

Community Physical Activity Kit

*A Let's Move! Active Schools
volunteer guide*

Introduction

Studies show that **Active Kids Do Better**. A lot better. They score up to 40% higher on tests and have better concentration and attendance in the classroom.¹

We know that school-age kids should participate in at least **60 minutes of physical activity every day**. Schools have a significant interest in helping kids exceed the 60-minute minimum and that is where we can step in to help.

As a school volunteer you can act as a role model and mentor to get kids excited about physical activity.

A bit more on *Let's Move! Active Schools*

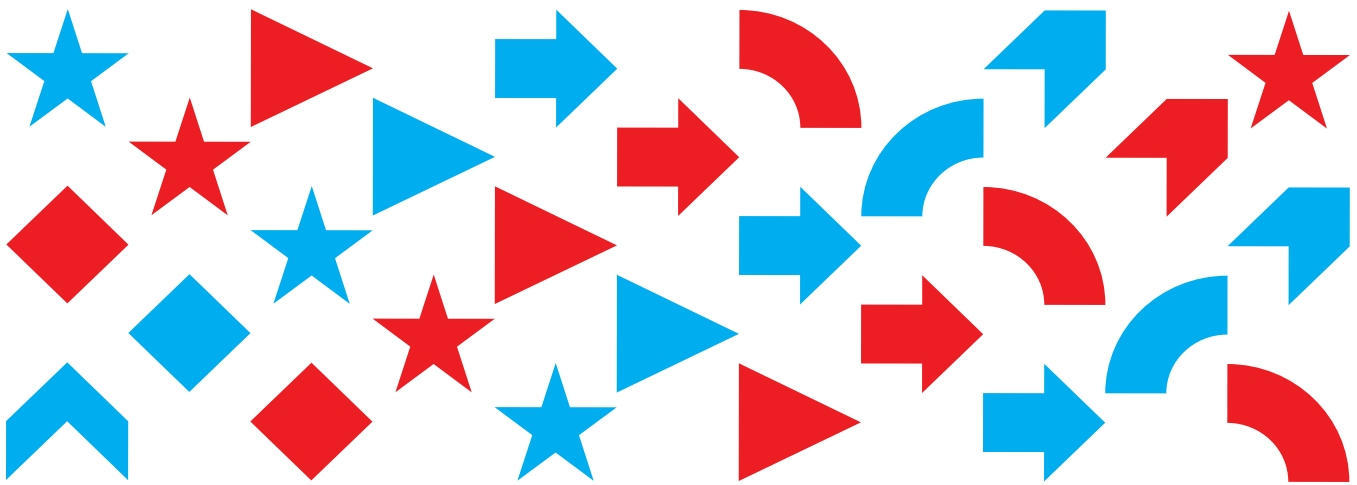
In February 2013, First Lady Michelle Obama's *Let's Move!* initiative joined other partners in creating *Let's Move! Active Schools*. Powered by a national collaborative of leading health, education and private sector organizations, *Let's Move! Active Schools* strives to transform the physical activity and physical education culture in schools. The *Let's Move! Active Schools* platform inspires kids to move more, supports school leaders and teachers, and activates key audiences to ensure 60 minutes of physical activity a day is the new norm in schools.

¹ Grissom, J. (2005). Physical Fitness and Academic Achievement. *Journal of Exercise Physiology*, 8 (1), pp. 11-25



Enclosed You Will Find Tips on the Following:

Being a great volunteer	3
Strategies for success.	4
Policies and requirements to expect.	5
Planning ahead: Things to think through before contacting a school.	6
Reaching out to a school	7
<i>Lets Move!</i> Active Schools Talking Points.	8
The 7 Filters for Early Positive Experiences	11
Elementary School Activities.	12
Middle/High School Activities	18



Being a Great Volunteer:

There are certain non-negotiables that are an important part of volunteering with kids.

- **Maintain confidentiality** regarding student behavior, academic performance or anything else you may observe or learn, except where reporting is required.
- **Immediately inform** teaching staff or administration if you suspect or learn that a child is in danger or exposed to any type of abuse and neglect.
- **Treat it like your job.** If you are unable to work at your assigned time please notify your contact person as soon as possible. Follow your staff dress code.
- **Check in** with your contact person when you arrive and be sure to identify yourself as a volunteer to all staff (where appropriate).
- **Abide by all school rules** and district requirements that are applicable to you.
- **Please attend** district and/or school specific volunteer orientation if offered.



