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# Introduction

The Healthy Habits for Healthy Kids series was created to provide educators and parents with simple activities that help students learn to make healthy food choices, appreciate the importance of daily exercise and develop healthy habits they will maintain throughout their lifetimes. Students who are healthy are better able to learn and be successful.

The activities in this book help students understand where the foods they eat come from and why nutritious food choices are beneficial to them. The objectives outlined by the USDA Food Guidance System formed the foundation upon which the activities in this book are based. The book has been adapted to more closely correlate to the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education concepts for Years 2–3 alongside the Australian Dietary Guidelines and the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating. Each of the five food groups is explored in depth. The goal is to build an understanding of the need to incorporate fruits, vegetables, whole grains and cereals, protein (lean meats, poultry, fish, nuts and beans etc.) and dairy into our daily diet. Students will also explore “sometimes” foods, or treats, and develop a greater understanding of why enjoying those foods in moderation is important to their health.

Physical fitness is also of the utmost importance for growing children, and it is suggested that they get at least 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous activity. At school and at home this can be difficult, since there is always so much to do. Still, knowing how important physical fitness is, we have to try! We have provided a variety of effective suggestions for exercises that can be done in the classroom. They can be completed in short increments on a daily basis. In addition to the obvious benefits of physical activity, the inclusion of purposeful physical activity at strategic times of the day can release tension and energise both students and teacher.

In recent years, the Australian Curriculum has been developed and is being implemented in many schools. These essential concepts aim to prepare students for university and careers, with an emphasis on real-life applications. Coupled with the Health and Physical Education essential concepts, the Australian Curriculum: English supports a whole-child approach to education – one that ensures that each student is healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged in their learning. The Healthy Habits for Healthy Kids series also supports a whole-child approach to education and can be used to support such policies as the NSW Department of Education Nutrition in Schools Policy (<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/nutrition-in-schools-policy>).

## How to Use This Book

*Healthy Habits for Healthy Kids, Years 2–3* was developed to provide busy teachers and students with an easy-to-use curriculum to learn more about personal nutrition, health and fitness. We want students to embrace making healthy food choices and getting exercise every day, knowing that healthier students make better learners.

## Getting Started

- Share the Healthy Habits Pledge (page 6) with students and discuss each line. Challenge students to learn the pledge and share it with family members. The goal here is to inspire the whole family to focus on good nutrition and support healthy habits. Post the pledge in the classroom and review it from time to time as students gain more insights into their personal health.
- Introduce daily exercise to your students using the tips on page 9. On pages 10–11 you will find cards for simple movements that students can do for a minute or two during the day. Display a clock with a second hand or keep a timer handy for these sessions. Use the physical activities to start the day and/or to transition from one activity to another. Throw in an extra one on tough days, or use more than one when weather conditions inhibit outdoor activity. These short, physical exercise breaks are a positive way to settle students for their day’s work. And don’t forget breathing exercises! They can be done at any time of day and can help refocus or calm students as needed.

# Introduction *(cont.)*

## How to Use This Book *(cont.)*

### Getting Started *(cont.)*

- Gather and display reference materials for the classroom on topics of nutrition, fitness and overall health. Resources might include library or trade books, magazines, posters and kid-friendly materials printed from government websites (see page 3). If appropriate, save links to relevant websites in a dedicated folder on classroom computers.
- Encourage students to start collecting packaging and nutritional labels from food products. Explain that they will be learning to read them and using them for comparisons. Establish an area in the classroom where these can be stored or displayed.

### The Student Pages

Student pages present health-related information and activities. Discuss the information together as a class. Share information. Most activities require no more than writing implements and classroom research materials. Devote a certain amount of time each day or week to these activities. The more regular they are, the more important they will be for students.

You might consider interspersing the Healthy Foods activities with Healthy Habits activities to give students a balanced approach. As the teacher, you know how much information your students can absorb at a time. It is also important to be sensitive to the dietary needs, allergies and family eating habits of your students.

There are three components to this book. The first section, Healthy Foods, focuses on the five food groups as described in government materials such as *eatforhealth.gov.au*. The goal here is to educate students about healthy foods – what they look like, where they come from, what nutrients they provide and how they can be incorporated into one's diet. A list of the foods commonly found in each food group is found at the beginning of each section. Have students think about the foods they eat regularly, the foods they have not heard of and healthy foods they would like to try. Provide resource materials for students to learn about foods that are new to them. Encourage students to make healthy food choices each day.

In the Healthy Habits section, students are introduced to concepts such as food safety, germ prevention, dental care, physical fitness and other ways to stay safe and healthy.

Suggestions on pages 74–84 are for a variety of outdoor, gross-motor skills activities. These activities will allow students to explore a full range of motion: running, leaping, jumping, dancing, etc.

The student Food and Fitness Journal (accessed at [go.hbe.com.au](http://go.hbe.com.au); follow the instructions given on the first left-hand page of this book) gives students the opportunity to express their thoughts about the information presented in the activities and class discussions. It can be used for reflective writing, sorting or summarising information, or to check for understanding.

