



**GROWING**



**ACTIVITY**



**FAMILIES**



**EATING**

**HEALTHY CHILDREN,  
HEALTHY WEIGHTS**

**Ring of Fun!**

**SCHOOL-AGED**

**Healthy Children, Healthy Weights** (HCHW) is designed to prevent childhood overweight and obesity by promoting healthy weight and growth in all children, starting with the youngest age group – birth to five years old.

**The Ring of Fun** is an activity tool to extend our key topics into the classroom:

- Healthy Activity
- Healthy Eating
- Healthy Growing
- Healthy Families

**HCHW thanks you for your commitment to growing healthy children.**

<http://publichealth.columbus.gov/healthy-children-healthy-weights.aspx>



THE CITY OF  
**COLUMBUS**  
MICHAEL B. COLEMAN, MAYOR

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**COLUMBUS  
PUBLIC HEALTH**

11/2012

# Sharks and Minnows

**Before You Start:** Set up a play area with visible boundaries, if outside use cones. Review how to play.

## **How to Play:**

1. Choose two children to be sharks and everyone else will be minnows.
2. Sharks stand in the middle of the play area and say “Fishy, fishy, come out and play.”
3. Minnows slowly walk towards the sharks.
4. At any time, sharks can yell, “Shark Attack!”
5. Minnows must run to the opposite boundary line without being tagged to remain safe.
6. If a minnow is tagged, he/she becomes a shark.
7. The last 2 minnows win the round and become the sharks for the next round.

*Adapted from [www.playworks.org/games](http://www.playworks.org/games)*

# See you Later Alligator

**Equipment:** Cones to set boundaries if needed, 2-5 scarves, 5-10 hula hoops.

**Before You Start:** To begin, select 2-5 children to be ‘game wardens’. Give each warden a scarf so everyone will know who they are. Place the hoops randomly around the play space. The rest of the students are the alligators.

## **How to Play:**

On “GO,” the alligators run from the game wardens to keep from being tagged. If an alligator is tagged, the game warden and alligator switch roles (the scarf is given to the new warden).

Alligators are safe when in a hoop, but only 1 alligator is allowed in the hoop at a time. If someone is in the hoop, the other person must say, “See you later alligator” to enter the hoop and the other must leave. No one is allowed to enter the same hoop they just left. This game can go on f-o-r-e-v-e-r!

*Adapted from [www.playworks.org/games](http://www.playworks.org/games)*

# 4 Corners

**Set Up:** Use an area with four corners like a classroom or an area in the yard. If your yard does not have corners, create designated areas using cones or play on the kickball field.

**Before You Start:** Have children split equally among the four corners and select one child to stand in the middle. He/she will be the counter.

**How to Play:** The child in the middle will close his/her eyes and count down slowly and loudly from 10 to 0. All students must move from their current spot to a different corner during the count. When the counter gets to 0, all students must be at a corner. After counting, with eyes still closed, the counter must point to a corner. Any children standing in that corner must do a selected exercise while everybody else counts to 5. If no one is standing at the chosen corner start over.

Switch counters about every three times, giving everyone a chance.

*Adapted from [www.playworks.org/games](http://www.playworks.org/games)*

# Freeze Tag

**Before You Start:** Use an open area with boundaries; use cones if needed. Demonstrate safe tagging: light touch on the shoulder. Review how to give a double high-5.

## **How to Play:**

Select two children to be “it”. The rest of the students spread out within the open area. The leader designates what movement everyone should be using (running, skipping, hopping, walking, etc.). If a student gets tagged, he/she immediately freezes. To ‘unfreeze’, another child must give the frozen person a double high-5. Switch taggers and styles of movement often.

*Adapted from [www.playworks.org/games](http://www.playworks.org/games)*

# Bubbles

**Equipment:** 1-2 beach balls

**Before You Start:** Spread out students in an open playing area sitting on the ground.

**How to Play:**

The object of the game is to keep the ball up as long as possible by hitting the ball in the air. Children should call the ball by saying “I got it!” and can only hit the ball one time in a row. Children must remain on the ground. They can use any part of their bodies to hit the ball. Challenge them to set a record, add another beach ball or use no hands.