Strategies for Success:

- **Be a positive role model.** Set an example for children and staff by being mindful of your own behavior, dress and dependability. Most importantly, let them see you having fun being active!
- **Learn names** of staff and students, especially those you work with regularly.
- **Be prepared.** Once you have identified your scope of service, come prepared to actively participate.
- **Be flexible.** A school and/or classroom's schedule can change. Follow the lead and adapt to the cues of the students.
- **Support the teachers** in their instructional programs. If there is a classroom theme or learning goal, find activities that will reinforce that goal.
- **Engage teachers and other classroom staff** in all activities.
Always discuss any new activities with teachers before they are performed. Identify and implement activities that embody the 7 Design Filters described on page 12.
- **Safety first.** Only perform activities that are within your physical capability.
- **Observe all safety rules,** and use care when performing activities.
- **Have FUN!**



Policies and Requirements to Expect

All schools have policies regarding the people who work and volunteer. These can vary based on a particular school, district and/or state. Please allow lead time to meet volunteer requirements. Most schools will not allow you to work until all requirements are verified.

Generally speaking, you can expect to be asked for the following:

- Background check
- Fingerprinting
- Tuberculosis (TB) screening
- Reference
- Completion of a volunteer application



Planning Ahead: Things to Think Through Before Contacting a School

Ok, first things first. You need to pick a school. After that, you'll want to consider these things:

- Convenience
- Your existing connection to the school—maybe you went there, or your kids do, or maybe you've volunteered there before.
- Schools that would benefit most.

Looking for more specific advice? Reach out to your local school district for suggestions on schools that would be a good fit. Or, visit www.letsmoveschools.org to identify a currently enrolled school in your area.

Before contacting a school, you'll also want to have a clear point of view on your availability:

- Are you available before, during, or after school hours?
- Frequency of visits, i.e., once a week, every other week, etc.
- Length of volunteer experience; how many months are you willing to commit?

Once you've picked a school, check out their website to learn about volunteer programs that are already in place. Don't be discouraged if they aren't accepting volunteers or don't seem enthusiastic when you reach out. Some schools are not in a position to take this on right now, but you'll always be able to find a school that is!

To learn more about what great Active Schools look like, take a look at *Let's Move!* Active Schools (www.letsmoveschools.org).

Reaching Out to a School

Once you've picked a school, call the main office and ask if they have an existing volunteer program. If so, your job just got easier. Connect with the volunteer coordinator.

Once you have a contact:

- Introduce yourself and briefly describe your organization's volunteer policy.
- Ask if they are enrolled in *Let's Move! Active Schools*. Or, check www.letsmoveschools.org/school-champions
- If yes, become a champion of their Active Schools team, and go to www.letsmoveschools.org to sign up as a Fan on the school's team.
- If no, explain *Let's Move! Active Schools*. Offer to use *Let's Move! Active Schools* resources to increase physical activity and physical education opportunities at their school.
- If no, use the *Let's Move! Active Schools* talking points on page 8 to let them know what's possible.
- Ask about their current efforts around physical activity and discuss where you might fit into their current system.



Talking Points for School Outreach

Background

- We know that Active Kids Do Better. Their test scores are up to 40% higher, and they have better behavior, concentration and attendance.
- Schools today are facing a number of challenges. The pressure to excel academically coupled with budget cuts have led to increases in class time and decreases in physical activity opportunities during the day.
- Physical education programs and recess are being cut in many schools across the US. In fact, we know that only 1 in 3 kids is active every day, only 6 states require physical education in every grade, and only 20% of school districts require daily recess.
- Kids spend the majority of their time in school so if we want active kids, we need Active Schools.
- The school environment provides a tremendous opportunity to create early positive experiences for kids and to reintegrate physical activity into everyday life.

What We Want to Do

- We'd like to work with [school] to get kids moving in a way that makes sense for your goals, set-up and curriculum.

