

Active Solutions



Ideas for Indoor Activity in Small Spaces

Keeping kids active has its challenges. Let's face it, in Saskatchewan there will be days that are too cold or too hot to play outside. There will be some spaces too small to run in and there are some pieces of equipment that will be too expensive to purchase.

There are lots of great resources that will help you overcome these challenges and provide you with ideas to help you and the kids that you care about get the daily physical activity needed for health benefits!

Equipment

Below are some basic, inexpensive ideas for equipment that are great for all ages. These ideas can help you expand the number of games and opportunities you provide for the children you work with. Often you can find these at garage sales and can build up your equipment over time.

Balls	...a variety of sizes, textures, colours. Balloons encased in a nylon stocking work well for smaller children
Bean Bags	...make them yourself or ask some who can sew to help out
Ropes	...great for balancing on with small children. For older children, skip, wheel or limbo underneath the rope
Scarves	...great for dress-up play, catching or playing tag

No Equipment? No Problem!

It's still very easy to be physically active!

- For great examples of active games that use very little equipment or recycled materials, visit www.2010legaciesnow.com/leap_bc/. Imagine, crumpling an old newspaper and playing catch!
- For games that require no equipment such as "Duck, Duck Goose" or "Kick the Can," visit www.otfi.com/games.htm
- Enjoy the great outdoors. Go for a walk or hike, look for birds and animal tracks, play in the grass or make snow angels.
- Ask school-aged children to create their own game of tag. There are many different ways to play tag, such as chain tag, for example.



Small Spaces

When leading active experiences in a small space, safety is the key concern. Movements should be slower and often limited to 'on the spot.'

- Bounce or wheel around in one spot to music. When the music stops, children stop moving. Children resume bouncing/wheeling when the music begins.
- Practice balancing. Balancing is fun! Ask the children to try walking or wheeling the length of the room with a book on their head. To increase the challenge, try balancing two or three books – then add a cuddly toy to the very top!
- Think of games and activities that can be done on the spot, but still allow for movement such as "Simon Says", "If You're Happy and You Know It", or "Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes."
- Download a series of free illustrated activity cards encouraging learning through play, and early literacy and language development. Activities are designed for families, caregivers or early childhood educators to enjoy with children from birth to 5 years (www.2010legaciesnow.com/talk/).
- Check out the book *No Gym? No Problem!* by Charmaine Sutherland, which offers ideas for providing physical activity in a small space (www.humankinetics.com/products/all-products/no-gym-no-problem).
- Visit www.bced.gov.bc.ca/dpa/pdfs/k-9_physical_activities.pdf for great ideas to keep school-aged children moving in a small space.



Other options for the indoors:

- Dramatic play enables children to use their creativity and imagination while being physically active. Dramatic play includes dress-up games, plays, skits, finger plays, puppet shows and improvisation. Collect costumes and interesting clothes for dress up activities. Halloween clearance sales offer discounts on costumes ideal for dramatic play. Borrow books from the library with plays and skits for kids. Encourage kids to create puppets from recycled material. Start building your tickle trunk!
- Stretching is a fun activity that can be done indoors. Small children may stretch like a tree or stretch their arms to the side like a bird. It is relaxing and is a good habit to stretch every day. For more ideas on stretching visit: www.sproutonline.com/sprout/activities/listing.aspx?preset=stretches&ppreset=cgoo_dnightshow