*Adapted from [www.playworks.org/games](http://www.playworks.org/games)*



# Flag Football Agility Course

**Equipment:** 3-8 Footballs, cones for boundaries and 3-8 scarves

**Before You Start:** Set up a play area. Have at least 2 children stand inside, with a larger group you may have more. Have all other children line up with a scarf in their pocket or waistband hanging half way out. Children with a scarf should also have a football when it is their turn.

## **How to Play:**

One person with a football must skillfully make it to the other side without losing their scarf or going out of bounds. If their scarf is taken they are now in the middle and the person who got the scarf can get in line. If they go out of bounds they are automatically in the middle and their scarf is given to another child.

*Adapted from [www.playworks.org/games](http://www.playworks.org/games)*

# Everyone's It

**Before You Start:** Establish boundaries. Demonstrate safe tagging: light touch on the shoulder. Review the boundaries and the consequence for going outside of them, start over from zero or perform 10 jumping jacks to get back in.

## **How to Play:**

The object is for children to tag and keep a running count of everyone they touch in one minute. No one is “it” and no one stops playing or “freezes” when tagged. When one minute is up ask children to yell out how many people they tagged. Start over, but in this round challenge them to get a higher number.

*Adapted from [www.playworks.org/games](http://www.playworks.org/games)*

# Amoeba Tag

**Before You Start:** Establish boundaries and pick one child to be IT.

**How to Play:**

The “it” person is to tag as many people as possible. Those who are tagged now have to link arms or hold hands with the “it” person. Then they have to work together to tag everyone else. As the chain gets bigger they can be split into smaller chains.

*Adapted from [www.playworks.org/games](http://www.playworks.org/games)*

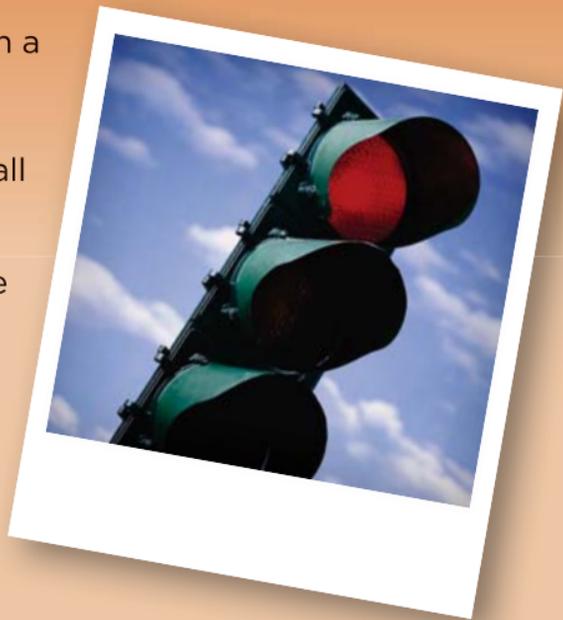
# Red Light, Green Light

**Before You Start:** Define playing area with a start and finish line. Review rules.

**How to Play:**

1. Select one child to be the caller while all other students stand at the start line.
2. When yelling “green light” the caller must turn around so he/she cannot see anyone.
3. The caller will turn around when yelling “red light” and everyone must freeze.
4. Anyone moving is sent back to starting line.
5. The first person to reach the caller is the caller for the next round.

*Adapted from [www.playworks.org/games](http://www.playworks.org/games)*



# Sports Clubs

**Before You Start:** Make sure all children have space about arm length apart. Identify a signal to freeze. Review several types of games with and actions for those games. Examples:

- Basketball
- Four Square
- Boxing
- Tennis
- Gymnastics
- Football
- Jumping Rope
- Running
- Hula Hooping
- Volleyball

## How to Play:

Call out a game and model the action; all children will “play” that game by acting it out. Give signal to freeze. Repeat with different games.

*Adapted from [www.playworks.org/games](http://www.playworks.org/games)*

# Jump Whistle

**Equipment:** Whistle

**Before You Start:** Make sure children know right and left, front and back. These are the 4 sides to which they must jump.

**How to Play:** Have all children face forward. Each time the whistle blows children are to jump.

- One whistle: jump front, center
- Two whistles: Jump front, right, center
- Three whistles: Jump front, right, back, center
- Four whistles: jump front, right, back, left, center

Children should always end up back at center, facing the leader. You can mix up the whistles, one, two, three, two, one, three, two, or four. The object is to see how well the children pay attention and can keep up.

