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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 Dietary Guidelines, Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education standards for Foundation to Year 1. 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: English has been developed and is being implemented in many schools. These standards aim to prepare students for university and careers, with an emphasis on real-life applications. Coupled with the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education content descriptions, they support 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 F–1 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 make healthy food choices and get 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 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 and breathing activities in class. Use the suggestions on page 9 and the activity cards on pages 10 and 11 for 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. Short, physical exercise breaks are a positive way to settle students for their day’s work. And don’t forget those 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 nutrition labels 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. Be sensitive to the dietary needs and the 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 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 common foods in the 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 to try. Provide resource materials for students to learn about foods that are new to them. Encourage students to think about ways they can 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 80–81 are for outdoor, gross-motor skills activities. These activities will allow students to explore a full range of motion: hopping, running, skipping, leaping, jumping, etc.

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

Download and print copies of the journal from go.hbe.com.au for each student. Encourage students to add pages to the journal throughout the year as new food and fitness topics arise. Reproduce extra copies of the blank journal page that is also provided at go.hbe.com.au as needed. Additional activities are also available.

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 dietary guidelines in Australia.

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

eatforhealth.gov.au: Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

This subsection of the site shows the five food groups as shown on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating. These resources, paired alongside each other, are great resources for teachers.

<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

This site provides information for schools, students and parents, as well as programs to promote active, healthy lifestyles for kids.

<https://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/>

Nutrition Australia: Home

The main page of Nutrition Australia provides both national and state-specific information on the benefits of healthy eating and physical activity.

<http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/>

Nutrition Australia: Food and Fitness for Children

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

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

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.