Download and reproduce copies of the journal from [go.hbe.com.au](http://go.hbe.com.au) for each student. You may wish to have students add pages to the journal throughout the year as new food and fitness topics arise. Students can add notebook paper to the journal, or you can download extra copies of the blank journal pages also given at [go.hbe.com.au](http://go.hbe.com.au). Additional resources are also available to download. A Healthy Habits classroom poster is available to purchase at [www.hbe.com.au](http://www.hbe.com.au).

# Internet Resources

These sites provide useful, age-appropriate information to aid you in embarking on a year filled with active, healthy students. Let's move!

## **eatforhealth.gov.au: Australian Dietary Guidelines**

This Department of Health site offers resources and information about the five food groups and the Healthy Eating Pyramid.

<https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/>

## **eatforhealth.gov.au: Australian Guide to Healthy Eating**

This resource provides a visual representation of the five food groups as described in the Australian Dietary Guidelines.

<https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/australian-guide-healthy-eating>

## **Fresh for Kids**

This site offers resources for kids and teachers, including informative pages on specific fruits and vegetables.

<http://www.freshforkids.com.au/>

## **Healthy Kids Association: Home**

This New South Wales site provides plenty of tips, activities and resources for students and teachers all over Australia.

<http://healthy-kids.com.au/>

## **Healthy School Canteens**

This site includes tips on how to develop a menu that incorporates healthy food, as well as plenty of research and information for teachers and school leaders.

<https://healthyschoolcanteens.nsw.gov.au/>

## **Kids Helpline: Healthy Mind and Healthy Body**

This subsection of Kids Helpline has lots of tips for young students looking for ways to make their minds and bodies healthy and strong.

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/kids/tips/healthy-mind-and-healthy-body/>

## **Nutrition Australia: Food and Fitness for Children**

This site includes a summary of ways families can build a foundation of healthy habits for their children.

<http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/national/resource/food-and-fitness-children>

## **Nutrition Australia: Healthy Eating Pyramid**

This site goes into details of the food groups and how to approach them. This resource works very well when paired alongside the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating.

<http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/national/resource/healthy-eating-pyramid>

## **Stephanie Alexander**

Chef and author Stephanie Alexander is passionate about raising children and young adults with an appreciation for and understanding of fresh food. This led her to establish the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation (<https://www.kitchengardenfoundation.org.au/>), which leads schools around Australia in pleasurable food education.

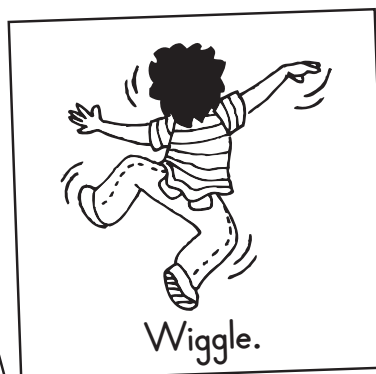
<http://www.stephaniealexander.com.au>



# Exercise of the Day

Here are some tips to get your daily indoor exercise program started.

1. Each day ask a student to choose a simple exercise movement from the list for the class to perform. Use the cards on pages 10 and 11.
2. Demonstrate the exercises as needed. When the movement involves stretching suggest slow and steady movements.
3. Ask questions that pertain to the movements.
  - How long can you make your arms or legs when you reach?
  - How fast can you run in place?
  - Can you run in slow motion?
  - When you pretend to climb a tree, do your hands and feet move together or do they alternate?
4. Set a timer or watch the clock and do the activity for one minute.
5. Have students add a tally mark for the chosen exercise to their “My Exercise Log” page in their journals each day after they have completed the action.
6. Repeat the same action throughout the day to signal transitions or simply to give students an opportunity to stretch and refocus their energies. Allow students to add additional tally marks each time in the day that they repeat the action.

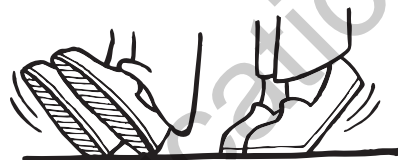




## Ideas for Outdoors

Start with these transitions to go in and out of the classroom. Explain that each day the class will walk out one way and come back into the classroom doing the opposite movements. Here are a few suggestions to get started:

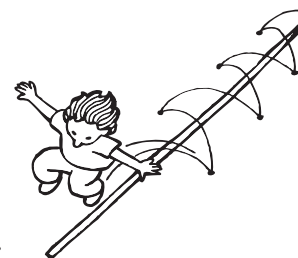
- Walk outside on heels, walk inside on toes.
- Walk outside quickly, walk inside slowly.
- Walk outside going forwards, walk backwards or sideways to return to the classroom.
- Slouch walking out, stand tall walking back in.
- Walk outside with arms in front, walk inside with arms behind back.
- Walk outside in a straight line, walk into the room in a curvy line.



### Relay Races

Place a line of sticky tape or string on the floor (or ground) for each team. Introduce a number of ways to go from Start to Finish. Start with these:

- Hop back and forth over the line (zig-zagging) from Start to Finish. Sit down when all teammates have hopped back and forth to the finish.
- Team members stand on the line. Pass a small beanbag or other small object alternating over head and under legs to the end of the line and back again. Sit down when item is back at the start.



