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## **Kidokinetics: The Critical Need to Address Childhood Obesity Trends in a fun non-competitive environment.**

There is a “**Critical Need**” to address Childhood Obesity and rising health concerns for our kids.

At no other time in our nation has there been a greater need for children’s fitness programs. In the past decade, **the childhood obesity rate has tripled**, with one in every four children now overweight. Childhood obesity and inactivity has far-reaching consequences. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), there is a dangerous bottom line: American children today have a shorter life expectancy than do their parents.

Here is some troubling data for you to consider ...

### **American Council on Exercise:**

#### **Statistics on Childhood / Adolescent Obesity in America:**

*[Centers for Disease Control (CDC), National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES)]*

- Obesity is a global problem that affects 300 million people worldwide,
- Nearly two-thirds (130 million) adults in the United States are overweight,
- **In 1964, the childhood obesity rate was 5%. Today, it's over 20%.**
- **Approximately 25% of children and adolescents are overweight.**
  - Over 10% of preschool children between ages 2 and 5 are overweight
  - 15% of children and teen (ages 6-19 years) are seriously overweight
  - Another 15% of children and teens are considered at risk of becoming overweight
- Researchers found that lowered self-esteem was associated with being overweight in girls as young as 5.
- Children with obesity, ages 10-13, are reported to have a 70% likelihood of obesity persisting into adult years.
- By the time they reach high school, 63% of children are no longer physically active.

**THIS IS WHERE WE CAN AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THESE CHILDREN'S LIVES.**

**It's never too early to start introducing children to physical fitness (even as early as 6 months).**

**Why is it so important for young children to move? Fitness & movement are critical in their development. It is important that we present fitness to children in a way that will make them willing to participate and have fun and form lifelong positive habits.**

**Physical activity can contribute positively to so many different aspects in a child's life, including:**

- **Art**
- **Math**
- **Music**
- **Science**
- **Social Studies**

**Today we are going to look at different ideas that you can take home with you and do with the children at your schools. I hope you will leave here with many ideas and enough to teach other staff members how they can introduce physical fitness into the lives of the children that they spend so much time each day.**

## **GROSS MOTOR SKILLS**

**Gross motor control** refers to the movements of the large muscles of the body.

Without reasonable gross motor skills, children often struggle with the fine motor skills that are required for formal school work.

A baby starts developing gross motor control from birth, beginning with the control of her head and torso, continuing until she has mastered sitting, crawling, standing and eventually walking, running, jumping and the range of activities that an adult can do.

Children learn new gross motor skills by practicing until a particular skill is mastered

Motor skills in preschool children improve greatly. An average 5 year old American child can ride a tri-cycle, climb a ladder, pump on a swing, throw, catch and kick a ball. Some can skate, ski, or ride a bicycle, which all require practice and brain coordination. A three year old child can not hop on one foot, but by the time that child is five, his brain has matured enough for him to be able to master this skill.

Below are some of the gross motor skills we want to work on and encourage children in a positive manner to practice.

- Balance – the ability to maintain equilibrium
- Body awareness – for improved posture and control
- Crossing of the mid-line
- Laterality – awareness of the left and right sides of the body
- Major muscle co-ordination
- Spatial orientation – awareness of the body position in space and in relation to other objects or people
- Run
- Walk a straight line
- Jump
- Hop
- Alternate feet walking down stairs
- March
- Stand on one foot for 5-10 seconds
- Walk backwards for five feet
- Throw a ball
- Warm ups

## **CROSSING THE MIDLINE**

The midline (first defined by Dr. Dennison) is the area where the left and right visual fields overlap, function as one. They help students to increase upper-lower body coordination, for both large-motor activities and fine-motor skills.

The Cross Crawl is simply a cross-lateral walking in place exercise. By touching the right elbow to the left knee and then the left elbow to the right knee, large areas of both brain hemispheres are activated at the same time. Cross Crawling, like walking and being totally present to the motion of walking, facilitates balanced nerve activation across the corpus callosum (that part in your brain that connects the right half to the left half.) When done on a regular basis, more nerve networks form and more connections are made in the corpus callosum, thus making communication between the two hemispheres faster and more integrated for high level reasoning.

