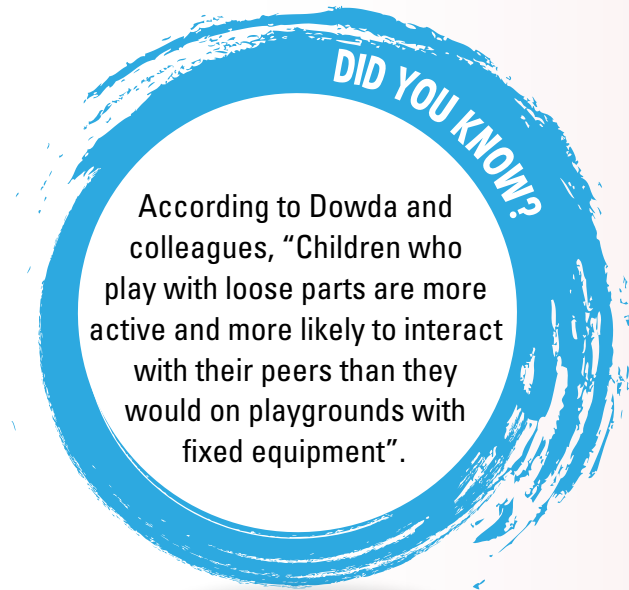
Ball, ring, scarf, hoop, target, basket, sandbag, sponge

This list is not exhaustive, and the materials listed can be used in many different ways.

FIXED VERSUS PORTABLE EQUIPMENT

Children and educators enjoy fixed play structures but tend to lose interest in them over time.

To increase the children's active time, a better investment would be to purchase small, portable materials, which the educator could offer to the children when needed. In this way, the children can be creative with the equipment, and it will hold their interest.



The simpler, the better!

Children don't need special equipment. It has to be attractive, available, safe and age-appropriate, and there must be enough for everyone.

THE THREE STAGES OF FUNDAMENTAL MOTOR SKILL ACQUISITION

OBJECTIVES

- Understand the stages of motor skill acquisition in children ages 0 to 9 years.
- Assess the motor skills of the group as a whole in order to implement opportunities for active play that will develop the children's motor skills.
- Offer age-appropriate activities and materials.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Generally observe the stages in which children in the group acquire fundamental motor skills.
- Create a favourable environment and opportunities for play adapted to the children's stages of development based on your observations.

Refer to the following tools:*

Tool No. 4a - Fundamental Motor Skill Development From 0 to 9 Years

Tool No. 4b - Characteristics of the Three Stages of Fundamental Motor Skill Acquisition

Tool No. 4c - Table of Fundamental Motor Skills

*The tools provided are not intended to help diagnose motor skill development or to compare children within the same group.



Recommendations for supporting children as they develop:

