SMART FROM THE START
HEALTHY DECISIONS. HEALTHY HABITS.

HAVE A BALL!

Theme: Give It A Try

Overview: In this series of activities, students will name the things they like to do with a ball, experiment and document different types of ball movements, and create a mobile that displays pictures and information about their ball play.

Vocabulary:

- Energy: What we need to move, work and play. Some activities require more energy than others.

Activity 1: Same and Different

Type of Activity: Energy to Discover

Domain: Cognitive, Language, Physical

Students will:

- Develop vocabulary relating to actions with balls such as bounce, throw, dribble as well as other related descriptive terms such as large, small, colorful, etc.
- Identify similarities and differences of several balls.

Materials:

- An assortment of balls in various shapes, sizes and textures. If balls are not available, you can substitute yarn balls, balloon balls, sock balls, and nylon bath scrubbers
- Flip chart

Time Frame: 20-30 minutes

Directions:

1. Invite students to sit in a circle.
2. Show the students a ball. Ask them to share something they know about it. Tell them they are going to get a ball to hold. They are not to throw or kick it. They just have to hold it. Next, pass a ball to each child.
3. Ask children what they know about the balls they are holding.
4. Depending on answers, ask students to answer one or more of the following questions about the balls in their hands. Questions could include:
   - Is your ball big or small?
   - Is your ball hard or soft?
   - Is your ball smooth or rough? (Students may need some guidance about these adjectives)

- What color is your ball?
- What shape is your ball?
- Have you ever played with the ball you are holding before?

5. Ask students if they know what it means when two things are the same. If not, explain that the same means that one is like the other. Show students two balls that are exactly the same to help students understand this concept. Then, show students two different balls that are the same in every way but one. Model for students an example of something that is the same about these two balls. For example, the small yellow ball is the same as the small blue ball because they are both small. The small red ball is the same as the large red ball because they are both red. Allow several student volunteers to share traits that are the same about different balls.
6. Then, ask students if they know what it means when two things are different. Explain that it means when one thing is not like another. Model for students how two of the balls are different. For example, the small blue ball is different from the small red ball because they are different colors. Allow several student volunteers to share traits that are different.

Activity 2: How Do You Feel?

Type of Activity: Energy to Discover, Energy to Move

Domain: Cognitive, Language, Physical

Students will:

- Use motor skills to catch, throw, kick, dribble, and keep a ball in the air.
- Describe how the series of movements made their bodies feel differently.
- Help the teacher document how the movements make them feel.

Materials:

- One of each of the following balls: beach ball, small ball (tennis, baseball), medium-sized ball (volleyball, soccer ball). If balls are not available, you can substitute yarn balls, balloon balls, sock balls, and nylon bath scrubbers
- Flip chart
- Paper and pencils

Time Frame: 20-30 minutes

Directions:

1. Tell students that now it's time to have a little fun with their balls.
2. Bring out the beach ball. Ask students to form a circle.

3. Explain that you will tap the ball in the air and call out someone's name. When you call their name, they should try to tap the ball in the air and call out a different student's name. Continue until all students have had a chance to tap the ball.
4. Ask students if they observed any changes in their bodies when they were running. Did they breathe harder? Did it feel like their heart was beating faster? (You may want to show students how to feel their hearts beating).
5. Draw the beach ball on the flip chart and draw or write any of the student's observations.
6. Take out the soccer ball. Ask two student volunteers to run in place and then come to the front of the room and kick the soccer ball gently back and forth to each other. Again, ask students how they felt while they were kicking the ball. Did Did they breathe harder? Did it feel like their heart was beating faster? (You may want to show students how to feel their hearts beating. Explain to students that when we move, our bodies use more oxygen (air) and we breathe harder. When we move, we are also making our hearts work hard so they are beating faster. Different movements use different amounts of energy.
7. Document student responses on the flip chart by showing tally marks for one or more of the questions. For example, you might choose to document the number of students who breathe harder vs. the number of students who don't.
8. Continue this process with several different ball activities such as dribbling a basketball, rolling a beach ball back and forth, holding a ball between their knees and jumping around the room, and trying to keep a ball in the air.
9. After each activity, ask students to notice how their bodies feel different.
10. Explain to students that moving with balls makes us work and uses energy. After all activities, ask students which ball movement made their bodies work the hardest.

