

## Friendly Fitness

### The Big Idea

This activity combines social interaction with quick energizers that engage students with the idea of community-building, but through incorporating physical activity (rather than “screen time”) as a core element. Students will take quick breaks to get up on their feet and interact, and engage with one another, making social physical activity breaks a part of the school culture.

Education Standards: (NHES) Health: 1.5.1, 1.5.3, 2.5.3, 2.5.4, 7.5.2, 7.5.3, 8.5.2; (CCSS) English Language Arts: W.4.4, W.5.4, SL.4.1, SL.5.1

### GOALS AND SKILLS

#### Students will...

- Identify positive feelings associated with participation in physical activities
- Create a list of activities that promote both social interaction and physical activity
- Develop ways to incorporate more physical activity in their school
- List three benefits of daily physical activity

#### Supplies and Preparation:

- Make copies of the **Interview in Action** sheet for each student
- **Optional:** Chart paper or poster board
- **Optional:** Art supplies for creating posters

**Background for Teacher:** Learn more about physical activity as it relates to an overall healthy lifestyle at <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/physical-activity.html>. Also check out the Family Health Series website at <http://www.familyhealthseries.org> for more information about exercise and staying healthy.

### INSTRUCTION STEPS

**1. Discussion.** Engage students in a conversation about social interaction and physical activities. Use the following prompts and record answers on the blackboard or whiteboard.

- How and why do you interact with others? (*Target Answers:* To have fun with friends and family; to socialize.)
- How do you feel when you are doing something active that gets your heart beating faster? (*Target Answers:* I have more energy; I'm less tired, ready to face the day.)

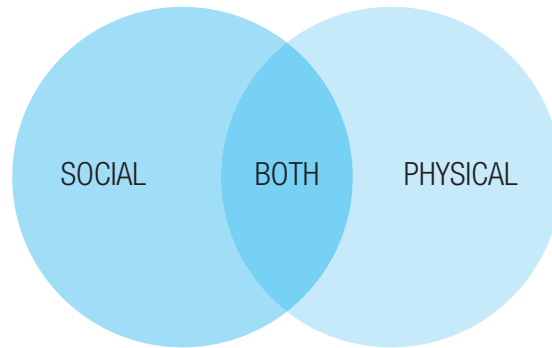
#### Teacher Tip:

Remind students that you don't have to play sports to be active! Yoga, dance, walking to school, taking the stairs, planting a vegetable garden – it all counts!



**2. Face-to-Face Fitness.** After students have discussed the value of both social and physical activity, engage students by asking how they might combine them. Explain to students that face-to-face social interaction is dying, but is a valuable life skill. Instead of having in-person conversations, we often text, email, or use social media to communicate with one another. Finding ways to merge social and physical activity often makes exercise more fun!

Have students create a Venn diagram to brainstorm activities that are both social and physical.



**3. Energized Interaction.** Explain to the students that being active is one of the best things they can do to keep their bodies strong and healthy. Physical activity burns the “fuel” that they consume as food and beverages, and helps keep the body and organs running smoothly. Remind students that at least 60 minutes a day of physical activity is needed. As schedules become busier, students may need to be creative in finding ways to fit this important element into their daily routine!

Challenge students to think of ways they can use the social and physical activities they brainstormed during downtime at school. This could be during breaks, during lunch, or when they have extra time in the classroom. For each activity, they need to build in an opportunity to chat/interact with others.

Ideas could include:

- *Study Hall Stretch:* Student teams can study or practice an upcoming presentation while doing floor stretches
- *Classroom Connections:* Incorporate movement into a class group share or current topic – like performing a dance from a particular decade, acting out the verses of a poem or song lyric, or demonstrating moves of the national sport from another country. Remind students that the movements they create should reinforce what they are learning, and not take the class off task
- *Lunchtime Olympics:* Recruit other classrooms to develop fun or silly five-minute “events,” and do one per day for a week or month. Examples include:
  - **Plastic Bottle Recycling Basketball:** Use recycling bins to practice your “jump shot”!
  - **Round-the-Bases Crabwalk:** Test your speed walking upside down on all fours
  - **Sidewalk “Tightrope”:** See who can go farthest heel-to-toe

**4. Extend the Lesson.** Have students brainstorm ways to extend their ideas to get the whole school moving throughout the day and week. Volunteers could lead a morning stretch over the intercom, or offer peer classes or workshops to teach activities like jump roping, speed walking, or dance. Students can work with the gym teacher to lead the class in a special dance routine, or create posters showcasing the “move of the day” and place them around the school.

**5. Home Connection.** Provide the *Interview In Action* take-home sheet on the next page, and tell students to choose one activity – a nature walk, a trip to a bowling alley, a yoga DVD, walking a dog – to do with a parent, grandparent, older sibling, or caregiver. They can review the interview questions prior to the activity and fill in the answers once they’re done. Students should bring their completed sheets back to class, compare results and create a bar chart demonstrating which activities are their favorite. Share the results with parents during back-to-school night to showcase what other families are doing!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Interview in Action Take-Home Sheet

**Start Time:**

**End Time:**

**Our Activity:**

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**Exploration:**

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1. *What is your favorite outdoor activity?* \_\_\_\_\_

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2. *Why?* \_\_\_\_\_

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3. *What is your first memory of a game that got your heart beating?* \_\_\_\_\_

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4. *If you could do one activity to get energized, what would it be?* \_\_\_\_\_

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5. *What are three benefits of daily physical activity?* \_\_\_\_\_

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