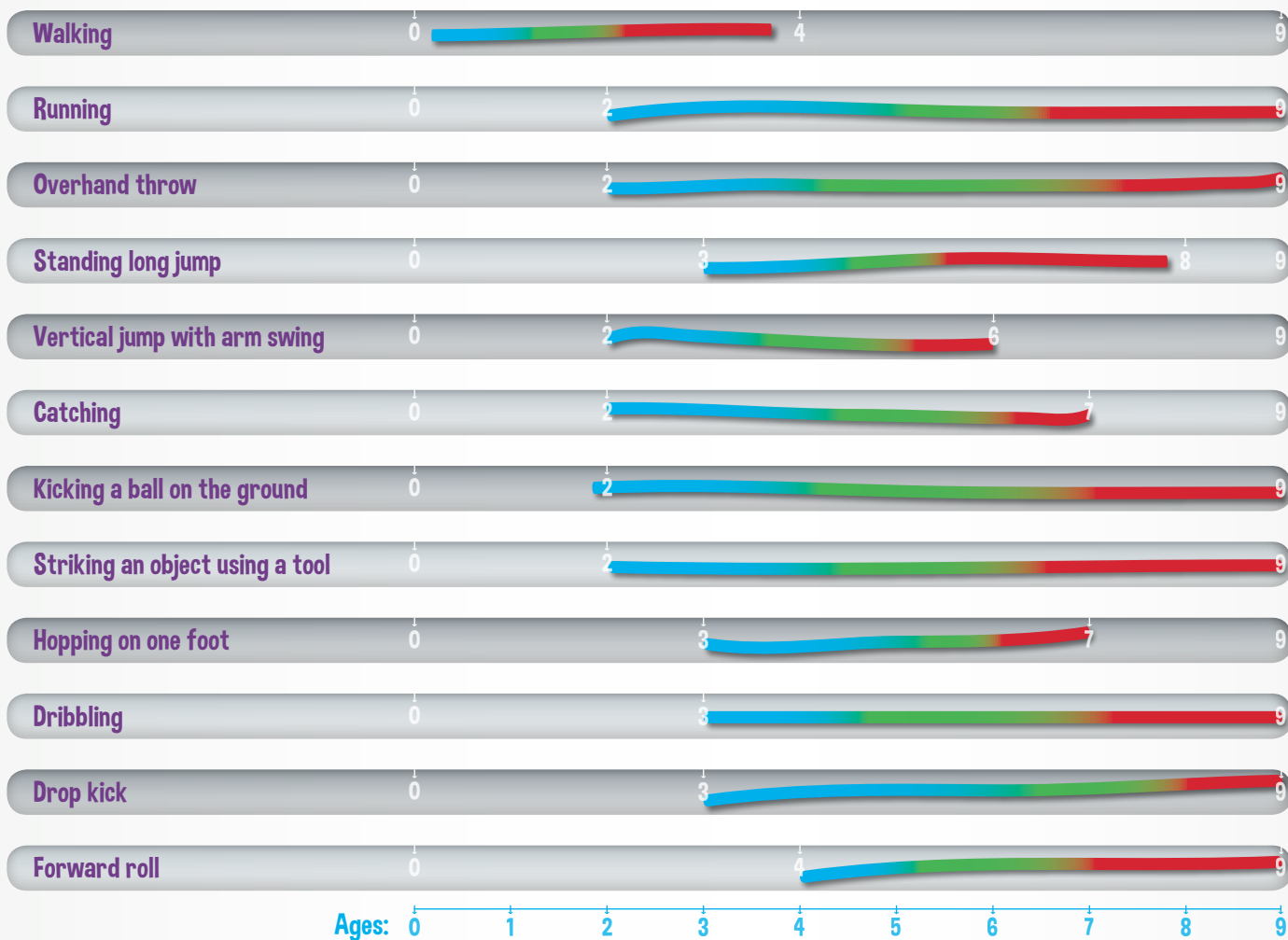
- Suggest activities based on the children's stages of motor skill development.
- Provide opportunities for the children to practice their skills (e.g., let them throw, jump, kick, hop on one foot, do forward and backward rolls).
- Offer a variety of stimulating and age-appropriate materials (e.g., balls of different sizes and textures).
- Provide an opportunity for the children to initiate active play on a daily basis.

The Three Stages of Motor Skill Acquisition from 0 to 9 years

Blue: Initial stage

Green: Intermediate stage

Red: Final stage



THE 3 STAGES

Initial: emergence of primary motor skills (muscle tone, posture, balance, grasping, sitting, walking)

Intermediate: acquisition and adaptation of fundamental motor skills

Final: perfection of previously acquired motor skills through improved motor performance

Source: PAOLETTI, R. (1999). *L'éducation et motricité de l'enfant de deux à huit ans*. Québec: Gaétan Morin Éditeur.



CHARACTERISTICS OF THE THREE STAGES OF FUNDAMENTAL MOTOR SKILL ACQUISITION

Regardless of the type of motor activity, the way children perform the activity evolves over time. Stages in the control of these different activities can be divided into three phases: initial manifestations of the behaviour, intermediate manifestations and final characteristics (nearing those of adult behaviours). At the beginning of elementary school, children are already able to master most motor patterns.

WALKING

Children usually learn to walk between the ages of 12 and 18 months. Beginning at age four, the child begins to walk like an adult (stride length increases as the child grows and the legs get longer). Therefore, it is not necessary to develop specific motor education sessions to improve it.

Initial stage: 0 to 12 months

Children walk with arms extended away from the body, legs spread apart and feet flat on the ground.

Intermediate stage: 1 to 2 years

Arms are beside the body, and legs are closer together. Children walk up and down stairs, one step at a time. They can walk backgrounds and sideways.

Final stage: 2 to 4 years

Walking is smooth and arms are balanced on each side of the body, opposite the legs.



RUNNING

Children begin to run at about age two. Running differs from walking in that it has a flight phase during which both feet are off the ground. After the age of four, children have better control over running movements and changes in direction (they need less space to turn); they push off more with their back leg while leaning forward, and their arms help to propel and stabilize the body.

Initial stage: 2 to 3 years

Children begin to trot. This is the beginning of running, with a very short flight phase.

Intermediate stage: 3 to 6 years

Children run more gracefully, and their strides are longer.

Final stage: 6 to 9 years

Children run like adults. Their movements are coordinated. They are able to start, stop and change direction.

JUMPING

Children start jumping at about age three. They can jump approximately 6 cm at age five and 9 cm at age six. They can use two legs (long jump or vertical jump with feet together) or jump on one leg (vertical jump, long jump or hopping). Hopping on one leg requires increased strength and balance. They are able to execute two or three consecutive hops by age three or four, and 10 consecutive hops by age five. At this point they are able to play hopscotch.



