



ACTIVE Schools TOOLKIT

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
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Active Schools Toolkit



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Strategies for Active Schools

II

Strategy 5

Active Classrooms "Snapshot"				
Description: The goal is to have schools build into their daily schedule at least two 10-minute physical activity breaks, not including PE or recess, that are led by the classroom teacher.				
Resources Needed:				
Funding	Staff Time	Prep Time/ Materials	Training	
Minimal for supplies.	Two 10-minute activity breaks integrated into the school day.	Resource books with appropriate activities.	Teacher in-service.	
Facilities and Equipment Needed:				
Facilities	Equipment	Set up / take down time	Transportation	Custodial
Classroom	Varied according to grade band and activity.	None	None	None
Evaluation: Wellness breaks, energy breaks, and academic integrated movement activities are present in the daily schedule.				

Description and Rationale

Active classrooms means integrating movement breaks, also known as energizing breaks or brain breaks, outside of physical education and recess, into the school day. The goal is to have schools build into their daily schedule at least two 10-minute physical activity (energizing or brain) breaks, not including physical education or recess, that are led by the classroom teacher. Regular breaks improve learning because they give students time to make sense of information. In the classroom, children need breaks for learning to be effective.⁶

Active classrooms helps meet NASPE Standard 3: Participates regularly in physical activity.

⁶ Lamprecht, Clinton. 2004. *Teaching Expertise*. Optimus Professional Publishing.

Action Steps

- Talk with school administration regarding what a movement (brain or energizing) break is and how to implement them in the classroom.
- Purchase or develop a document that has numerous movement break strategies and give it to every teacher.
- Train staff on when and how to do these breaks in a staff development session.
- Have staff implement one strategy per week until every staff member feels comfortable with the practice.
- At staff meetings, periodically share movement break ideas.
- Place movement break time slots in the school schedule as appropriate.
- Develop grade level movement break booklets to be used each year.

Examples

Physical Activity Breaks across the Nation:
<http://www.healthiergeneration.org/schools.aspx?id=3459>

Yoga as a School-Wide Intervention

Hawley Environmental School, a K–5 Milwaukee Public School serving about 330 children, provides mental health services, which are part of a larger health initiative. Survey results from staff, students, and parents about mental health concerns indicated that it would be a priority to provide a stress reduction intervention. After some research and discussion with staff, we decided to pursue yoga as a primary prevention strategy. A local program called YogaKids provided training to three school staff to teach yoga to school-aged children. Teachers provide yoga in grades K4—second, fourth, and fifth grades. Third grade will be added later. For more information, contact Patriq DuSaint, PhD.

*Those who do not find
time for exercise will
have to find time for
illness.*

—Arabic Proverb

Resources

Promoting Physical Activity and Health in the Classroom. Pangrazi R., Beighle, A., Pangrazi, D. (2008). http://wps.aw.com/bc_pangrazi_classroom_1/97/24889/6371694.cw/index.html

This contains individual lesson activity cards for the classroom teacher.

- Implementing the Instructional Activities (11 cards)
- Classroom-Based Activities (68 cards)
- Large Area Activities (46 cards)
- Basic Skills (36 cards)
- Sports on the Playground (37 cards)
- Multicultural Activities (28 cards)
- Nutrition and Sun Safety Activities (18 cards)
- Health and Fitness Activities (24 cards)

Brain Breaks, A Physical Activity Idea Book for Classroom Teachers. <http://www.emc.cmich.edu/brainbreaks/>

Classroom Energizers for elementary and middle school classrooms helps teachers integrate physical activity with academic concepts. <http://www.ncpe4me.com/energizers.html>

JAMmin' Minutes: a free resource that is emailed to the teacher each week. The JAMmin' Minute is a series of five exercises that take only a minute to do. Teachers or students can lead these energizing breaks. <http://healthetips.com/archive.php>

You've Gotta Move: an activity-based program designed and delivered as an engaging combination of dance, activity, and music for kindergarten to second grade students. http://www.healthyschoolsms.org/ohs_main/youvegottamove.htm

Disarming the Playground: Violence Prevention Through Movement and Pro-Social Skills. <http://www.hancockcenter.net/disarm.html>

