

MUSICAL MATS - FLEXIBILITY & STRENGTH EXERCISES

(60 min; 16 children*)

BEHAVIOR GOALS:

1. Experience having fun while being physically active
2. Experience cooperative and group learning through sport
3. Develop muscular flexibility and agility

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Children will learn warm up and cool down stretches help loosen muscles, avoid injury and let the heart gradually adjust to higher and lower activity levels.
2. Children will learn water is the best beverage for hydration.

TOTAL TIME: 1 hour (without advanced prep)

Time	Activity
4 minutes	Children enter room and are directed to sit in a circle in the gym. The Group leader administers Pre-test and opens discussion on GROUND RULES.
10 minutes	Stretch & Talk. A group leader will demonstrate each stretch. Assistants will observe and assist children while reminding children about the importance of warm up stretching (as discussed previously in Lesson 1).
10 minutes	Explain & Play Musical Mats.
4 minutes	Transition & Water Break.
4 minutes	Assign children to pairs.
15 minutes	Do Strength Building Exercises. A group leader will demonstrate each exercise. Assistants will observe and assist children. The group leader will simultaneously engage children in discussion about the importance of building and maintaining strong, flexible muscles. See Background Information for suggested order for strength building exercises.
1 minutes	Transition to cool down area.
10 minutes	Talk, Cool-Down & Flexibility Stretches. A Group Leader will demonstrate, and monitor cool down stretches again, while reviewing the importance of cooling down and developing flexible muscles. See BACKGROUND INFORMATION for suggested order of stretching exercises.
2 minutes	After cool down activities, the leader should administer the Post-test. When children are done they should sit or lie quietly. This is an excellent time to praise performance and effort; to commend cooperative behavior; and to encourage children to do these exercises while watching TV, talking on the telephone or listening to music.

*Can be adapted to accommodate 10-40 children by changing the number of leaders and supplies.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR INSTRUCTOR:

Musical Mats:

Musical mats is a game that is very similar to musical chairs but it encourages a bit more flexibility and agility as participants are required to bend over to pick up the mat, then to stand upright afterwards. Mats are placed on the floor (you may want to start with more mats than children so that they can get a sense of what the game is about). The object of the game is to pick up a mat before another child can. After a round or two, the number of mats needs to be fewer than the number of children. To increase fairness, mats should be spread out over a large area so that everybody may have a fair shot to pick up the mats. It might take some effort on the part of the leaders to keep children from hovering around the mats – the object is to keep the children constantly moving. With the emphasis on fun and movement, keep the children active and engaged. The music helps to keep the atmosphere light and enjoyable. Remind the children that their hearts will beat fast when they are active (a good thing) and their rate of breathing will increase (also a good thing). The activity and group leaders should frequently pat children on their backs, commending them for moving so fast today (with the implication that they are moving faster today than yesterday!), and for moving for so long (again, with the implication that they are moving fast for longer today than yesterday!). By encouraging all children to do their personal best with respect to staying active, aerobic capacity will be developed through play.

Flexibility Stretching and Strengthening

Children should get their muscles warm before stretching for flexibility. Warm muscles stretch further. This helps to prevent injury when being more active. Cooling down after vigorous exercise reduces stiffness and helps to slowly bring the heart rate back to a resting level. Stretches should be slow, without jerking, which can cause injury. Stretches should “pull” but shouldn't hurt! Encourage the children to listen to their bodies – ask them to push themselves, however to do only do what is comfortable. It is important for children (and adults) to develop strong muscles. We develop strong muscles by using those muscles. When muscles are used, bones grow stronger and bigger, and together, strong flexible muscles and strong bones improve posture, reduce injury, help our bodies feel better, improve health, and help to prevent disease such as diabetes, and osteoporosis (curvature of the spine). Following is a recommended order for these strength-building exercises:

SI TUPS - in pairs with partner holding ankles

CURL UPS - alone with focus on feeling the abdominal muscles

SIT BACKS - beginning in “up position” lowering body to floor

ABDOMINAL CURLS - chin curled towards chest, shoulder blades coming off of the floor

ABDOMINAL BICYCLES - alternately bring right & left knees to chest and then extend

CRUNCHES - arms across chest, feet about one foot off ground, touch elbows to thighs

LEG RAISE - raises bent legs to a 90 degree angle and then lower slowly to start

PARTNER PULL-FUN- clasp both hands with a partner, on GO pull partner towards you

PUSH UPS - slow, starting in DOWN POSITION- lie face down, hands even with chest line

wider than shoulders, fingers pointed straight ahead, back straight, push up until arms are straight.

