

FORWARD CORNER

June is Sports America Kids Month

During the COVID-19 outbreak, we can be a part of the problem or a part of the solution. One way to be part of the solution is to build a healthy immune system for ourselves and for the children we care for. There are four main pillars in building a healthy immune system: healthy nutrition, physical activity, adequate sleep and managing stress.

June is Sports America Month. This month, hone in on the physical activity pillar by introducing and recognizing the value of sports. In pre COVID-19 times, we would encourage you to take time to introduce sports to young children, playing their favorites or introducing new ones. For the time being, here in Illinois child care, preschool and camp programs, and organized youth sports come with limits. During our time social distancing, while quarantining or when out in public, find ways to be an advocate for sports (especially lifelong sports) and to introduce activities that build these sports-related skills. Make it fun (with games, creative movement activities and such) as skill-drills can be overwhelming and children easily lose interest.

Run	Roll/Gymnastics Moves	Dribble
Jump	Toss (aim and hit a target)	Control Breathing
Slide	Throw (underhand/overhand)	Swimming Strokes
Leap	Catch (different size balls)	Swing/Drive
Balance	Bounce	Putt
Stretch	Kick	Hang/Pull (to build upper body strength)
Squat	Strike (e.g. with hand or bat)	

In addition to the fitness benefits—sports also help children:

- Listen and follow directions.
- Develop confidence.
- Practice self-discipline.
- Improve coordination.
- Engage in teamwork skills.
- Exhibit sportsmanship behavior.

The American Academy of Pediatrics encourages us to consider the child's age, interest and ability. Click [here](#) for information.

JOIN THE HEALTHY MOVEMENT TODAY BY TAKING ACTION!

June Call to Action for Families: With COVID-19 restrictions in place, take the month of June to work on perfecting skills (run, jump, leap, balance, toss, catch, swing, putt, etc.), saving group practices and games until they are deemed safe.

June Call to Action for Early Childhood Providers: Use this time in quarantine to plan out a year of gross motor skills that children easily learn through sports (toss, catch, hit, drive/putt, kick, dribble, etc.). Consider the order you will introduce them and how you'll add them to your weekly lesson plan.

For information on healthy eating and activity initiatives in DuPage, check out www.forwarddupage.org.