STANDING LONG JUMP

Initial stage: 3 to 4 years

Push-off with legs is limited. The jump is directed upward more than forward.

Intermediate stage: 4 to 5 years

Arms are involved to a small degree. Push-off with legs is stronger.

Final stage: 5 to 7 years

Arms are well balanced on each side of the body to increase power and push-off with legs.

VERTICAL JUMP WITH ARM SWING

Initial stage: 2 to 3 years

Children begin to jump and lift their feet off the ground. They can jump on one foot.

Intermediate stage: 4 to 5 years

Children lift both feet off the ground. Their jump is strong but not very well coordinated with their arms.

Final stage: 5 to 6 years

Children jump higher. Their arms and legs are well coordinated and provide more power. They begin to jump rope.

HOPPING

MOVING FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER BY JUMPING ON ONE LEG.

Initial stage: 3 to 4 years

Arms are outstretched very high on each side of the body for balance. They can keep their balance for one to three hops.

Intermediate stage: 4 to 6 years

Arms move from bottom to top and the hops are quicker. They can keep their balance for about 10 hops.

Final stage: 6 to 7 years

Arms help to propel the body, as does the raised leg. Children have greater control over take-off and landing. They can hop over longer distances.

OVERHAND THROW

The development of throwing skills provides an excellent illustration of the stages of motor skill acquisition.

Initial stage: 2 to 3 years

Children throw an object using their arms only. At this stage, they still throw a ball using both hands and with their entire body. When they begin to throw with one hand, the elbow is bent, and the arm provides the only power. The legs are not involved in the throw.

Intermediate stage: 4 to 6 years

Children move their bodies more to propel the throw by turning toward the side of the throwing arm. They move their foot forward and, at the end of the throw, put their weight on the leg that is on the same side as the throwing arm. They begin to throw toward a target.

Final stage: 7 to 9 years

Large, well-coordinated body movements provide more power and accuracy to the throw. In the last stage, they advance the foot opposite the throwing arm at the end of the throw to strongly propel the object. Training at this stage enables earlier arm-leg opposition.



CATCHING

At about age three, the ball often goes right through their arms as they bring their arms together too late.

Initial stage: 2 to 4 years

Feet are on the ground and arms are outstretched. Arms close after the ball touches the chest. At around the age of four, they fold the arms to trap the ball against their chest. They catch with their entire body.

Intermediate stage: 4 to 6 years

Feet are on the ground, palms facing as they prepare to catch the ball. Children are able to catch smaller balls. At around age five, children cup their hands to catch a ball that has bounced on the ground.

Final stage: 6 to 7 years

Eyes follow the ball and children move according to its trajectory, for example, to make sure the ball doesn't hit them. Hands are well coordinated when catching.



FORWARD ROLL

Children can begin to do a forward roll around the age of three or four. They often roll toward the side instead of the front.

Initial stage: 3 to 4 years

Weak push off with arms and legs. Side roll is frequent. Head is often extended instead of flexed. The finish position is stretched out on the ground.

Intermediate stage: 5 to 6 years

Small push-off with arms and legs. They begin to place the back of the head on the ground. The finish position is with legs outstretched in front because their abdominal muscles are still too weak.

Final stage: 7 to 9 years

Chin is tucked in for maximum head flexion. The push-off with arms and legs is strong, allowing them to rise without placing their hands to the ground. Legs are bent at the finish, which helps them to rise with arms outstretched toward the front.



KICKING A STATIONARY BALL

Children quickly learn to kick a ball.

Initial stage: 2 to 3 years

Children use very little leg swing. They kick a stationary ball by simply stepping forward. The leg pushes the ball rather than actually kicking it.

Intermediate stage: 4 to 6 years

Children use greater leg swing by bringing the kicking leg further back. The leg continues moving upward after striking the ball.

Final stage: 7 to 9 years

Powerful swing of the kicking leg to the back, and just as powerful toward the front. Continued motion of the leg upward after kicking. The leg swing is more precise, and the kick is stronger.



DROP KICK

Children usually begin to drop kick a ball around the age of three. Kicking is more efficient at age five to six, with better balance as well as increased swing of the kicking leg.

Initial stage: 3 to 5 years

The arms throw the ball upward, the leg touches the ball with very little swing beforehand. The ball often touches the knee instead of the foot.

Intermediate stage: 6 to 7 years

Hands hold the ball and throw it forward and upward with greater accuracy. There is greater swing of the kicking leg.

Final stage: 7 to 9 years

The child throws the ball forward using the opposite hand from the kicking leg. The leg swing is very strong, and the child hops slightly after kicking.

DRIBBLING

When children start dribbling a ball, their hand begins by following the ball's motion instead of anticipating it. As a result, during their first attempts, their hand touches the ball as it descends and does not drive it downward. The ball bounces once and then rolls away.