School's Involvement with *Let's Move!* Active Schools

- Is [school] enrolled in the *Let's Move!* Active Schools, the national solution to ensure 60 minutes of physical activity a day is the new norm in schools?
 - If so, we'd love to join your Active Schools team or wellness committee.
- If not, we can still use their resources. *Let's Move!* Active Schools has tons of free and low-cost ways to incorporate movement before, during, and after the school day.
 - I'd be happy to share a few of the resources with you, and show you how your school can become an Active School.

What is an Active School?

- We know that our kids need 60 minutes of physical activity daily, not only so they can grow up healthy, but because we know it helps them succeed in school.
- An Active School incorporates physical activity before, during and after school for at least 60 minutes every day.

As the national solution to ensure 60 minutes of physical activity a day is the new norm for schools, *Let's Move! Active Schools* equips school leaders, educators and parents with the resources and tools to cultivate active learning environments, and in turn, to make physical activity and physical education a fundamental part of every child's educational experience.

An Active School focuses on five key areas:

1. **Physical Education**
2. **Physical Activity During School**
3. **Physical Activity Before and After School**
4. **Staff Involvement**
5. **Family and Community Engagement**



WHAT OTHERS CAN DO:

- **SPREAD THE WORD.** Use your voice to encourage school leaders, teachers and parents to understand the value of Active Schools.
- **OFFER YOUR TIME AND RESOURCES.** To support local schools in becoming Active Schools.
- **GO TO WWW.LETSMOVESCHOOLS.ORG** to learn more and find out how to make schools in your area Active Schools.



The 7 Filters for Early Positive Experiences

Experts tell us there are 7 features that make the very best physical activity programs out there. The goal is to make sure programs have as many of them as possible.

- 1. Universal Access: Ensure all kids play.**
Be inclusive and ensure tasks are differentiated so that all children can attempt them.
- 2. Age Appropriate: Six is not sixteen. Make it fit.**
Make sure activities are fun, safe and appropriate for the age group you're working with.
- 3. Dosage + Duration: How much? How long? How hard?**
Kids should get at least 60+ minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.
- 4. Fun: Let kids be kids.**
For kids to choose a lifetime of physical activity, sports and play, the options available to them must be fun.
- 5. Incentives + Motivation: Give kids a reason to participate.**
Celebrate attendance, participation and both individual and group effort and progress.
- 6. Feedback to Kids: How am I doing?**
Building group and individual feedback loops into programs and activities lets kids know how they are doing.
- 7. Coach/Mentor/Teach: Change the trajectory of a kid's life.**
Create a positive experience for all kids in the program, through differentiated tasks and clear learning objectives.

Elementary School Activities

Feel free to use these suggestions or others you find in the *Let's Move!* Active Schools resource database.



Activity: GO BANANAS!

Space	Time	Age	# of students	Prep and equipment
Classroom or Open Space Indoors or Out	5-10 mins	Pre school through 5 th	Unlimited	None

Formation: Standing at desks or in open space

Rules/Directions:

1. The object is to perform actions based on the chant. The chant goes as follows:

- “Grow bananas, grow, grow bananas.”
Raise 1 arm slowly until overhead. Repeat the phrase and raise the other arm overhead.
- “Peel bananas, peel, peel bananas.”
Slowly lower 1 arm. Repeat the phrase and lower the other arm.
- “Mash bananas, mash, mash bananas.”
Stomp on the floor and repeat.
- “Go bananas, go, go bananas!”
Jump up and down and go bananas!
Repeat.

2. Lead students in several rounds.

Variations:

- How quietly can we “go bananas”?
- Who can think of another fruit or vegetable we could grow?

Teaching Tips

- Be sure other classes nearby are not in “testing mode” when your group goes bananas, as it will get loud and crazy.
- Teach and practice a signal for getting back to normal. Don’t allow students to go bananas again until they can come back down quickly.
- If this activity is used in an outdoor/open space scenario, please mark off parameters for the activity space.

