



Fuel Their Minds

Ideas for Better Eating and Active Play with Children



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Benefits of Board Games

Did you know there are educational benefits to playing board games? Board games not only satisfy a child's urge for fun and friendly competition, but have proven to help children learn math skills, social skills and other developmental concepts.

For example, playing games may enhance a child's:

- * Number and shape recognition, grouping and counting
- * Letter recognition and reading
- * Visual perception and color recognition
- * Eye-hand coordination and fine motor skills

When children play, they are interacting and developing their social skills. Unlike reading, writing and arithmetic, social skills can not be solely taught. Social skills require development over various experiences. Board games enhance a child's verbal communication, ability to share, take turns, follow rules and learn the meaning of good "sportsmanship."

In addition, board games help improve concentration by fostering an environment where children can be attentive and improve their long-term attention span by completing a fun game. Some board games instill meta-messaging that indirectly help children gain life skills, such as the game *Chutes and Ladders*-a player's luck can change instantly, so never give up. This message can be important in broadening a child's understanding of challenges and solutions. Lastly, research studies have demonstrated board games have helped children think strategically, plan ahead and to attach abstract thoughts to concrete objects.

Here are some board games that can be incorporated into the classroom and be utilized when students are indoors during the wet, windy and cold winter months. Encourage your students to play board games while out of school such as weekends and holiday breaks to keep them learning! Consider doing a library loan system for board games, if possible.

For Language:

- * **Scrabble Junior & Scrabble** (Milton Bradley):
For children ages 5 years and older.
Game fosters literacy and language skills.



- * **Boggle Junior & Boggle** (Parker Brothers):
For children ages 4 years and older.
Game teaches letters, words, spelling and classification.



For Memory:

- * **Zingo** (Think Fun Company) or **Qwirkle** (MindWare):
For children ages 5 years and older. Game enhances matching skills and quick thinking.



For Cause & Effect:

- * **Junior Labyrinth** (Ravensburger):
For children ages 4 years old and older. Game teaches spatial relations and refines fine motor skills.



For Math:

- * **Blokus** (Mattel):
For children ages 5 years old and older. Game enhances analytical thinking.



- * **Monopoly Junior** (Parker Brothers):
For children ages 5 years old and older. Game develops math, color recognition, reading, reasoning and social skills.



“Walktober”



Are you ready to get those feet moving?

Did you know all around the United States schools, businesses and communities are gearing up to celebrate National Walking Month, or “Walktober”?

The month of October is a great time to go outside for some physical activity because its cooler, yet the days are still long enough to squeeze in a walk or bike ride before it gets dark. National Walk to School day is also celebrated on **October 7th**. This is a great opportunity for schools to encourage students to walk to school with friends, parents and see just how easy and fun it can be!

Need ideas on how to easily and quickly create a walk to school day event for your school and how to get students involved? Look no further, the *Walk Bike To School* organization has some great resources to get you started!

Don't forget to check with your school leaders/ administration to see if your school already has a Safe Routes to School program implemented, which may be hosting a Walk to School day event.

The month of October is also a great time to discuss with your students the importance of safety and following the rules of the road when walking or biking. Taking a “be safe, be seen” approach to walking and biking can reduce the risk of injury or collision. You can share tips with your students on how to be a safe pedestrian or bicyclist, such as wearing reflective clothing or having a reflector on their school bag and bike if walking at early morning or dusk. Reviewing road rules, including how to cross at the crosswalk, can help instill confidence into students (and parents) about being a safe pedestrian or bicyclist.

For resources on Walk to School day, visit <http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/>

National Safe Routes to School Partnership for classroom resources, success stories & more: <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>

Fruit Cobbler Recipe



Servings: 4

1 cup per serving

Eating a balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables supports a healthy body and mind. Exploring with classically favored fruits such as pears can help add variety to a child's diet and taste buds. Try this pear recipe at your next classroom celebration!

Ingredients:

- 1 (15oz) can sliced peaches in natural juices, drained
- 1 (15oz) can pear halves, in natural juices, drained
- 1/4 teaspoon almond or vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 cup nuts, any, chopped

Directions:

1. Combine peaches, pears, extract, and ground cinnamon in a microwave safe bowl. Stir well.
2. Sprinkle nuts over the top. Cover the bowl with a lid or plastic wrap. Leave a little opening for steam to get out.
3. Microwave on high for 5 minutes. Be careful removing bowl from microwave because it may be hot. Let cool slightly before serving.

Recipe adapted from CDPH's Harvest of the Month



Garden Puppet Show

Research shows when a child is involved in the cultivation and preparation of nutritious foods they are more open to trying them. School and community gardens alike provide children with a wealth of opportunities to explore and learn agricultural literacy and allow for learning across the subject areas to occur.