Initial stage: 3 to 4 years

The body tilts forward and rises and falls with the ball. Feet are firm on the ground. Children often use both hands. Their hands follow the ball's descent instead of striking it.

Intermediate stage: 5 to 6 years

The body tilts forward. Feet are firm on the ground. Arms are extended forward. Children strike the ball using the hand and wrist. They can strike the ball several consecutive times.

Final stage: 7 to 9 years

The body tilts forward slightly. Arms are slightly bent. The body's movements are coordinated with the ball's motion. Contact with the ball occurs during the upward phase, and they push with their fingers instead of striking the ball. Later, peripheral vision and proprioception will take over from central vision in controlling this activity.

STRIKING AN OBJECT USING A TOOL

Striking an object (puck, ball, shuttlecock) using a tool (racquet, bat) is even more complex due to the addition of an external element modifying the "length" of the child's arm. Sometimes children allow the shuttlecock fall on the hand holding the racquet instead of on the strings. In this case they should either back up the elbow of the arm holding the racquet or extend the arm holding the shuttlecock so that both the shuttlecock and the strings follow the same trajectory.

Initial stage: 2 to 3 years

At the beginning, children often use both hands to hold the object. They can use one hand to strike a ball that is suspended or thrown at waist level.

Intermediate stage: 4 to 6 years

They strike a ball by sweeping their arms laterally (front-back). Feet are firm on the ground and the trunk does not rotate.

Final stage: 7 to 9 years

The trunk rotates and weight is transferred from the back leg to the front leg. The lateral sweeping motion with large arm movements continues after contact with the object. Children anticipate the ball's movement by taking the same information into consideration: they prepare to strike based on the ball's trajectory.

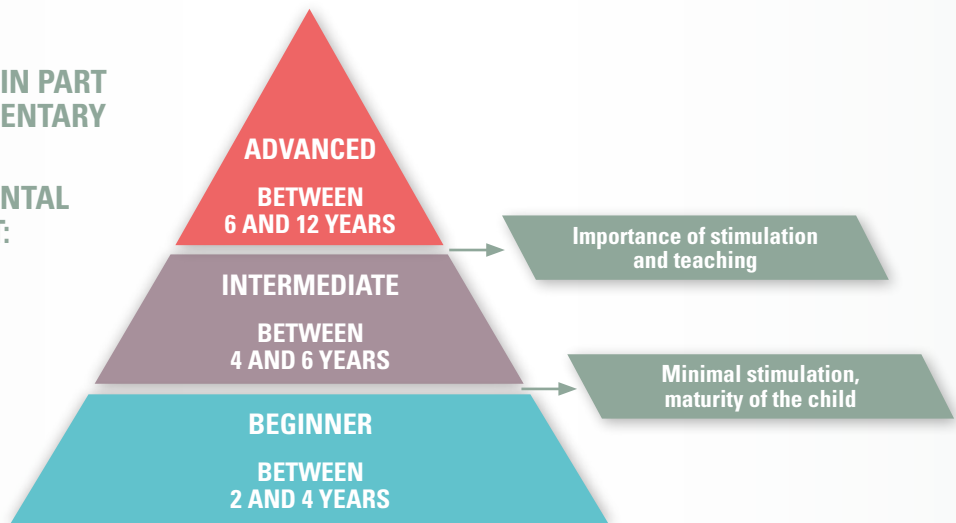


At about age five, several motor skills are already well developed: children can climb and go down stairs with alternating feet, hop in place or moving forward, stop and turn quickly, jump farther and hop on one leg, catch a ball and throw it several metres.

TABLE OF FUNDAMENTAL MOTOR SKILLS

NATURAL ACTIONS ARISING IN PART FROM REFLEXES AND RUDIMENTARY MOVEMENTS.

THREE STAGES OF FUNDAMENTAL MOTOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT:



Each fundamental motor skill has characteristic developmental features at each of the three stages.

The literature refers to 20 or so skills divided into three categories.

Fundamental motor skills	Stabilization	Locomotion	Manipulation
Balancing on one foot	✓		
Crawling		✓	
Climbing		✓	
Walking (on the ground and on objects)		✓	
Galloping		✓	
Taking giant steps		✓	
Leaping		✓	
Dodging		✓	
Running		✓	
Hopping on one foot		✓	
Standing long jump		✓	
Vertical jump with no arm swing		✓	
Jumping from a height		✓	
Side steps		✓	
Forward roll		✓	
Side roll		✓	
Overhand throw			✓
Underhand throw			✓
Catching with both hands			✓
Stationary dribbling			✓
Kicking with leg swing			✓
Kicking a moving object			✓
Striking an object using hands or a racquet			✓
Striking an object using a tool			✓

Encourage high-energy activities for optimal development

Dedicate several periods during the day to active play.*

Allow children to make choices, to invent and initiate their own active play.*

Make sedentary and transition activities more dynamic.*



Level of intensity of active play

FIVE PRINCIPLES FOR CREATING A DEMOCRATIC CLIMATE OF SUPPORT

1

Share power among educators/teachers and the children

- Listen to the children's instructions.
- Participate in the children's games and follow the rules they invent.
- Learn from the children.
- Let go of control by deliberately transferring it to the children.