*Adapted from [www.playworks.org/games](http://www.playworks.org/games)*

# The Wave

**Before You Start:** Ask children to form a circle and hold hands.

**How to Play:**

The leader announces they will start the impulse by slowly whipping the arm of someone to either their right or left. The motion should flow continuously through the group until it returns to the leader. After they get the hang of it run an impulse in opposite directions at the same time and see if they can pass through each other. For an added challenge add a hula-hoop and see if they can pass it through without letting go of their hands.

*Adapted from [www.playworks.org/games](http://www.playworks.org/games)*

# Trail Mix

## INGREDIENTS

- Variety of whole grain cereals and granola
- Dried fruits: raisins, cranberries, etc.
- Nuts and seeds: sunflower seeds, almonds, peanuts, etc.

## DIRECTIONS

1. Give each child a zip lock snack bag.
2. Allow them to add their own mix of ingredients.
3. Enjoy!

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

# Pita Pocket

## INGREDIENTS

- Whole wheat pita pockets
- Turkey (.5-1oz per student)
- Low fat cheese slices
- Lettuce (buy extra)
- Tomato

## DIRECTIONS

1. Have children place each ingredient on to a plate.
2. Allow them to assemble their own pocket.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

# Fruit Smoothies

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups low-fat or fat free yogurt
- 2 cups frozen fruit

## DIRECTIONS

1. Combine yogurt and fruit in blender; blend until smooth.
2. Recipe makes 4 servings.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*



# Gourmet Popcorn

## INGREDIENTS

- Reduced-fat air-popped popcorn
- Dried ranch mix packet
- Dry cheese sprinkles
- Cooking spray

## DIRECTIONS

1. Pop popcorn and pour into a large sealable bag or container.
2. Spray with cooking spray, shake to mix and repeat 2-3 times or until coated.
3. Sprinkle in about a tablespoon of dry ranch or dry cheese sprinkles.
4. Shake to mix until coated and serve.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

# Turkey Sushi Rolls

## INGREDIENTS

- Whole wheat tortillas
- Low-fat cream cheese
- Fresh spinach
- Shredded carrots
- Turkey (.5-1oz per a child)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Spread cream cheese on tortilla.
2. Place spinach, shredded carrots and turkey down the middle of tortilla.
3. Roll tortilla tight.
4. Slice into 1" rounds; flip on sides to look like sushi.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

# Veggie Patch Bagel Bites

## INGREDIENTS

- Whole wheat mini bagels
- Low-fat cream cheese
- Diced veggies: peppers, carrots, cucumber, etc.

## DIRECTIONS

1. Spread cream cheese on bagels.
2. Dice the veggies into small pieces.
3. Top bagels with veggies and enjoy!

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*



# Waffle Tacos

## INGREDIENTS

- Whole grain waffles
- Peanut butter or strawberry cream cheese
- Bananas
- Honey

## DIRECTIONS

1. Warm or toast waffles.
2. Spread peanut butter or cream cheese on waffle.
3. Top with banana slices and honey.
4. Roll in half like a taco.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

# Fruit Spritzer

## INGREDIENTS

- Sparkling water
- 100% Juice

## DIRECTIONS

1. Fill half a cup with sparkling water.
2. Top with juice and enjoy.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

# Yogurt Parfaits

## INGREDIENTS

- Low-fat yogurt
- Whole grain cereal or granola
- Fresh or frozen fruit (thawed)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Provide children with bowls of  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup yogurt.
2. Have them add fruit and cereal or granola to taste.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*



# Fruit Pizzas

## INGREDIENTS

- Whole wheat English muffins
- Low-fat cream cheese
- Sliced fruit: kiwi, strawberries, peaches, bananas, etc.

## DIRECTIONS

1. Spread cream cheese on English muffins halves.
2. Have children top with fruit to taste.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

# Apple Yogurt

## INGREDIENTS

- Diced Granny Smith apples
- Fat-free vanilla yogurt
- Granola
- Raisins

## DIRECTIONS

1. Chop apples into small pieces.
2. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of yogurt to bowl.
3. Stir in a  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of chopped apples and top with granola and raisins.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

# Corn and Black Bean Salsa

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 can corn
- 1 can black beans
- 1 can diced tomatoes
- Baked whole grain corn chips

## DIRECTIONS

1. Rinse and drain corn and black beans.
2. Combine ingredients in mixing bowl.
3. Stir and serve with baked whole grain corn chips.

