



Fun Activities for Young Children

The following suggestions are fun ways for children to move their bodies and be physically active as part of a *Healthy AI, Healthy Me* Celebration. When introducing the activities, remind children that one healthy choice children can make is to be active, and that being active can be fun! Activities can be played inside or outside, and most last approximately five minutes. Pick one, two, or do them all!

Silly Walkin’

Establish a “walking path” in the room or outside. Call out silly ways that the children can walk. For example – “walk with your hands on your knees,” or “walk like an elephant.” Let the children take turns calling out “Silly Walking” ideas, too.

...And Wave Your Scarf

Using scarves or ribbons, call out activities for the children to do while they wave their scarves. For example, “jump in place and wave your scarf, sway like a dancer and wave your scarf, stand on one foot and wave your scarf, or turn in a circle while waving your scarf.” Let children take turns calling out some “...and wave your scarf” suggestions, too.

AI’s Action Story

Read the attached “AI’s Action” story to the children. Ask the children to act out the active parts of the story when you cue them.

Freeze Dancing

Play music and invite the children to dance, telling them ahead of time that when the music stops they have to freeze in the exact position they were moving in. Stop the music periodically and wait for the silly “freezing” positions.

Bean Bag (or soft toy) Toss

Set up a starting line and place a bin fairly close to the starting line. Invite children to toss bean bags or soft toys into the bin. Move the bin farther away and invite children to try again. Keep moving the bin farther and see who can still make it!

Al's Action Story

Introduction

This story is a fun way to combine activity and storytime. Invite the children to stand in an area with enough space to move around. As you read this story about Al, ask the children to move their body the same way Al would be moving his body when an action is mentioned. For example, if Al is walking, the children will move their feet in place as if they are walking. The movements for the children to act out are bolded in the story. If needed, demonstrate movements for the children to copy. The full-sized Al puppet or Al finger puppet can also be used to tell this story.

Story

Last week, our friend Al had a pretty big problem. Al lost his favorite book. This book wasn't just any old book, but a special book that his Grandpa had given him and that his Grandpa loved to read with him.

When Grandpa would come visit, Al would sit on his Grandpa's lap and they would **turn the pages together** – sometimes reading the book two or three times in a row. **(turn pages)**

Grandpa was coming soon for a visit. Al really wanted to find the special book before Grandpa got there!

Al felt annoyed and disappointed that the book was missing. He thought hard and brainstormed ways he could solve this problem. He could read another book with Grandpa, or ask Grandpa to do something else with him, or he could try again to find his book. Al decided to try again to find his book.

He thought it was a good idea to look in his room first so he **walked down the hallway** to his room. **(walk/march)**

Al stood in the middle of his room **and looked all around**. **(turn head all around)** He did not see the book anywhere.

Al decided he needed to look in places where you can't see things right away - like under his bed. Al **got down on his knees and looked under the bed**. **(kneel, look up and down)**

All Al saw under the bed was a sock.

"Hmmm," thought Al, "Maybe the book is under my desk. **I'll knee-walk over there!**" (**children walk on their knees**)

"Still no book!" thought Al. "Well, sometimes lost things are up high."

Al had nothing to stand on, so he decided **to jump** and look in the "up high" places that book might be. (**jump up and down, looking all around**)

No luck! A last place to look in Al's room was his closet. He **opened the closet door.** (**open a door**)

Oh no! Al did not see his book, BUT he did see a big spider! Al is NOT a fan of spiders! In fact, spiders are kind of scary to Al.

Al did not scream but **closed that closet door fast (close closet door)** and then he **ran out of his room!** (**run in place**)

Even though he knew it was silly to be scared of a little old spider, Al kept **running right out the back door** to the small backyard area his mom lets him play in. (**keep running in place**)

Al **ran to his favorite special tree**, which is a really big tree that is perfect for leaning against, and **sat right down** in his favorite quiet spot. (**sit**)

Whew! Al **put his hand on his chest** because he could feel his heart beating faster! (**put hands on chest**) (Ask children who can feel their heart beating faster.)

By feeling his heart beating faster, Al knew that running had given his body a good workout. But he was still sad that his book was missing.

Al decided to do some calm down steps to handle his disappointed feelings. He **took 3 deep breaths (take 3 deep breaths), counted softly to 5, (count softly to 5) and whispered "calm down."** (**whisper calm down**)

While Al was whispering calm down, his eyes drifted down too, and guess what he saw? There it was! He had left his special book here, under his special tree! Al was so happy, that he **raised his arms over his head and shouted, "Yay!" (raise arms up and shout "yay!")** Now he would be able to read his special book when Grandpa came to visit.

The end.