

Introduction

Every healthy child should be involved in some type of movement training program. Learning to move your body in a variety of ways and in different settings is important to the complete development of the child. A homeschool co-op is one place that a child can learn and practice new movements. Movement training and physical play also create a better learning environment. Incorporating a movement training class will help improve learning in the other classes.

There are several obstacles that may hinder families from incorporating physical education classes into their daily plan. There may not be anyone who feels qualified to lead the children in a physical education class. There may be space issues or no gym available. There may be a wide age range of children. These are genuine concerns, but it is possible for almost any parent to lead a class if they are given some guidance, lesson plans and have a bit of creativity to overcome unforeseen problems. The Family Time Fitness Co-op Program is designed to provide lesson plans and guidance to help the physical education instructor.

This online co-op contains 36 weekly lessons. Every set of 4 lessons emphasizes certain important movement skills.

Weekly Lessons' Emphasis

01-04 Proprioception and Locomotion

05-08 Hand and Ball Skills

09-12 Body Awareness, Spatial Awareness, and Locomotion

13-16 Hand and Ball, Foot and Ball

17-20 Rhythm, Creative Movement, and Teamwork

21-24 Spatial Awareness, Tag Games

25-28 Volleyball, Hand and Ball

29-32 Foot and Ball, Hand and Ball

33-36 Running Games

The Importance of Physical Education or Movement Training

Physical Education can be thought of as movement training. Teaching children how to move their bodies is critical to their physical, mental, emotional, social, and environmental well-being. There is an enormous amount of research that provides much information on the crucial role movement plays in the education of all children.

- It is well known that movement training increases the brain's ability to focus.
- Physical Education strengthens the brain cells involved in planning, memory, and learning.
- When children play strenuously, muscle cells release proteins that stimulate neuron growth and function in the brain.
- When children are physically educated they are healthier in all areas of their lives. They manage stress better, are less anxious, focus better, and are better behaved.

These are just a few examples of why physical education is necessary for all children.

Equipment

This program is designed to use minimal equipment. You will need playground balls, bean bags, cones, and jump ropes. Check the equipment prior to each class to make sure it is in good condition. Keep in mind that a plastic cone that is cracked can have a sharp edge and pose a potential danger. A jump rope with a cracked or loose handle could also be a hazard that could result in injury. Teach children proper use and storage of the equipment to help maintain good working condition.

When gathering equipment for a lesson, keep in mind that some items are used for different purposes. Depending on the lesson, when jump rope is listed, it may be used as a line or marker on the floor and not as a jump rope. Look ahead for lessons that require items for individual use so that you are prepared with enough items for each child or be prepared to share.

Equipment for program:

12 cones or markers
6-8 medium sized (8.5 inch) playground balls
4-6 beach balls
12 bean bags
3-4 jump ropes
9-12 carpet squares
Music

Safety

Creating a safe environment is one of the most important factors to consider with physical education. The skill level among children varies greatly. It is important to go over the rules and expectations at the start of every class. It is also important to make sure all the students understand the instructions for each activity. It is wise to ask children to repeat back the instructions of an activity to make sure they understand. Children will often need reminders or cues to follow instructions. For example, when playing a tag game, it is important to remind the children to tag gently. There is no pushing or hitting when playing tag. Be observant during class time. This will allow you to see which children may need extra help. Physical Education reveals much about people's attitudes and abilities.

Clothing

Students should wear proper attire for physical education class. Comfortable clothing such as a t-shirt, shorts, or track pants will allow the student to move more effectively. A good pair of athletic shoes is also important.

Space

Make sure the designated physical education space is safe prior to the class. Remove any obstacles and stay away from any hazards that may cause injury. When using a confined space use tables and chairs as equipment. It is also good to use markers such as cones, removable tape on the floor, or other suitable aids.

If there are no lines or markings in the physical education area it may be necessary to use cones, rope, or floor tape. Markings are helpful in organizing games, teaching certain activities, and developing spatial skills. The lessons use cones as markers but they can be substituted with ropes or tape or any other marker such as a shoe.

Parental Encouragement

We are designed to move. All children enjoy physical education in a positive learning environment. Create a positive environment by encouraging the children to participate in the lessons. Be enthusiastic. The children will give the same importance and enthusiasm that the parent gives. Provide positive reinforcement. This will help keep the children motivated and enthusiastic about physical fitness.

Class Session Breakdown

We have found that an effective way to run the class is to have a welcome time, coordination development time, game time, a second coordination development time, a second game time, and then a short cool down/closing time. This can all be done in a 40 minute timeframe or less.

Coordination Development (10 minutes)

Explain and demonstrate the exercises. Make sure you get a verbal confirmation of understanding from the students. The first few activities in this section serve as warm-up exercises and prepare the children for the movement lesson.

Game Play (5 minutes)

Explain and demonstrate the game. Make sure you get a verbal confirmation of understanding from the students.

Coordination Development 2 (10 minutes)

Explain and demonstrate the exercises. Make sure you get a verbal confirmation of understanding from the students.

Game Play 2 (5 minutes)

Explain and demonstrate the game. Make sure you get a verbal confirmation of understanding from the students.

Cool Down/Closing (5 minutes)

Spend a few minutes stretching and reviewing what was learned in class. Thank the students for their effort and participation.