*Please wash hands and handle food properly.*

# Soil Detectives

- Divide children into learning teams.
- Each team should have a tray with a mound of soil and a magnifying glass.
- Ask children to be soil detectives and look for soil ingredients using a magnifying glass.
- Children will search for the living and non-living components in soil.
- Discuss how living things (insects, worms, mushrooms) eat the non-living things (rocks, dead plants) and break them down into tiny particles adding minerals to the soil for plants to soak up like a sponge.

*Adapted from the Washington State University, CHANGE Curriculum.*

# Natural Collage

## What You'll Need:

- Leaves, petals, twigs and other natural materials you can find outside to make art
- A bag for collecting the natural art supplies
- Glue, tape and string

## Directions:

- Take children on walk to find natural art supplies.
  - Have children pick up any leaves, petals, small pinecones and materials that have fallen to the ground to add to the collage.
- Bring items back, then glue, tape or string findings on a piece of paper to make a beautiful, natural collage.
- Consider adding magazine pictures, paint and glitter for variety.

*Adapted from <http://gentleworld.org/outdoor-activities-for-kids/#Easy%20Bird%20Feeder>*

# Outdoor Plant Tepee

## What You'll Need:

- Poles (bamboo or other light woods)
- Bean seeds or other climbing plants

## Directions:

- Create a small tepee, big enough for a child to sit inside, with sticks or bamboo poles crossing over each other.
- Plant seeds at the base of the tepee and allow them to grow up the poles creating a secret room in the garden for play.
- If you cannot create a tepee large enough for children to play in, create small tepees for butterflies or garden fairies!

*Adapted from <http://gentleworld.org/outdoor-activities-for-kids/#Easy%20Bird%20Feeder>*

# Easy Bird Feeder

## What You'll Need:

- String
- A large pinecone
- Nut or seed butter
- Birdseed or a mix of sunflower seeds and millet

## Directions:

- Tie a string to the top of your pinecone.
- Spread a light layer of nut or seed butter on the pinecone.
- Sprinkle birdseed or sunflower and millet mix over the pinecone until coated.
- Hang the feeder from a tree or place where birds will reach it.
- Have children observe the birds enjoy their special treat.

*Adapted from <http://gentleworld.org/outdoor-activities-for-kids/#Easy%20Bird%20Feeder>*

# Growing Herbs

## What You'll Need:

- Small pots or egg cartons
- Soil
- Seeds

## Directions:

- Add soil to small pots and plant seeds.
- Place pots in a warm, sunny spot.
- Keep soil moist but be careful not to soak.
- Add organic fertilizer every two weeks.

Herbs can take a few weeks to sprout. Once they are ready, have children use them to add flavor to various foods and drinks:

- Add mint leaves to tea.
- Add basil, mint or parsley to water.
- Add parsley to salad.
- Add chives to mashed potatoes.

Easy to grow herbs: Chives, Dill, Basil, Parsley, Mint and Sage.

*Adapted from <http://www.kidsgardening.org/>*

# Blindfold Fruit and Vegetable Taste Test

## What You'll Need:

- Bite-size samples of fruits and vegetables
- Small paper cups, plates or napkins
- Two blindfolds (large bandanas or handkerchiefs)

## What To Do:

- Divide children into two teams.
- Blindfold a child from each team and have them taste a food and guess what it is.
- The first one to correctly identify the food earns a point for their team.
- Continue the contest until all kids on each team have at least one chance to guess.
- The team with the most points wins.
- Have all children taste all the foods together at the end of the game.
- Have children rate the foods using thumbs up or thumbs down.

*Adapted from Leader's Guide: Healthy eating & active living ideas & activities for kids and families at [kidnetic.com](http://kidnetic.com)*

# Make Breakfast Count!

Invite parents to a breakfast bar.

- Provide bowls of oatmeal or low-fat yogurt.
- Set up stations with a variety of toppings including: granola, diced fruits and nuts.
- Add a glass of low fat or fat free milk and enjoy!