2

Showcase the children's skills and strengths

- Learn the children's areas of interest.
- Analyze situations from the children's perspective.
- Inform parents and staff of the children's areas of interest.
- Plan activities based on the children's strengths and areas of interest.

3

Establish genuine relationships with the children

- Share interests with the children.
- React to the children's areas of interest by paying attention to them.
- Provide specific feedback to the children.
- Ask genuine questions and give sincere answers.

4

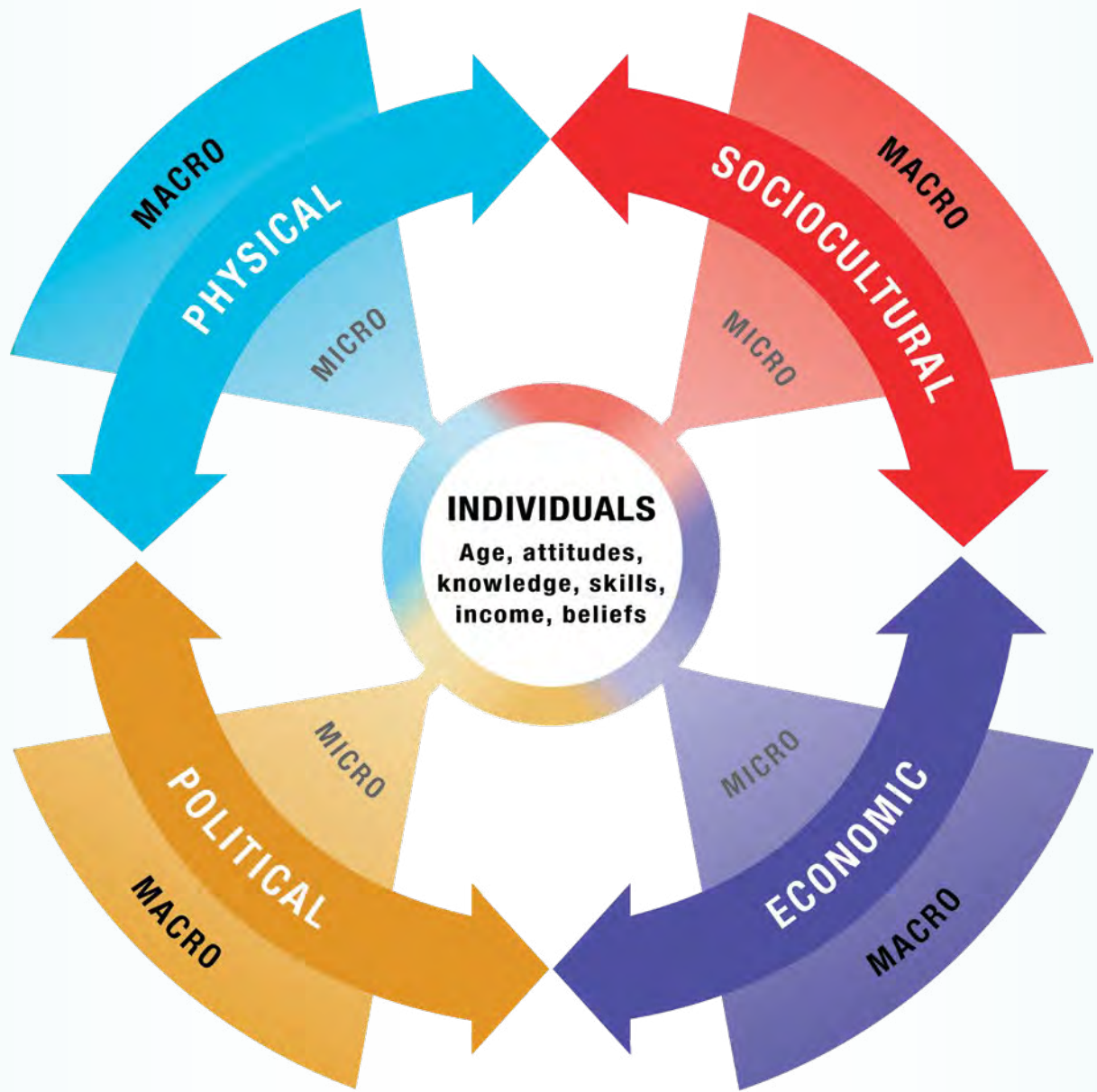
Support the children's play

- Observe and understand the complexity of their games.
- Have fun with the children.