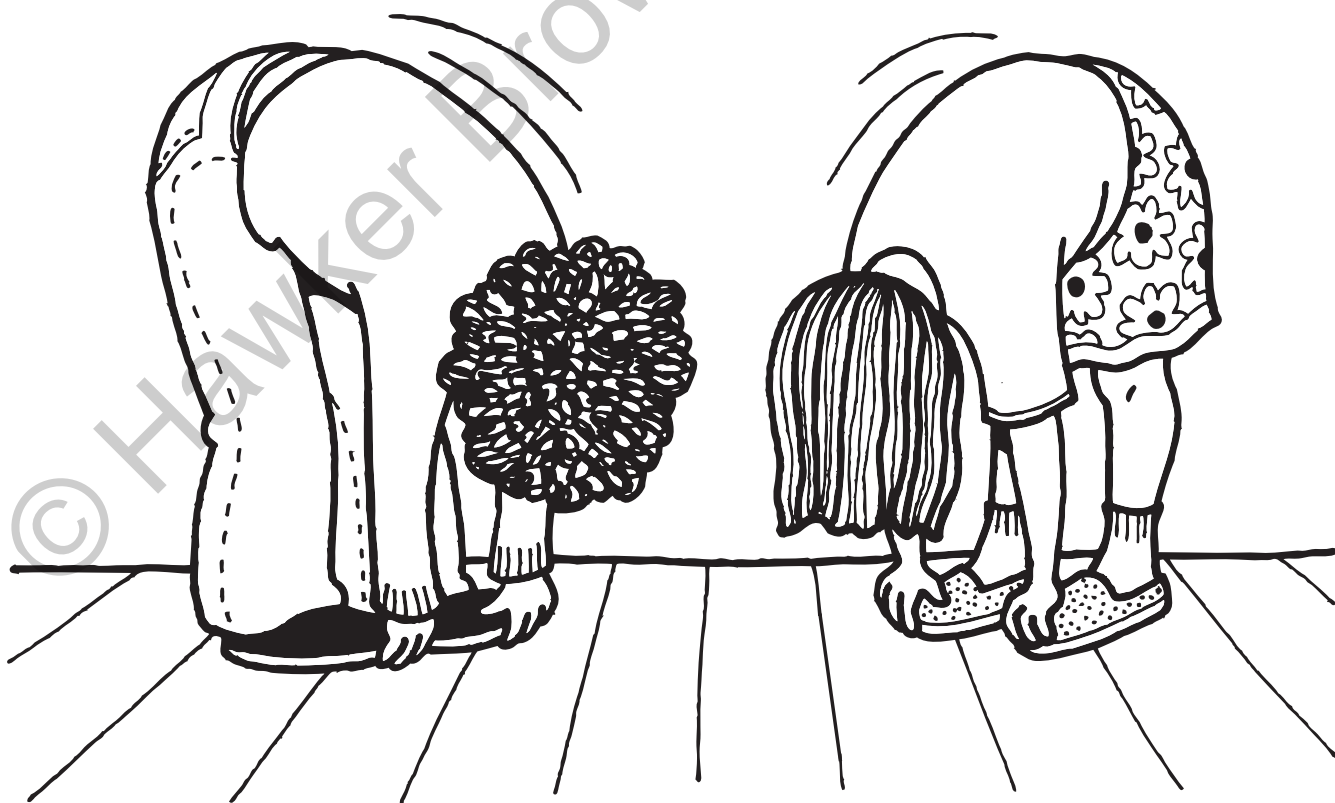
<http://www.stephaniealexander.com.au>



Exercise of the Day

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

1. Each day, ask a student to choose an exercise card for the class to perform: use the cards on pages 10–11.
2. Demonstrate the exercises on each card as needed. Point out the parts of the body being used. 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 each day's activity for one minute.
5. Add the chosen card to your class calendar each morning after the students 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.





Ideas for Outdoors

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

- Walk out on heels, walk in on toes.
- Walk out quickly, walk in slowly.
- Walk out 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 out in a straight line, walk in in a curvy line.



Foot Races

Try races doing different “travelling” movements. Use markers like traffic cones or coffee tins to signal starting and stopping points. Start with short distances and extend them as students’ skills and stamina increase. Alternate laps of running, skipping, hopping on one foot or two feet, sliding sideways or galloping.

Line Games

Play whole-group line games such as “Mother May I?”, “Simon Says” or “Red Light, Green Light”.

Circle Games

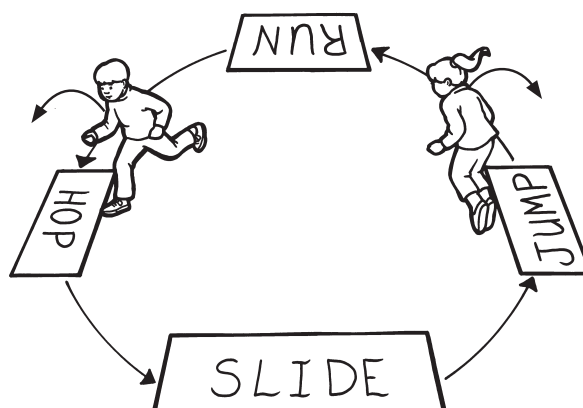
Involve the whole group in circles games such as “Farmer in the Dell”, “Ring-a-ring o’ roses” or “Duck, Duck, Goose”.

Teacher Note: If possible, when playing these games, consider two groups of 10 or more instead of one whole-class group. This will allow for more turns! There are also many Indigenous games such as *marn-grook* or *mer kai* that would be very active and fun, depending on the abilities of your students.

Combined Locomotor Skills

Use chalk to make locomotor movement signs and a large circle on the pavement. Try these words for starters: jump, run, hop and slide.

Have groups of students take turns doing the different actions as they progress around the outside of the circle (so as not to step on the words). The circle can be enlarged as students become more comfortable with the different movements.





Ideas for Outdoors *(cont.)*

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:

- Toss the scarf with left hand and catch with right hand. Then swap to tossing with the right and catching with the left.
- Toss the scarf, turn around once and try to catch the scarf before it floats to the ground.
- Toss and catch the scarf with a partner.



Beach Ball Throw

Throwing, bouncing and catching a ball are all fun activities that can be done outside or seated in the classroom.

Take a few minutes to label the ball with words, letters or numbers.

Have students arrange themselves in a circle.

Explain to students that they will gently throw the ball back and forth until they hear a signal.

The student who has the ball at the signal will read the word, letter or number written on the ball closest to their right thumb.

Consider creating balls for students to practise one of the following skills:

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

Ball Rolling

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