You can also do Cross Crawl to a variety of music and rhythms. Not being able to cross the midline may affect a child's ability to read, write, participate in sports & physical activities, etc.

### **Crossing Midline Warm ups**

Reach with opposite arm and leg in varied directions.

Opposite hand to foot, hand to knee, hug oneself, elbow to knee, hand to ear.

Reach behind the body to touch the opposite foot.

Pop bubbles with one hand only

Reach for a bean bag across your body, then throw at a target

Make a large 8 with arms out in front of you

Make a large X with arms out in front of you

Do a slow-motion Cross Crawl, reaching opposite arm and leg to their full extension (Cross Crawl for focus)

Skip (or bounce lightly) between each Cross Crawl. (Skip-Across is especially helpful for centering; it also alleviates visual stress.)

### **Noodlekinetics**

#### **Keep the ball safe**

**Material needed:** *Large noodles and 1 or 2 beach balls.*

Have groups of no more than 6-8 children standing in a circle facing inwards and then try outwards. Kids open their legs and put the noodle between their legs. The ball will be in the middle of the circle and the object is to not let the ball go through their legs and to keep the ball in the circle. Each participant should try and hit the ball out of the circle through someone else's legs.

#### **Noodlekinetics Stacking**

**Materials needed:** Large, medium and small noodles

Have the children bring all different sizes of the noodles and stack them. You can give them a period of time that they have to stack the noodles.

#### **Noodlekinetics says:**

**Materials needed:** *Medium or large size pool noodles*

Have one person in the front of the class leading different exercises with the noodle and have the class follow.

#### **Glue your body parts**

**Materials needed:** *Large or medium pool noodles*

Have each child find a partner and give them body parts to match up with another person and hold the noodle in place until you let them release and try another hold

### **Noodle Baseball**

**Materials needed:** *Large and small pool noodles/ waffle balls*

Have the children throw their small noodles in the air and practice hitting the small noodle with their large noodle. They can also find a partner that will stand in front of them and throw (pitch) the noodle to them. Set up a T and have the children hit a waffle ball from there, the results are almost always in favor of the child batting.

### **Noodle Defense**

**Materials needed:** *Large or medium and small noodles and a goal or hula hoop*

Using a goal or area away from the group, have a few children be the defenders around the goal and the other children spread out. The children's job is to pick up as many small noodles and toss them into the area. The defenders can stand in front of the area and either hit the small noodles back their hands or with a large noodle.

### **Noodle Nutrition Bowl**

**Materials needed:** *Large, medium and small pool noodles, hula hoops*

You should have 5 hula hoops spread out, 4 in each corner and one in the center. Place all the small noodles in the center. Give each child 2 large or medium noodles (chopsticks) and have them pick up the small noodles which are healthy food from the center of the room and while they are carrying it over to their hula hoop they should think about what healthy food it is and drop it in the hula hoop ("bowl")

### **Noodle-go round**

**Materials needed:** *Large pool noodles*

Have all the children stand in a circle facing each other and their noodles should touch in the middle, while the other end is pushing up against each child's stomach. This will build strength having them hold their noodles up. Have them do different activities while their noodles are touching each others. Lift up one foot. Touch your nose, head, eyes, stomach, etc. For younger children you can have them do this in pairs.

### **Knock the Ice-cream**

**Materials needed:** *Large and medium pool noodles*

Each student will collect one large noodle and a medium noodle. The students will place the medium noodle "ice-cream" on the back of their hands. In the other hand, they will hold the large noodle. When the game begins, students will attempt to use their large noodles to knock the medium noodle "ice-cream" off the hand of other students. If the medium noodle "ice-cream" gets knocked off, the student must leave put down their noodles and leave the playing area and complete a fitness task. When the task is complete, they may reenter the game and continue playing

### **Noodlekinetics Sit ups and Abs**

**Materials needed:** *Medium or small noodles*

Children should lay down with one noodle placed behind their heads when they sit up they should bring the noodle to in front of their feet

You can also put the noodle on their stomach and as they sit up it should not roll off

Children should lay on their back with their feet in the air, they will take the noodle for a ride up and down with out dropping the noodle

### **Drop the noodle**

**Materials needed:** *Small noodles and 4 buckets*

Have the children in two lines with two buckets at the start of the line and two buckets at the end spot have the children one at a time take the noodle to the opposite end.