The garden puppet show can be an outlet for children to express what they have seen and learned while being in the garden.

Consider the following for the show:

The members of your “garden community” are like the characters in a play. There are stars and characters with smaller parts. There’s a crew to build the set and a director to put the show together. Each has an important role to play. Use the activity instructions to help your class brainstorm the show.

Perform the show to family and friends at an upcoming school event!

Activity Instructions:

1. First, make a list of the plants, insects, and other “garden community” members you want to include in your class puppet show like the garden keeper, teacher, tomato, bee, etc.
2. For the script, give each character a role. Encourage students to think about what they saw and did in the garden, how they took care of plants/flowers/insects/birds. What they did with the foods in the garden, etc.
3. Students can begin the show by telling a story about how the garden started at school and elaborate on how the plants and living creatures got there, maintenance of the garden, etc.
4. Make stick puppets for each character in the play. Use craft sticks, glue and any decorative art supplies like felt, construction paper, markers, yarn, glitter, pipe cleaners, googly eyes, etc. Consider using items from the garden like leaves, flower petals, twigs, etc.



Activity adapted from Gardening with Children, Brooklyn Botanic Garden

Free Physical Activity Resources

Looking for physical activity resources for P.E. or classroom brain breaks? The University of California CalFresh Nutrition Education Program can provide teachers with free physical activity games, energizers and more!

How? Contact Sonia Fernandez, Nutrition Educator at ssfernandez@ucnar.edu or (530) 666-8702.

Sample Game (Source CATCH)

Activity Name: Bag It! | Grade level: 3-5 | Equipment: 1, cone, 4 bean bags | Skills Emphasis: walking, sliding hopping, teamwork

Organization:

- ✦ Seat students on the floor (or at desks) in 4 rows forming a square. Each row forms a team. Place a cone in the center of the square. Give the player on the left end of each row a beanbag. Designate an appropriate locomotor movement (e.g. hopping, walking, sliding) to be used.

Description:

- ✦ On start, the player with the beanbag travels to the cone using a designated locomotor movement, touches the cone, and continues towards his/her team’s right end seat/desk. In the meantime, all players on the team have scooted over 1 seat to the left. When the player with the beanbag gets to the open seat, the beanbag is passed under 1 leg by each player down the row of seats. Keep playing until all 4 rows have been rotated and the lead-off players are back in their original place.



Fuel Their Minds Parent Corner

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Let's Play!

A statement heard often by young children, 'let's play' is at once an invitation and a command. Children love to play and playing helps children grow and develop. Although, playing may seem like a simple and childish act, it is very important for babies, children, and even teens to play every day. Playing alone, or with friends or family helps children learn important communication and social skills. Play also helps with emotion regulation; children learn about their feelings and how to control them. Play also helps children in school by boosting their self-esteem. When children play, they practice, copy, and master behaviors and new skills. Parents benefit from playing with their children too. Playing together helps strengthen family bonds and builds children's confidence and self-esteem.



Playing with toddlers and preschoolers (2-5 years of age):

Pretend play helps boost imagination and social skills. Pretend play helps children understand what it feels like to be someone else, this develops empathy. Encourage and engage toddlers in dress up play with hats, scarves, and tools related to different professions. This helps toddlers imagine and act out what it is like to be a nurse, teacher, fire fighter, etc.

Let children choose their own 'free' play activity regularly, this allows for more creativity, freedom, and skill building. Structured play is organized and guided by an adult and helps children start a new activity but all play does not need to be structured.

Playing with children (6-12 years of age):

Physical play helps boost fine and gross motor skills. Easy physical activity ideas that build gross (large) motor skills are riding bicycles, swimming, and climbing at the playground or park. Physical activity is a great way to release energy and develop a lifelong love for movement.

Easy physical activities that build fine (small) motor skills are painting, cooking, baking, and completing small piece puzzles together.

Group games help children learn how to problem solve and negotiate with one another, an important life skill. Group games like Tag, Hide-and- Seek, and Simon Says, are all easy and fun.

Playing with teenagers (13-18 years of age):

Socializing is an important part of teenage play; talking with friends, listening to music, or playing computer games are ways in which teenagers enjoy play. Limit leisure screen time like television and computers (not homework) to two hours a day. Encourage teenagers to get and stay involved in the family by planning a family outing based around their interests (like going to a local museum, attending a concert, enrolling in a cooking class, or going to a sporting event). Start a family game night: encourage teenagers to plan the day, time, location, and game to be played as a family.



Group sports are also a great way to encourage teenagers to continue participating in physical activity, build social skills, and 'play' together with friends. Schools, local parks departments, and recreation centers are a great place to ask about and sign up for group sports.



¡Jugamos!