5

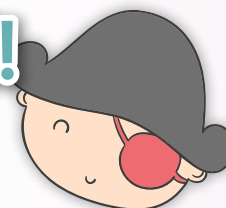
Use a problem-solving approach to deal with conflicts

- Address interpersonal conflicts calmly and recognize the children's feelings.
- Gather information and reformulate the issue.
- Support the children's search for, choice of and application of a solution.



INSTRUCTIONS

- Read the story slowly. Pause during the story so the children have time to carry out the movements and increase their intensity.
- Let the children tell their own active story!

ESCAPE FROM THE PIRATES!**HERE ARE THE MOVEMENTS THE CHILDREN MUST ACT OUT WHEN THEY HEAR THESE WORDS:**

ACTION 1: Balance on one foot.

ACTION 2: Pretend to swim by making arm motions (lying on the ground or sitting on a chair).

ACTION 3: Walk like a crab.

ACTION 4: Run in place, crouch down, and stand up at the signal to avoid the cannonballs.

ACTION 5: Kneel down on all fours and don't move. The game leader walks through the rows and gently pushes each child from the side. The child must push back gently in order to not lose their balance.

ACTION 6: Jump with feet together. The children take turns jumping in hoops set out on the floor in advance.

ACTION 7: Walk on tiptoes for 30 seconds.

ACTION 8: Crawl on all fours for 30–60 seconds.

ACTION 9: Pretend to climb. The children stretch out their arms and raise their knees as high as they can.

You are sailors and have been captured by pirates. They want to feed you to the sharks. They have you walk the plank so you will fall into the water (**ACTION 1**).

You lose your balance and fall into the sea. You must swim to a deserted island to get away from the sharks (**ACTION 2**).

You escape the sharks and reach the island, where you see cute little crabs. You follow them to the crab colony, imitating how they walk (**ACTION 3**).

The pirates spot you through their spyglass and attack with cannonballs. Run! (**ACTION 4**)

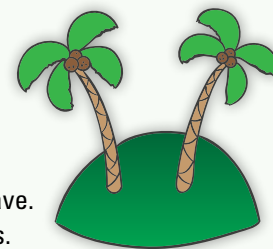
You escape once again. You hide behind a bush and stay very still (**ACTION 5**).

The pirates are still looking for you. If they see you, they'll recapture you! Luckily, they can't find you and they leave. Now that they're gone, you must find a cabin to protect you from the rain. On your way, you see a group of turtles. You don't want to hurt them, so you jump on rocks instead of stepping on them (**ACTION 6**).

You manage not to step on the turtles, but now you're in the middle of a family of sleeping lions! You don't want to wake them, so don't make any noise (**ACTION 7**)!

You were very quiet and the lions didn't wake up. You can continue your journey. Next, crawl through a tunnel to the other side of the mountain (**ACTION 8**).

You have finally reached the cabin, which is hidden in a treetop. You have to climb up the tree (**ACTION 9**). Good job! You're safe and sound. Now you can rest!



THE RABBIT AND THE STATUE



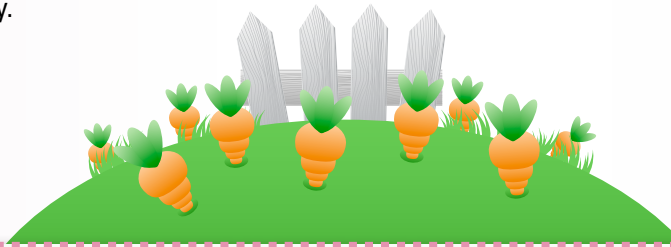
HERE ARE THE MOVEMENTS THE CHILDREN MUST ACT OUT WHEN THEY HEAR THESE WORDS:

RABBIT: Hop with feet together.

STATUE: Balance on one foot.

FROG: Jump like a frog.

MONKEY: Act like a monkey.



A **RABBIT** went out looking for magic carrots on a beautiful spring day. Magic carrots grow in Abracadabra Forest. To get to the forest, the **RABBIT** had to cross a lake. In the middle of the lake, the **RABBIT** met a **FROG**.

"Hello, Mr. **RABBIT**," said the **FROG**. "I don't usually see **RABBITS** swimming in the lake."

"I'm not swimming," answered the **RABBIT**. "I'm looking for magic carrots."

"Oh!" said the **FROG**. "I've heard those carrots can be dangerous! If you eat too many, you can turn into a **STATUE!**"

The **RABBIT** burst out laughing. "A **STATUE?!?**" exclaimed the **RABBIT**. "I think someone has played a joke on you, Mrs. **FROG!**"

The **RABBIT** said goodbye to Mrs. **FROG** and continued along his way. Once the **RABBIT** reached Abracadabra Forest, he met a **MONKEY** and asked where he could find the magic carrots.

