



## Main Objective

Be physically active for at least 60 minutes on most, preferably all, days of the week.

## Background

Physical activity burns calories, improves cardiovascular (heart) health, strengthens muscles (especially the heart muscle), promotes joint flexibility, improves bone density and helps maintain a healthy weight. Physical activity is good for the entire body, and even helps to keep the brain alert! People who are more active also tend to get sick less often than people who are inactive.

When it comes to physical activity, every little bit counts. So it is important to encourage your students to find ways to be more active – walk or bike to school (either part of the way or the whole way), take the dog on a walk every day, play with friends at the playground, join an afterschool soccer or softball league, etc. The goal for children and adolescents is to engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week. While it is important for students to be physically active at school, it is also important for them to start exploring out-of-school exercise options. What can they do on weekends or during holiday breaks?


Students of all ages can set realistic goals based on their own level of physical activity. It is important that students understand the difference between cardiovascular activities (those that are good for the heart and may make you breathe a little faster), muscular strength (those that will help to build muscle), and flexibility (activities involving various stretches) and find ways to regularly participate in all three. As students get older and continue to develop new skills, they can begin to participate in and enjoy different activities each year. With these new activities will come new challenges – but nothing you can't face together. Just get out there and keep moving

## Take Home Activities

- 1) Complete the Walkability checklist available at <http://www.cawalktoschool.com> (English and Spanish handouts are included in the guide). This will help you determine a safe way to walk or bike to school. If there isn't a direct safe route, is there a closer direct safe route? It may be possible to drive only part way to school and walk the rest.
- 2) If possible, participate in Walk to School Day (Wednesday of the first full week of October).
- 3) Discuss other forms of physical activity that the family enjoys. Are there activities the family can do together?
- 4) Go for a walk together before or after dinner.
- 5) If possible, encourage your schoolchildren to participate in National School Lunch Week (the second full week in October).

 **School Activities**

- 1) Kick off the month by participating in International Walk to School Week (the first full week in October). Encourage everyone to participate in Walk to School Day (Wednesday of that week). (See <http://www.cawalktoschool.com>)
- 2) Ask a police officer to come to the school for an assembly and talk about safety issues regarding walking or biking to school in that specific neighborhood.
- 3) Take an inventory of all items the school has to promote physical activity - balls, jump ropes, etc. – and increase the accessibility of these items during recess.
- 4) Promote school lunch during National School Lunch Week (the second full week in October). (See <http://www.schoolnutrition.org>)

 **Classroom Reward Ideas**

Reward students with activities that will keep them active. Some examples include extra time on a Friday for fitness activities or allowing students to run the “ball room” at recess for a week.

 **Resources****California Walk to School Headquarters**

P.O. Box 997413 – Mail Stop 7211

Sacramento, CA 95899-7413

Phone: 1-888-393-0353

<http://www.cawalktoschool.com>

This is the main website for the California Walk to School Program. It is full of wonderful materials, resources, activity ideas, stickers, and balloons. Many materials are available in a number of different languages as well. Register your school for the event for a chance to win prizes!

**Official USA Walk to School Website**

<http://www.walktoschool-usa.org>

This site provides more resources and information about what is going on across the U.S. to promote Walk to School Month.

**Official International Walk to School Website**

<http://www.iwalktoschool.org>

Students can learn what is going on around the world for Walk to School Week. Also see: Canadian Walk to School – <http://www.goforgreen.ca/walktoschool>

U.K. Walk to School – <http://www.walktoschool.org.uk>

**MyPyramid.gov**

<http://www.mypyramid.gov>

<http://www.mypyramid.gov/sp-index.html> (site in Spanish)

This is the main website of the MyPyramid.gov food guidance system which will be discussed more thoroughly in November. However, this site does provide a lot of information about physical activity – what it is, why it is important, how much is needed, the number of calories burned during various activities, and tips for increasing physical activity.

## Resources

### **Center for Disease Control (CDC)**

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk>

The CDC website has more resources and information, including activity downloads, community presentations (to increase awareness and participation), train the trainer information, brochures, fact sheets, safety information and more.

### **Shape Up America – 10,000 Steps a Day**

<http://www.shapeup.org/shape/steps.php>

If pedometers are available, this site provides information and resources on the 10,000 Steps a Day challenge. This is a great way for teachers and school staff to become better role models for the students.

### **Healthy Trails Challenge – Santa Clara County Parks**

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

SCCP has partnered with Kaiser Permanente, SCC Public Health Department, and Steps to a Healthier Santa Clara County to provide a Healthy Trails Challenge to combat the increase in type 2 diabetes, asthma, high blood pressure, heart disease and cancer; as well as to increase participation in nature. The free Healthy Trails Challenge invites families to visit 5 different trails in the County's 21 parks by registering, receiving a detailed park guide, and a gift for Challenge completion in one year.

## Additional Resources

### **National School Lunch Week**

#### **American School Food Service Association**

<http://www.schoolnutrition.org>

Go to *Meetings and Events* to learn more about activities during National School Lunch Week.

### **Team Nutrition School Meals**

<http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov>

More information can be found here regarding activities during National School Lunch Week.

### **Eat Better, Eat Together**

#### **Washington State University (WSU)**

<http://nutrition.wsu.edu/ebet>

October is also Eat Better, Eat Together month. Information can be sent home with the students to encourage families to eat meals together. A toolkit to encourage families to eat together has been developed by WSU. Most of the materials can be downloaded free of charge from this site. Some materials are also available for purchase (stickers, bookmarks and more).



## Activities Linked to 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Content Standards & Framework

### Reading 2.7

- Follow simple, multi-step, written instructions to play a new physically-active game.
- Students can write stories about their walk to school. They can then share these stories out loud.

### Writing 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 & 1.4, Listening & Speaking 2.1, 2.2 & 2.3

- Include one-syllable words related to being physically active on students' spelling list.

### Written & Oral English Language Conventions 1.8

### Number Sense 2.7 & 3.3

- Create or use math problems that students can solve that include physical activity. For example, students can learn about money by looking at the cost of jump ropes. They can determine the unit cost of an item when given the total cost and the number of items purchased.

### Physical Science 2.b, Investigation & Experimentation 5.a, 5.c, 5.d & 5.e

- Students can be physically active while learning how light is reflected from mirrors and other surfaces by bouncing balls off of walls outside and running after them. Students can then predict what will happen by running to where they think the ball will go. Data can be collected and analyzed.

### Social Science 3.1.1

- Identify geographical features on a map that pertain to hiking, biking and walking trails.

### Social Science 3.2.2

- Describe how geography influenced how the local Indian nations moved to different locations.

### Physical Education 3

- Make a list of physical activities that the students find enjoyable. Keep this list up throughout the month and encourage students to be physically active on a daily basis.

### Physical Education 3.8

- Encourage students to measure and record the amount of time they spend being physically active. Set a goal to slowly increase that amount throughout the month.

### Physical Education 5, Health Framework Expectation 1

- Discuss some of the barriers to increasing physical activity. As a class, can you come up with some ways to overcome these barriers?

### Selected Reading List

**Floating in Space**, by Franklyn Branley – Science