# Make Each Plate a Healthy Plate

## DINNER MENU

- Ask children to create a dinner menu for their families.
- Include foods from all food groups.
- Have children decorate the menu like they would see in a restaurant with pictures and neat hand writing.
- Encourage children to help with preparing their dinner at home and share the experience with the class.



# Cold Weather Fun

Bundle up and head outside on a snowy day. Have children work together to create snow creatures or a village of snow people to show their parents at pick up.



# Healthy Celebrations

Create a sign-up sheet with healthy snacks and activity supplies for parents to volunteer to bring to the next party. Start with these items:

- Fruit
- Veggies and dip
- Cheese cubes
- Granola bars
- Milk
- 100% Juice
- Game
- Music
- Goodies:
  - Pencils
  - Stickers
  - Bookmarkers

# Growing Great Tasters

Host a veggie tasting party.

- Prepare a variety of vegetables including cooked and raw forms.
- Compare textures and tastes.
- Use a large chart to track the likes and dislikes for each vegetable tasted.
- Make a graph showing the children's favorite vegetables; display for parents to see.

*Adapted from <http://www.brighthubeducation.com/preschool-lesson-plans/58585-harvest-time-vegetable-lesson/>*



# Build Children Up With Words

The Compliment Game builds confidence and helps children learn to appreciate classmates. Play this game with children sitting in a circle and the teacher in sitting in the middle.

- Throw a small ball to a student and ask him/her to say something positive about the students on either side of him/her.
  - Encourage students to focus compliments on personalities and behaviors, not looks.
- Send home a description of the activity for families to try at home.
- Families can say something positive about the person that tossed the ball to them.
- Try to make it through 5 rounds!

*Adapted from [http://www.ehow.com/info\\_8009867\\_confidence-building-games-children.html](http://www.ehow.com/info_8009867_confidence-building-games-children.html).*

# An Hour of Play a Day

Encourage children to get 60 minutes of physical activity every day. Play activities from the healthy activity section of the Ring of Fun or create new games. Invite parents to participate games with their children at a family night.



# Reduce Screen Time

Implement a no screen time policy at your site.

Instead, play board games. Have children bring a board game from home. Play games as a class or break into small groups. Encourage children to take the games back home and play them with their family.



# Water First for Thirst

Make water fun and flavorful.

- Have each child or group fill a pitcher with water.
- Provide fresh mint, basil, sliced cucumbers, sliced citrus fruits and berries for flavoring.
- Have children create their own flavor combinations.
- Refrigerate for at least an hour, allowing the flavor to infuse.
- At pick-up, encourage parents and children to try all the different flavored waters and discuss which ones they liked best.

# Take Time for Meals

During meal time ask children to share their favorite fruit and vegetable and how they like it prepared or how it is used in a favorite dish, i.e., raw, cooked, with cinnamon, in a casserole, etc.

For an at home activity:

Have children ask their family the same question at dinner that night and bring a list of dishes their family mentioned to share with the class.



# Make Snacks Count!

Have children prepare a healthy snack to share with family.

## BANANA POPS

### Ingredients

- 1 banana
- 2 Popsicle sticks
- 2 Tbsp peanut butter\*, softened
- Chopped peanuts or walnuts, granola, cereal or sunflower seeds\*

*\* Have a nut or seed allergy, use cream cheese instead of peanut butter and use cereal.*

### Directions

1. Peel the banana.
2. Cut it in half, widthwise.
3. Push a Popsicle stick through the cut end of each half.
4. Spread peanut butter on the banana.
5. Roll banana in the nuts, cereal or seeds.
6. Wrap in waxed paper and freeze for 3 hours.
7. Send children home with one for themselves and one to share.

*Recipe from [Familyfun.go.com](http://Familyfun.go.com)*

# Good Rest is Best

Have children write a 'sleep pledge' for parents to sign. Include the following guidelines:

## **I will...**

- Set a regular bedtime.
- Create a relaxing bedtime routine.
- Avoid caffeine before bedtime.
- Avoid electronics before bedtime.
- Keep household noise level low.
- Keep bedroom cool and dark.

*Adapted from <http://www.webmd.com/sleep-disorders/sleep-disorders-sleep-tips-kids>.*