"The magic carrots grow at the foot of the biggest tree in the forest," said the **MONKEY**. "But be careful, Mr. **RABBIT**. One of my friends turned into a **STATUE** after eating too many of them!"

The **RABBIT** burst out laughing again. "So you're the one, Mr. **MONKEY**," said the **RABBIT**, "who has been playing tricks on Mrs. **FROG**! Don't worry about me!"

"Good luck!" said the **MONKEY**.

The **RABBIT** continued on his way, laughing the whole time. Soon he reached the biggest tree in Abracadabra Forest. There they were! At the foot of the tree, the **RABBIT** saw the bushy green carrot tops. As he dug them up, he thought they were the nicest looking carrots he had ever seen. Without waiting a minute longer, he bit into a first carrot. It was delicious! The **RABBIT** gobbled down another carrot, and then another. Before he knew it, he had eaten five! But the **RABBIT** didn't realize that the more magic carrots he ate, the hungrier he felt! After eating ten carrots, the **RABBIT** turned into a **STATUE!** Today, you can visit the **STATUE** in Abracadabra Forest, and if you listen closely, you can hear the **RABBIT** laughing!

THE TALE OF MRS. ANT



HERE ARE THE MOVEMENTS THE CHILDREN MUST ACT OUT WHEN THEY HEAR THESE WORDS:

LITTLE: The children crouch down beneath their chairs.

BIG: The children stand up on their chairs.

THE NAME OF AN ANIMAL: : The children run in place behind their chairs.



Mrs. **ANT** was travelling through the **BIG** forest to visit her friend the **LADYBUG**. On her way, she met a cute **SQUIRREL** and said hello. He was so busy gathering nuts for the winter that he barely noticed her. It was a beautiful fall day, and the forest was very colourful.

The leaves were lovely shades of red, yellow and orange. The **BIRDS** were singing in the trees. The **BIG** ones were singing loudly, and the **SMALL** ones were whistling happily. Along the path Mrs. **ANT** met her friend the **FOX**. How **TALL** he was! He asked if he could walk with her to visit the **LADYBUG**. She happily said yes. The two friends continued on their way, chatting the whole time. Suddenly, they came upon a **BIG** crack in the earth. The **FOX** gathered up his courage and asked his friend to climb up onto his back. He jumped with all his might to cross over the **BIG** hole. They made it safely to the other side, but their troubles weren't over! A **BIG** tree had fallen and was blocking the forest path. Since the **ANT** was **SMALL**, she climbed under it, but the **FOX** had to climb over it. Once they were on the other side, the two friends were happy to see **LADYBUG**'s **SMALL** house in the distance. They reached the **SMALL** house quickly. Mrs. **FOX** was very happy to share a snack with Mrs. **LADYBUG** and Mr. **FOX**. Since they didn't all fit inside Mrs. **LADYBUG**'s **SMALL** house, they decided to eat the snack outside, and the three good friends enjoyed a **SMALL** picnic.



Parents as well as educators are interested in observations concerning motor skill development and connections between active play and the five aspects of child development.

OBJECTIVE

- Raise educators' awareness of the realities of today's families so they can support parents in adopting practical changes, i.e., encourage active play initiated by their child.

INSTRUCTION

- Read this tool. It will help you respond to parents' questions and needs. This document is not intended for parents, but rather as a tool to enrich discussions between parents and educators.



References:

Comité scientifique de Kino-Québec, Secrétariat au loisir et au sport, ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, gouvernement du Québec. (2011). *L'activité physique, le sport et les jeunes – Savoir et agir*.

Canadian Paediatric Society. *Caring for Kids. Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour in Children and Youth. A Guide for Physicians*. Retrieved from https://www.cps.ca/uploads/active/AKHK_Guide_Physicians.pdf

"What can I do if we don't have much time for physical activity?"

Incorporate physical activity into your daily routine. Walk or bike instead of driving, take the stairs, get off the bus one stop early.

Take your children to the park after work.

Encourage your children to play active games with friends.

When your children have free time, give them small equipment and materials to play with (e.g., balls, cones, hoops) so they can invent their own games.

Do not direct the game.
Let your child initiate active play.

"What can I do if my child is not physically fit?"

Ask your child what he or she would like to do.

Let your child plan a family activity.

Encourage your child to take part in activities with friends.

Start slowly — every minute counts.

Aim for shorter activities because children are very active during the first 10 minutes of a game. Offer your child opportunities to be active several times during the day.

"What can I do if we live in an unsafe neighbourhood?"

Set up a stimulating and safe space both indoors and outdoors.

Gradually incorporate safety instructions when walking or biking. Over time, your child will develop the skills needed to assess the risk of danger.

"How can I limit my children's screen time?"

Set concrete limits about how much screen time they are allowed.

Use a timer.

Remove electronic devices from their bedrooms.