Activity 3: Make a Ball

Type of Activity: Energy to Discover, Energy to Move, Energy to Create

Domain: Physical

Students will:

- Follow directions to make their own bouncy balls.
- Practice motor movements by playing with the balls they have made.

Materials:

- White glue
- Food coloring
- Borax powder
- Cornstarch
- Warm water

- Small cups
- Measuring spoons
- Popsicle sticks or plastic spoons for stirring
- Paper towels

Time Frame: 20-30 minutes

Directions:

1. Ask students for ideas of what they could do if they wanted to play with a ball but they didn't have one. Accept all possible answers. Then, guide students to say that they could make one of their own!
2. Place three cups in front of each student.
3. Direct students to do the following to make their balls. You may need to help younger students with the measuring. Be sure that students know that none of the ingredients are to go in their mouths.
   - In the first cup, put four tablespoons of warm water, three tablespoons of cornstarch, and ½ teaspoon of Borax powder. Stir well.
   - In the second cup, pour the glue. Add several drops of food coloring. Stir well.
   - Pour the water mixture into the glue mixture. Make sure each have been stirred well first. Stir the combined mixture. It will start to clump together. Keep stirring until you have a big glob!
   - Take the big glob out of the liquid and begin rolling it using just the palms of your hands to form a ball. It may be sticky at first so you may need to wipe off your hands with a wet paper towel.
   - Give your rubbery ball a few minutes to dry.
4. Invite students to practice bouncing, throwing and catching their balls with a partner.

Modifications:

<u>Pump It Up for Older Students</u>

- For older children, you can vary the size and texture of the balls they are using in Activity 2, as well as the distances from which they are throwing/kicking them.

<u>Cool It Down for Younger Students</u>

- You may need to measure out the ingredients in Activity 2 before you begin.

NAEYC Standards Alignment

- **2.A.10** The curriculum guides teachers to incorporate content, concepts, and activities that foster social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development and integrate key areas of content including literacy, mathematics, science, technology, creative expression and the arts, health and safety, and social studies.

- **2.K.01** Children are provided varied opportunities and materials that encourage good health practices such as serving and feeding themselves, rest, good nutrition, exercise, hand washing, and tooth brushing.
- **2.C.04** Children have varied opportunities and are provided equipment to engage in large motor experiences that stimulate a variety of skills; enhance sensory-motor integration; develop controlled movement; enable children with varying abilities to have large-motor experiences similar to those of their peers; range from familiar to new and challenging; help them learn physical games with rules and structure.
- **2.E.05** Children have daily opportunities to write or dictate their ideas.
- **2.G.03** Children are provided varied opportunities and materials that encourage them to use the five senses to observe, explore, and experiment with scientific phenomena.
- **2.G.06** Children are provided varied opportunities and materials that encourage them to think, question, and reason about observed and inferred phenomena.

Be Smart from the Start at Home!
Preschool-aged children are not expected to understand calories or how their bodies use energy, but they can begin to learn foundational information to help them make healthy decisions around diet and exercise. The Smart from the Start lessons are a set of flexible activities designed to introduce and reinforce these concepts, and we encourage you to integrate the rest of the activities in Me and My Choices and Give it a Try! into your existing curriculum. Throughout these activities, children will learn about energy they need to work and play; to make healthy choices about what they eat and drink from a variety of food groups; and how to move throughout the day with fun activities that help keep their hearts strong and healthy.

As your students progress to elementary school, the Healthy Decisions, Healthy Habits Together Counts™ curriculum can help them focus on more rigorous concepts related to self-esteem, decision-making, healthy nutrition and regular physical activity.

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Energy at Home

This week, your child had a ball with balls! The students compared several different types of balls and named ways they were alike and different. They practiced kicking, throwing, catching, and dribbling balls. They also talked about how their bodies felt differently after exercising and playing with these balls. Finally, they made their own balls using glue, Borax, cornstarch, and water.

Playing with balls is a great way for preschool children to develop important small and large motor skills. Let your preschooler show you how he or she can pass, bounce, kick and dribble. If you don't have balls at home, you can make one with yarn, socks, or even a nylon bath scrubber.