

Stretching

Action Schools! BC



classroom



gymnasium



outside



K to 3

Healthy Muscles

Muscle strength, endurance and flexibility enhance functional ability and support life-long active living. Weight bearing and strength training activities exert forces on the bones contributing to healthy bone and muscle development. Additionally, stretching increases range of motion, contributes to muscle development, and can help prevent injuries.

HEALTH
COMPONENTS
OF FITNESS

FLEXIBILITY
STRENGTH

BALANCE

FUNDAMENTAL
MOVEMENT
SKILLS

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS



BIG IDEAS

- Daily physical activity helps us develop movement skills and physical literacy, and is an important part of healthy living (K-1).
- Good health comprises physical, mental, and emotional well-being. (K-1).
- Our physical, emotional, and mental health are interconnected (2-3).
- Learning how to participate and move our bodies in different physical activities helps us develop physical literacy (2).

CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES:

- Develop and demonstrate a variety of fundamental movement skills in a variety of physical activities and environments.
- Describe the body's reaction to participating in physical activity in a variety of environments (K-1).
- Identify and describe opportunities to be physically active at school, at home, and in the community (K-2).
- Identify and describe opportunities for and potential challenges to being physically active at school, at home, and in the community (3).
- Identify and describe practices that promote mental well-being (K-1).
- Identify and apply strategies that promote mental well-being (2-3).

CONTENT

- Proper technique for fundamental movement skills, including non-locomotor, locomotor, and manipulative skills.
- Effects of different activities on the body (1).
- Effects of physical activity on the body (2).
- How to participate in different types of physical activities, including individual and dual activities, rhythmic activities, and games.
- Practices that promote health and well-being.

FIRST PEOPLES PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING FOR ALL STUDENTS



- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity.

COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL HEALTH CONNECTIONS



RELATIONSHIPS AND ENVIRONMENTS

- Have the students spread out in a large area so that they can stretch without bumping into anyone or anything.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Stretching throughout the day allows the mind to relax, it helps to circulate blood through the muscles which decreases feelings of stiffness, and it helps to re-focus student thoughts.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Bring in a specialist from the community such as a fitness professional or a knowledgeable parent/guardian to teach stretches to students.

EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES



- Music player
- Hand grippers
- Head-to-Toe Stretch poster available from www.actionschoolsbc.ca/resources
- Dynamic Stretching available from www.actionschoolsbc.ca/resources
- Music: yoga CD or other calming music

IMPLEMENTATION



- Display *Head-to-Toe Stretch Poster* so students can see the proper technique provided by the illustrations. This poster combines both static and dynamic stretches.
- Warm-up before static stretching (e.g., 5 minute playground circuit or chair aerobics).
- Hold each static stretch for a count of 10 to 30 seconds and repeat each dynamic stretch 5 to 10 times.
- During some stretches, squeeze a hand gripper to keep count.
- Have students take turns leading the stretch.
- Try the *Dynamic Head-to-Toe Stretch* as part of a warm-up to prepare muscles for more physical activity.
- Have students explain how stretching contributes to their health (e.g. It can help them relax, it can help their muscles become more flexible, etc.).
- Have students reflect on and describe how they felt while participating in this activity (e.g., Their muscles felt tight during the stretches, they felt tight in some muscles and not others during the stretches, etc.).
- Have students propose and explain strategies to include stretching in their day (e.g., At recess or lunch to develop their flexibility, after a test or quiz to help relax their mind, when they are feeling stressed, etc.).
- Teach students the proper muscle names which can be found on Head to Toe Stretch sheet.

ACTION TIPS

- Make stretching a part of the daily class routine.
- Incorporate breathing (in through nose, out through mouth) and relaxation while stretching to decrease stress and embrace body awareness.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- Ensure students warm up before the activity and cool down and stretch afterwards.
- Ensure teacher is present and can observe students at all times during the activity.
- Ensure students are not bouncing around during the stretches to prevent joint and/or muscle injury.
- Stretching should not hurt and each stretch should be held for at least 30 seconds.
- Students should listen to their body when stretching and not compete with others around them (e.g., who can stretch further).

EXTENSION OF LEARNING

- Invite students to think about where and when (e.g. in their home during TV commercials, after finishing homework, etc.) they can do this activity outside of school and who they might be able to do it with (e.g., family, friends, etc.).