You can exchange screen time for outdoor play, walking, biking, spending quality time with the family, etc.

"My child doesn't enjoy high-energy games. What can I do to generate interest?"

Offer active games based on your child's level of development, interests and needs.

Use the three most effective forms of persuasion: encouragement, participation and facilitation.

Show that you are proud of your child, regardless of the outcome. It is important to recognize progress and not focus on mistakes or losses.

Integrate the activity into your daily habits.

Travel from place to place on foot or by bike with your child, and climb stairs together.

Give your child the chance to learn and practice basic motor skills as soon as possible — the benefits will last a lifetime.

Active play is not the same thing as sports. Jumping, galloping and rolling are simple movements that promote motor development.

"What can I do to help my child manage stress and sleep better?"

Active play where the child is out of breath helps to relieve tension, better manage stress and improve sleep quality.

A child who plays in a natural outdoor environment develops resilience, self-control and healthy habits that will help manage everyday stress.

PLAY, EXPLORE AND HAVE FUN TO DEVELOP STRONG FOUNDATIONS THAT WILL LAST A LIFETIME

Dear parents,

We are pleased to announce that our centre has adopted a new approach to promoting healthy lifestyles by taking concrete steps to encourage active play and optimize overall child development. Our educators have taken part in training sessions on motor development through active play. The objective of the sessions is to support staff members and provide them with tools so they can offer the children more opportunities to initiate active play. All of this is done through a variety of pleasant experiences so that the children will develop to their full potential.

Child-initiated active play is extremely important to their development. Time dedicated to free play helps them develop different skills, and the children can express themselves, interact, move around and find solutions to their problems. Activities organized and directed by adults limit the development of independence in children because they are not based on their needs or interests.

For optimal overall development, children need good muscle tone and balance. They also need fundamental motor skills relating to movement, such as jumping, climbing and throwing. They must experience success to develop self-confidence and feel good about themselves. By developing their full motor potential, children are able to sit still, focus and hold a pencil, which will help them do well in school.

We are aware that your family reality demands a lot of time. This is why we are asking for your cooperation to offer the children more opportunities to move and play high-energy games on a regular basis.

Energetically yours,





PLAY, EXPLORE, AND HAVE FUN TO DEVELOP STRONG FOUNDATIONS THAT WILL LAST A LIFETIME

ENCOURAGE HIGH-ENERGY ACTIVITIES

Did you know that playing ball with your children helps them to develop motor skills, and that crawling and walking on all fours are positively related to academic success?

Your children's motor development occurs through everyday activities. Have fun with your children. By suggesting these exercises, they will want to take part in physical activity.

Allow your children to take risks in a safe environment. You will be encouraging them to realize their limits and fostering their development. Learning is sometimes accompanied by a few bumps and bruises.

[TRANSLATION] "Children need to move, make noise, gallop, jump and shout. Being indoors has its limits and forces children to hold back their impulses to move. High-energy activities allow them to loosen up, be free and meet their needs."¹

Here are a few strategies you can incorporate into your daily routine:

- Walk from place to place whenever possible.
- Let your children jump, climb, run, pedal, swim, dance, throw, catch, kick, etc.
- Stand on one leg like a flamingo while you are waiting for something.
- Use your environment (stairs, chair, rock) to jump and climb.
- Hop on one foot to get to the bathroom.
- Offer small materials and equipment like balloons, balls, baskets, sticks, etc.
- Jump like a kangaroo before mealtime.
- Walk along cracks in the sidewalk or the lines on a bicycle path.
- Play outdoors as often as possible.
- Let your children use both sides of their bodies (e.g., throwing with both their right and left arms).
- Encourage children to face new challenges on their own.



RESOURCES

Have a ball together!

The website offers tools to promote and encourage physical activity in children up to six years of age. It is aimed at families and professionals.

Website: www.haveaballtogether.ca

Active for life

The website offers expert tips and ideas for daily physical activity for children. Active for Life is a social enterprise and national movement concerning physical literacy.

Website: www.activeforlife.com

Clubs 4-H du Québec

Founded in 1942, the 4-H Clubs offer several different resources, including a new project, Club Micro 4-H. This ready-to-go tool provides fun, new activities involving nature. Visit their website for more information about this project.

Website: www.clubs4h.qc.ca

Groupe Promo-Santé Laval

The mission of Groupe Promo-Santé Laval is to promote healthy lifestyles among residents of Laval, including regular physical activity, proper nutrition and no smoking. It provides the training for *Attention ! Enfants en mouvement* in the Laval region.

Website: www.gpslaval.com

Portail Cent Degrés

This website provides reliable information on strategies for eating well, leading a physically active lifestyle, developing a healthy body image and preventing weight-related problems in children and adults.

Website: www.centdegres.ca





Attention!

enfants en mouvement