

## HEALTHY LIVING: OUTDOOR GAMES

### HEALTHY EATING & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (HEPA) STANDARDS

Studies show that healthy, active children learn better, perform better academically, and experience fewer behavioral problems. But many children are not getting the healthy food and physical activity that they need to function each day. Afterschool and summer programs are well positioned to be key partners in a comprehensive effort to help children grow healthy. The National Afterschool Association's HEPA standards provide a framework for those Afterschool and summer programs to ensure that they are providing a healthy growing environment for every student present. To learn more about the HEPA standards, visit:

<https://naaweb.org/resources/naa-hepa-standards?highlight=WyJoZXBlI0=>

#### STANDARDS FOR THIS ACTIVITY LESSON

Content	Standard Code	Description
Content & Quality (CQ) Standards	CQ10.	Offer developmentally appropriate, inclusive physical activities, games, and sports that provide youth with the knowledge and skills necessary to enjoy being physically active throughout their lives and reflect the best practices.
Content & Quality (CQ) Standards	CQ11-19.	Plan and provide time for physical activity, provide moderate to vigorous activity, offer daily outdoor play, offer free play, etc.
Environmental Supports (ES) Standards	ES2.	Has adequate types and amounts of equipment for games, activities, and sports that support best practices.

# BIG IDEAS

## WHY IS PLAY SO IMPORTANT?

Active play with others can help keep people healthy and strong. This also fosters lifelong appreciation for movement and exercise. Many youth spend too much time indoors playing video games or watching television; they are not getting the recommended hour of moderate physical activity each day. More than two hours per day of screen time for youth can be associated with poor health. Bodies of all ages need at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day. One of the best ways to achieve this goal is to limit time spent in front of computers, video games, and television and go outside to play!

## SUPPLIES & PREPARATION

### SUPPLIES

- Play equipment (balls, jump ropes, hula-hoops, Frisbees, etc. as much as you can find to give the youth many options)
- Pen/pencils/markers
- Paper

### PREPARATION

- If you feel that you are lacking in play equipment, consider asking the youth to bring their favorite play items with them on a certain day
- Set out the assortment of play equipment, whatever is available at the school or center that your out of school time group meets at

## ENGAGE THE STUDENTS

1. Ask the students the following questions to guide a discussion on play and why it is important to play outside and do other activities that do not involve screen time.
  - a. Someone share a memory of a time when you were playing outside with friends or family.
  - b. What activities do you like to do outside?
  - c. How do you spend your free time after school, on the weekends, or on breaks from school?
  - d. Do you play with video or computer games?
  - e. Do you play outside?
  - f. Which do you prefer, screen time or playing?
2. Encourage the students to be honest in their answers to the questions and foster a safe space for them to discuss how important it is to play versus always being connected to a screen.

# EXPLORE & EXPERIMENT

## EXPLORE... AND PLAY!

1. This activity is to be completely designed and ran by the youth!
2. There are some options as to setting the activity up for the youth, if your group is on the smaller side, you can allow the youth to create a game or activity as a whole. However, if your group is bigger or you would like to split up the students, provide enough play materials for the different groups. Then, the separate groups can teach their games to the rest of the group.
3. Explain to the students that they are going to invent a new game for the rest of the group to play.
  - a. The game should have a name (the more creative, the better!)
  - b. Their game must have an end goal while still having several steps to reach that goal
  - c. The game should have rules or regulations to play within
  - d. The students should use at least 2 of the pieces of play equipment in their game, either to serve as boundaries or props to actually play with
4. Allow each group plenty of time to create a game and time to practice their game
  - a. Remind them to consider how they will teach the game to other groups (if you have more than one group!)
5. When each group has a game, a name for their game, and a plan for teaching it to the rest of the youth, have each group tell the name of their game, give instructions, present a demonstration (if the group so chooses), and then allow the rest of the groups to play the game
  - a. After the game has been played by everyone else, have the students give a “glow” and a “grow” about the game, reminding them to be kind and constructive, NOT mean.
  - b. Repeat these steps so that each group gets to teach their game to the rest of the students, this can be carried out over several days if you run out of time!

## CONNECT & EXTEND

- How did your group start the process of making up a new game?
- What was the first decision your group made about the game?
- What happened if you disagreed with the rest of your group? How did the group handle it?
- What was your favorite part about coming up with a new game to play?
- What was the hardest part about creating a new game?

## EXTEND

- A great way to get this activity started is for you and your staff to come up with a game for the whole group to play before they create their own. It will help them come up with something for their game!

## REFERENCES

4-H/Army Youth Development Project. (2017). Lifetime fitness, healthy decisions. Up for the Challenge. U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, 4-H National Headquarters, U.S. Army Child and Youth Services.

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