

What We Learned Today

Learning Routines

Most young children love moving their bodies, whether it's rolling, crawling, walking, running, climbing, or jumping. As adults, it is our job to make sure children are moving in safe and organized ways.



During today's ChildcareAlive! activity, your child played several physically-active games that helped them learn essential routines for participating in structured active play while at child care. Learning these essential routines helps children enjoy participating in active play safely, and will also prepare them for the structured physical activity that occurs in elementary Physical Education classes.

Why **Structured Active Play**?

Children benefit from both free play and structured active play. During the toddler and preschool years, many children start showing signs of independence, which easily lends itself to free play, where children are able to choose their own activity with adult supervision.

In structured active play, physical activity is planned and led by an adult. There are many benefits to structured active play, including providing each child with a chance to be physically active and to practice a variety of motor and social skills.

Active Play @ Home

As a parent and a role model, you have a great opportunity to influence your child's current and future physical activity habits. By leading and participating with your child in some active play at home, you will set a great example.



Try some of these ideas for leading active play at home:

1. **Take a Family Walk or Bike Ride After Dinner.** Take a stroll around the block when everyone is home.
2. **Treat the family with fun physical activity.** Plan a trip to the zoo, a park, a water park, or the lake as a treat.
3. **Create fun indoor games.** When weather is poor, try turning on some upbeat music and dance with your child, or playing "basketball" with rolled up socks and laundry baskets.

What We Played Today

- 1 Join the Parade.** Children were asked to walk around in a circle, pretending to be typical parade participants, such as animals or marching band members.
- 2 Freeze.** While children were “parading” or moving in space, they were asked to “freeze,” coming to a complete stop with their arms crossed in front of their body.
- 3 Paint Your Bubble.** Children were asked to paint an imaginary bubble around their bodies using an activity scarf as a “paint brush.” Children had to try to stay inside their bubble as they moved around.
- 4 Apples and Bananas.** Children were asked to sit “crisscross applesauce” whenever they heard the word “Apple,” and stand when they heard the word “banana.” Everyone had to make sure they were listening closely for the right word!
- 5 Being Balloons.** To help us cool down and end our activity time, children pretended to be balloons, “inflating” themselves and then slowly letting out their air.



More Ways to Move

Freeze Dance

Play some fun, upbeat music. Every few seconds, stop the music and call out “Freeze!” Make sure everyone freezes, and then start the music again!



This activity is great for a cold or rainy day!

Move Your Bubble

Ask children to “paint their bubble” again (like they did today in their child care program. You may use a scarf, sock, or even a small towel as the “paint brush”). Ask them to move around “in their bubble,” without touching anything (so the bubble won’t “pop”). You may even blow a real bubble to remind them what happens when a bubble touches something.