Cuando los niños oyen “¡vamos a jugar!” oyen una invitación y un orden. Les encantan jugar a los niños y les ayuda crecer y desarrollar. Aunque parece básico y cosa de niños, es muy importante que los bebés, niños, y adolescentes juegan todos los días. Jugando solo, con amigos, o con familia ayuda a que los niños forman sus habilidades sociales y también aprenden como comunicarse. Jugando también ayuda con la habilidad de poder regular las emociones. Cuando juegan, los niños aprenden sobre sus sentimientos y como regularlos. Jugando en la escuela ayuda aumentar la autoestima. Cuando los niños juegan ellos practican, copian, y mejoran sus habilidades físicas, mentales, y sociales. Los padres que juegan con sus niños benefician también. Jugando entre familia realiza relaciones positivas con lazos fuertes. Cuando los niños juegan con sus familias les aumenta su confianza y autoestima.

Jugando con niños de 2-5 años:

Jugar a pretender ser alguien les ayuda a los niños desarrollar la imaginación y habilidades sociales. Jugar a pretender ser alguien les ayuda a saber cómo otras personas se sienten y realiza la empatía. Anime los niños a que se disfrazen y usen sombreros, bufandas, y herramientas de diferentes profesiones. Esto ayuda que los niños imaginan y actúan como es ser una enfermera, maestra, o bombero. Deje que los niños escojan su juego regularmente, esto ayuda aumentar la creatividad, libertad, y desarrollo en capacidades. Jugando con estructura es organizado y guiado por un maestro. Jugando con estructura ayuda que los niños empiezan nuevas actividades pero no todos los juegos necesitan tener estructura.



Jugando con niños de 6-12 años:

Los juegos físicos ayudan desarrollar habilidades motoras gruesas y finas. Actividades físicas que ayudan mejorar habilidades motoras gruesas son usando una bicicleta, nadando, y escalando en el recreo o parque. La actividad física es una buena manera de deshacerse de energía y realizar un amor para el ejercicio que durara toda la vida. Juegos fáciles que ayudan desarrollar habilidades finas son pintar, cocinar, y usando rompecabezas con pedazos chiquitos. Juegos en grupo ayuden a que los niños aprenden como resolver problemas y como negociar. Estos son habilidades esenciales para cuando sean adultos. Juegos en grupo como futbol, ‘El teléfono escacharrado’, y jugar al rescate son sencillos y divertidos.

Jugando con jóvenes de 13-18 años:

La socialización es un tipo de juego que es muy importante para adolescentes. Hablando con amigos, oyendo música, jugando en la computadora, y videojuegos son maneras en que los jóvenes de esta edad disfrutan jugar. Ponle límites al tiempo que estos jóvenes usan pantallas. Deje que solo usen pantallas como televisión y computadoras para pasar el tiempo por no más que dos horas al día (esto no incluyendo tiempo en la computadora para la tarea). Anime a sus jóvenes que se involucren en actividades entre familia y que ayuden escoger que hagan juntos. Pueden talvez sugerir ir a un concierto, museo, una clase de cocinar, o evento deportivo. Empieza una rutina de noches entre familia donde todos participan en juegos de mesa y deje que sus adolescentes planean el día, tiempo, lugar, y juego. Deportes con grupos también son buenas maneras para incluir adolescentes y motivarlos a participar en actividad física, desarrollar sus habilidades sociales, y “jugar” con amigos cooperativamente. Escuelas, parques, y áreas recreativas son lugares buenos para preguntar sobre como registrarse en grupos deportivos.



Jugando entre familia realiza relaciones positivas con lazos fuertes. Esto facilita una comunicación abierta y activa entre familia. Jugando entre familia también mantiene a todos miembros de la familia activos y sanos. ¡Procura planear un juego que su familia ahora mismo!

Activity Kits Free From the University of California

You can help impact childhood obesity, fitness, and malnutrition. Local, state, and federal initiatives (and funding) urge a coordinated approach to addressing these issues. The University of California has prepared **activity kits** to help you teach nutrition, health, and physical activity concepts to your children, while integrating math, language, and science concepts that address CDE standards.

These lessons come “ready-made” with all of the materials to teach a fun and interactive lesson. The curriculum was developed by the University of California.

We will bring the materials to you, free of charge. We can provide trainings and additional resources to increase your confidence in these topics. We can also plan classroom food-themed cooking clubs, special events, and other fun sessions.



ANR NONDISCRIMINATION AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY STATEMENT FOR UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PUBLICATIONS REGARDING PROGRAM PRACTICES - July, 2013

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Fuel Their Mind Nutrition Newsletter Enclosed



“Our mandate as a land grant institute ties us to the welfare, development, and protection of the state's land, resources, and people. Our mission is to develop and extend the use of research-based knowledge to improve specific practices and technologies.”

Funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and University of California Cooperative Extension, The SNAP program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious food for a better diet. To find out more, call 1-877-847-3663.

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