PUSH UPS - knees-heels towards buttocks

PUSH UPS - regular

EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES:

Warm-up, Cool-down, & Flexibility Stretches

- warm up, cool down and flexibility exercises can be done without any specific equipment, so they can be replicated at home.
- space for children to do stretches without touching each other
- posters of/for “Ground Rules” and “Warm-up, Cool-down & Flexibility Stretches”

Musical Mats

- 1 mat per person (include children and adults)
- fast passed music and music player (CD player, radio, tape player)
- (may need extension cord or batteries for CD or tape player)
- 0-20 nutrition questions (see list in Lesson #1) written on index cards

Pre- and Post-Tests

- copies of Pre- and Post-tests (one each per child)
- 1 sharpened pencil per child
- 1 pencil sharpener

PERSONNEL: 2 adults or more

1. Adult Leader (1)

- Oversees all activities & Administers Pre- & Post-tests.
- Model behaviors (fun, respect, keep moving).
- Assist children with stretches.
- Changes the pace if children lose interest or become frustrated with a game moving too slowly, too quickly, or if there is lack of inclusion.

2. Assistant (1 or more)

- During stretches & strength building exercises – demonstrate, observe and assist children in building new skills.
- During Musical Mats - oversee music & remove mats.
- During Musical Mats - Reads Nutrition Questions that serve as pass for children to re-enter game.
- Mediates disputes if they arise.
- Enforces Ground Rules.
- Oversees children during water & bathroom break.
- Collects Pre- & Post-tests (may help with reading tests).

ADVANCED PREPARATIONS: 30 minutes

Ground Rules

- Hang poster on wall for recording “GROUND RULES”.

“Warm-up, Cool-Down & Flexibility Stretches”

- Make poster listing “Warm-up, Cool-Down & Flexibility Stretches” including:
 - Head circles /neck, Arm circles/shoulders
 - Side bends/abdominals & back,
 - Trunk twists/abdominals & back
 - Hamstring stretches/ back of the upper leg

- Quadriceps stretches/front of the upper leg
 - Calf stretches /lower leg
- Make poster listing the Strength Building Exercises including:
 - Sit Ups
 - Curl Ups
 - Sit Backs
 - Abdominal Curls
 - Abdominal bicycles
 - Crunches
 - Leg Raises
 - Partner Pull Fun
 - Push-Ups
- Set up cones to designate boundaries
- Set up music player and cue music
- Set up 1 mat per child and adult throughout the gym for Musical Mats
- Prepare list on index cards of Nutrition Questions to use with Musical Mats

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

1. When children arrive in the gym immediately direct them to sit in a circle in the gym facing the group leader. The Group Leader should administer the Pre-test. Have assistants quickly collect completed tests. (Assistants and leaders should be prepared to help children with reading and writing if needed.)
2. Once again, begin by reviewing the rules and expectations established in the previous lesson. Have children remain seated on the floor and reread the rules. Allow children to add rules they didn't have before.
3. One of the Group Leaders should write additional rules on the poster titled "Ground Rules" that includes the following:
 - Quiet hands,
 - Listen while others are talking,
 - Be Respectful, and
 - Have fun.
4. Transition the group to WARM UP STRETCHES. Read & Demonstrate Stretches listed on the poster. Have children do warm up stretches for the neck, shoulders, abdominals, and back, upper, and lower legs. Have adult assistants demonstrate and check to make sure children are doing stretches correctly. (Assistants may need to repeat demonstrations as needed to accommodate children.)
5. During Warm-up Stretches, talk about warming up and stretching, and review why each is important to our exercise & flexibility programs when leading a healthy, active lifestyle. Use the following questions to guide discussion (since these same questions were asked in Lesson #1, more children should contribute correct answers).
 - Why is it so important to warm up & stretch before activity? (Loosen muscles making them more flexible, avoid injury, and let our heart gradually adjust to a higher activity level.)

- Why is it important to cool down after being active? (To let heart become adjusted to regular activity again, to let muscles return to normal.)
 - What happens when we overdo an activity by trying to do too much at one time? (Become sore or injure ourselves, give-up on our physical activity goal because we are sorer injured. It is important to start slowly.)
 - What should we do if we start to feel pain while being active? (Slow down or stop)
6. Remind children again that it is extremely important to come to Physical Activity dressed in loose clothes that allow freedom of movement without having to worry about exposure. Athletic shoes should always be worn. It's likely that children may not be dressed appropriately. Continue to keep this in mind when doing exercise demonstrations. Once again, give reminders, taking care not to embarrass children because of their clothes or footwear. For family or financial reasons, some children may be able to come with appropriate clothes even after they have been reminded.
 7. Transition to Musical Mats & Water Break. Gather children back to the circle on the floor of the gym, with the activity leader in the middle. Encourage children to continue with stretching while sitting (stretch legs, circle arms, knee bends, ankle circles etc). This is also a good time to allow children to get a drink of water (and for the leaders to verbally enforce the message that water is the best beverage during and after exercise).
 8. When children are back from their water break explain the Musical Mats game. The object of the game is to pick up a mat before another child. After a round or two, the number of mats will get to be fewer than the number of children. If you are "out", you can get back into the game by answering a nutrition question correctly – these questions will be about something you may already know or about something you may have learned in a nutrition lesson. Children should be rotated back into the game after one round. Give children hints to help with Nutrition questions that they don't know. If they are still unable to answer the question, tell them the correct answer and have them dance to the music for the round they are out. Ask them the same question when a new round starts. They should be able to answer correctly to reenter the game.
 9. Play Musical Mats! The activity leader will start the game with music. During play, remind the children that their hearts will beat fast and their breathing rate will increase when they are active. The activity and group leaders should frequently pat children on their backs, commending them for moving so fast today and for moving for so long.
 10. Tell children that the next physical activity will be Strength and Flexibility Exercises. One adult will quickly pair children with a partner and direct children to observe an assistant who will demonstrate the exercises. The adult and assistant will move around to assist children and, while doing so, the leader will tell the children about the importance of developing strong, flexible muscles. They also will motivate children to do exercises faster or with greater resistance, to do them longer - more repetitions or sets, and to increase flexibility by varying their range of motion. See Background Information for the recommended order of strength/flexibility exercises.
 11. Challenge children as they finish the exercises. Ask who remembers what we should do following physical activity. (Cool down and flexibility stretches.) Explain that when