### Skill Development

Teach students gross motor skills, such as galloping, leaping and skipping.

**Galloping:** Have students hold hands and slide around the circle. Then have students drop hands and turn in the direction the circle is moving. They continue to slide, now moving forwards; remind children they'll pick up their feet a little more. Try pretending to be horses.

**Leaping:** Find a grassy or sandy place to practise. Have students take a few running steps before they leap. Have students try to leap as far as they can. Alternatively, ask them to imagine they are leaping over a low step or wall. If you wish, have students participate in leaping contests for distance and height.

**Skipping:** Have students step and then hop on one foot. Then ask them to take a step and hop with the next foot. Suggest that students swing their arms as they skip to help them maintain balance and rhythm. Invite students to sing a song as they skip.



# Outdoor Activities Using Props

## Scarf Tosses

Use old scarves or 30-centimetre squares of fabric. Have students follow a series of directions using the scarves. To start, allow students ample time to practise tossing the scarves up and catching them before they hit the ground. Encourage students to toss the scarves up as high as they can and then let them float down.

Then, try the following ideas:

- Throw the scarf with the left hand and catch it with the right hand. Then switch hands and catch the scarf with the left hand.
- Throw the scarf up high, turn around once and try to catch the scarf before it floats to the ground.
- Throw and catch the scarf with a partner.



## Beach Ball Throw

Throwing, bouncing and catching a beach ball is a fun and good exercise that can be done outside or seated as a classroom activity. Why not combine activity with a skills practice? Take a few minutes to label the ball with words, letters or numbers.

1. Have students arrange themselves in a circle.
2. Explain to students that they will gently throw the beach ball back and forth until they hear a signal.
3. The student who has the ball at the signal will read the word, letter or number written on the ball that is closest to their right thumb.

Consider writing on beach balls using permanent ink.

Students can practise one of the following skills:

- letter identification
- sight words
- word recognition
- rhyming with the word on the ball
- addition facts or subtraction facts.



## Ball Rolling

Rolling a ball involves a number of skills including eye-hand coordination. To start, have students sit in a circle with legs crossed. Have each student practise rolling and catching the ball across the circle.

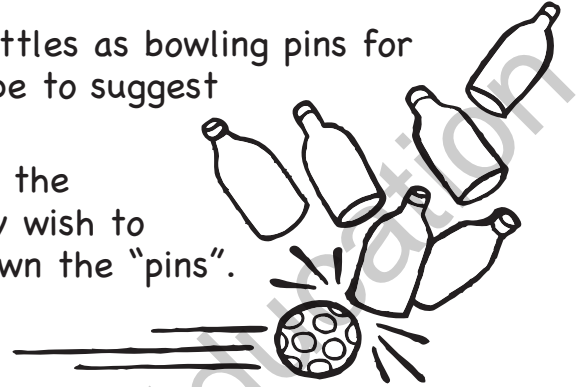


# Outdoor Activities Using Props *(cont.)*

## Bowling

Use a medium-sized ball and six two-litre bottles as bowling pins for each lane of bowling. Use chalk or sticky tape to suggest bowling lanes.

**Teacher Note:** Depending on the strength of the students and the weight of the ball, you may wish to add some sand or other material to weigh down the "pins".



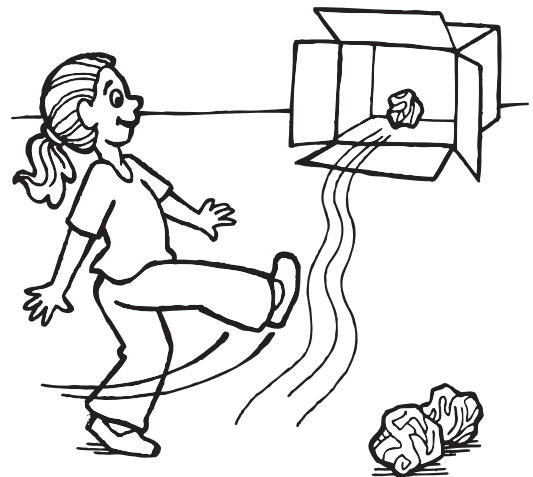
## How to Play

1. Arrange the pins in a triangle.
2. Use a cone or piece of tape to establish a starting point for the "bowler".
3. Have students take turns standing behind the cone and rolling the ball to knock over the pins.
4. Explain that the goal is to knock over as many pins as possible. This may be done in one turn, or students may be given a second roll, just as in regular bowling.
5. Engage other students to be in charge of ball retrieval and pin set-up to keep the game moving and more students involved.

## Kicking

Use a piece of scrunched-up newspaper for kicking practice. (Let students do the "scrunching".) The newspaper ball will stand still more readily than a real ball. Once students are comfortable kicking the newspaper balls, try some of these activities:

- Create a target into which the students must kick the "ball". (A large box works well.)
- Kick the ball back and forth between partners.
- Draw chalk lines, and see if students can kick the ball along the lines. Try relay races along the lines.



**Teacher Note:** Incorporate real balls and longer distances for targets as students' kicking skills improve.