### **Noodle Push-Ups**

**Materials needed:** *Small noodles and poly spots*

Place two poly spots on the floor about 3 inches apart. On one poly spot, put 1 small noodle. The object is to move the small noodle onto the other poly spot one at a time while staying in push-up position. The students must alternate hands each time they move a small noodle over to the other poly spot.

### **Noodle Balancing**

**Materials needed:** *Large noodles*

Each child should place the noodle on an open palm so that it extends upward. Without holding the noodle the students will attempt to balance the noodle on the open hand. To make the activity more challenging, the teacher can have the students move while balancing the noodle.

### **Noodle Tug**

**Materials needed:** *Large noodles*

Children should have a partner and a large noodle. Children should hold one end of the noodle and while keeping their feet side by side squat down over their feet. When the whistle blows they will pull the noodle and try make their partner lose balance. Have them reset for another round.

### **Noodle Olympics**

**Materials needed:** *Large noodles and bean bags*

Hold the noodle upright and place a beanbag on top. Challenge your child to move around the room without the flame going out--that is, without the beanbag falling off.

### **Noodle Limbo**

**Materials needed:** *Large noodles*

Hold the large noodle out in front of you, have the children move over, under, imitating animals.

### **Jump the Noodle**

**Materials needed:** *Large noodles*

Wiggle the noodle like a snake; lift it up have the children jump over the noodle

### **Rescue**

**Materials needed:** *Large noodles*

Have the children hold their own noodle upright, with one end resting on the floor. Give them an instruction, clap hands once or twice, touch your nose, touch your head and then shout "Rescue!" and let it go, the children scramble to catch it before it hits the ground.

## Balls

**Materials Needed:** *1 bag of playground balls, basketballs, and tennis balls*

As young children start practicing these skills they will develop throwing, catching, bouncing and rolling skills

### **Throwing and catching skills:**

- Balloons, Frisbees, bubbles, kickballs, noodles, tennis balls, beach balls, jump ropes, bases, food
- Throw ball forward (right, left, both hands)
- Throw ball from chest
- Throw ball from above head
- Throw ball from between legs (low)
- Throw ball backwards overhead
- Throw and catch with coach (no bounce, 1 bounce, 2 bounce)
- Throw and catch with partner (no bounce, 1 bounce, 2 bounce)
- Throw ball up in the air and catch (both hands, left hand, right hand)
- Throw ball in the air and catch (the with 1 bounce, 2 bounces etc.)
- Throw ball while in movement
- Throw ball up with one hand and catch with the other-unless small ball hard to catch with 1 hand only

### **Warm ups to do with a ball**

- Touch toes with ball
- Trap ball between feet, trap ball between knees
- Run –holding ball in the air across the room
- Hold ball twisting side to side
- Hop with ball between legs
- Pass ball around a circle-switch directions

### **Bouncing skills:**

- Bounce ball and catch (both hands, left hand, right hand)
- Bounce ball or throw ball up and
- Clap hands: in front, in back, under right knee/left knee
- Clap hands once, twice, etc.
- Touch toes then catch
- Bounce ball against a wall and catch

### **Rolling skills:**

- Roll ball
- Roll over ball on their tummy
- Roll ball to knock over cone

## **Sports and Fitness for Boys and Girls**

Sports & P.E. Classes - School Enrichment Programs – Park & Community Center Classes – Noodlekinetics  
Mommy & Me Classes - Daddy & Me Classes – BabyKinetics Classes - Birthday Parties – Summer Camps - Special Events  
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