exercising our heart beats faster. Cooling down by stretching helps our heart rate return to normal.

12. Begin Cool-down & Flexibility Stretches. Children should notice that they are able to reach and stretch muscles further following play and activity because their muscles are warm. Now is a good time for them to improve flexibility by holding their stretches for 10 seconds or more. If they feel pain they should not stretch quite so far.
13. During cool down, have children talk about the activities they will do at home. Ask them to tell which muscles they will need to warm up and stretch to avoid injury and to loosen up muscles appropriately.
14. Finally the leader should administer the Post-test and have assistants collect them. When children are done have them lie or sit quietly. Commend children for their efforts in the class. Give special recognition to those who made specific achievements. Have children think about ways they will be more active.

REFERENCES:

Stretches, SPARK After-School Activities Binder:

Warm-up (or) Cool-Down Activities, p 1-3.

Musical Mats, modification of Musical Chairs, see Wikipedia, at <http://en.wikipedia.org>, and <http://www.indianchild.com> (modification of Desert Island)

Strength Building Exercises, SPARK After-School Activities Binder, Muscular Strength and Conditioning.

EVALUATION: To be completed by activity leaders following delivery of exercise

	WARM-UP, COOL DOWN & FLEXIBILITY STRETCHES		STRENGTH BUILDING EXERCISES		MUSICAL MATS	
	Rating*	Specific recommendations to improve	Rating*	Specific recommendations to improve	Rating*	Specific recommendations to improve
Timing						
Equipment / supplies						
Personnel /staffing						
General response of <u>children</u>						
General response of <u>adult</u> leaders						

*Rating of 1 - poor to 5 - excellent

Other comments:

_____ Date

_____ Name (Optional)

NUTRITION QUESTIONS FOR MUSICAL CHAIRS OR MUSICAL MATS:

1. Is an apple a fruit or a vegetable? (a fruit)
2. Can you name a food group? (fruits, vegetables, grains, meat, dairy)
3. Is a carrot a grain or a vegetable? (a vegetable)
4. How many food groups are there (five)
5. What food group does milk go in? (dairy)
6. Is it better to eat foods that have lots of fat? (no)
7. Can eating too much fat lead to poor health? (yes)
8. Are whole grains good for us? (yes)
9. Are potato chips filled with vitamins and nutrients? (no)
10. Should we eat at least 10 servings of candy every day? (no)
11. Is it better to eat animal fat or fats that come from plants? (fats that come from plants)
12. What food group does chicken belong to? (meat)
13. What food group do beans belong to? (meat)
14. Is it healthy to eat the skin from chicken? (no)
15. Can you name a vitamin found in oranges? (vitamin C)
16. Can you name a vitamin found in carrots? (vitamin A)
17. Is vitamin A good for our eyes? (yes)
18. Do whole grains contain fiber? (yes)
19. Does soda belong to the fruit food group? (no)
20. Should we eat a variety of fruits and vegetables everyday? (yes)

PRE-TEST QUESTIONS

1. When our muscles are warmed up
 - a) We can reach further than when muscles are not warmed up
 - b) We can reach the same as when muscles are not warmed up

 2. Playing fun games with others
 - a) Is the perfect time to bully others
 - b) Is the perfect time to play cooperatively and have fun with others
 - c) Is the perfect time to show out and show others we are better than them at the game
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POST-TEST QUESTIONS

1. When our muscles are warmed up
 - a) We can reach further than when muscles are not warmed up
 - b) We can reach the same as when muscles are not warmed up

2. Playing fun games with others
 - a) Is the perfect time to bully others
 - b) Is the perfect time to play cooperatively and have fun with others
 - c) Is the perfect time to show out and show others we are better than them at the game