Activity: SPORTS GALORE

Space	Time	Age	# of students	Prep and equipment
Classroom or Open Space Indoors or Out	5-10 mins	2 nd -5 th	Unlimited	None

Formation: Standing at desks or in open space

Rules/Directions:

1. Teacher calls out the following sports skills to mimic for at least 10-15 seconds:
 - Shooting a jump shot
 - Running through tires
 - Batting a baseball
 - Serving a tennis ball
 - Downhill skiing
 - Spiking a volleyball
 - Swinging a golf club
 - Throwing a football
 - Juggling a soccer ball
 - Shooting an arrow
 - Shooting a hockey puck
 - Swimming underwater
 - Fielding a ground ball and throwing it to first base
 - Dunking a basketball

Variations:

1. Teacher can also integrate skills into word problems and have students repeat the number he or she calls out:
 - If Juan made 5 jump shots (students act out) and 2 went in the basket, how many did he miss? ³
 - If Briana hit 2 homeruns (students act out), how many bases would she have to touch? ⁸
2. Ask students for skills to mimic.

Energizers were developed by: Activity Promotion Laboratory College of Health and Human Performance In partnership with: NCDPI

Activity: AS IF

Space	Time	Age	# of students	Prep and equipment
Classroom or Open Space Indoors or Out	5-10 mins	Pre school –3 rd	Unlimited	None

Formation: Standing at desks or in open space

Rules/Directions:

1. Teacher reads sentence to class. Have students act out each sentence for 30 seconds.
 - Jog in place as if a big scary bear is chasing you
 - Walk forwards as if you're walking through chocolate pudding
 - Jump in place as if you are popcorn popping
 - Reach up as if grabbing balloons out of the air
 - March in place and play the drums as if you are in a marching band
 - Paint as if the paint brush is attached to your head
 - Swim as if you are in a giant pool of Jell-O
 - Move your feet on the floor as if you are ice skating
 - Shake your body as if you are a wet dog
2. Students act out each sentence for 20-30 seconds.

Variations:

1. Students may create their own sentences for additional activities.

Energizers were developed by: Activity Promotion Laboratory College of Health and Human Performance In partnership with: NCDPI

Activity: WIGGLES

Space	Time	Age	# of students	Prep and equipment
Classroom or Open Space Indoors or Out	1-5 mins	Pre school –5 th	Unlimited	None Music optional

Formation: Standing at desks or in open space

Rules/Directions:

1. Jog in place while doing the following activities.
2. On teacher’s signal, the students begin to wiggle their fingers.
3. Then their fingers and wrists.
4. Then their fingers, wrists, and forearms.
5. Then their fingers, wrists, forearms, and elbows.
6. Then their fingers, wrists, forearms, elbows, and shoulders.
7. Then their fingers, wrists, forearms, elbows, shoulders, and rib cage.
8. Then their fingers, wrists, forearms, elbows, shoulders, rib cage, and hips.
9. Then their fingers, wrists, forearms, elbows, shoulders, rib cage, hips, and knees.
10. Then their fingers, wrists, forearms, elbows, shoulders, rib cage, hips, knees, and head.

Variations:

1. Start from toes and work your way up (toes, knees, hips, etc.).
2. Repeat activity without jogging for a cool down.

Energizers were developed by: Activity Promotion Laboratory College of Health and Human Performance In partnership with: NCDPI

Activity: HIT THE DECK

Space	Time	Age	# of students	Prep and equipment
Classroom or Open Space Indoors or Out	10-15 mins	K-5 th	Unlimited	5 min Deck of cards Music optional

Formation: Standing at desks or in open space

Rules/Directions:

1. Teacher places deck of cards in front of the class.
2. Have one student select a card and students will do the corresponding activity for each suit.
3. Would be helpful to write corresponding activities on the board for each suit:
 - Heart: touch elbow to knee or crunches for 20 seconds
 - Diamond: jog in place or march in place for 20 seconds
 - Club: modified push up or cabbage patch for 20 seconds
 - Spade: jumping jacks or scissors for 20 seconds
4. Provide other students opportunity to pick a card from the deck and repeat activity.

Variations:

1. Place activities on chart paper so that activity can be done outside.
2. Choose 3 or 4 cards of each suit instead of using entire deck to save time.

Energizers were developed by: Activity Promotion Laboratory College of Health and Human Performance In partnership with: NCDPI

Middle/High School Activities

Feel free to use these suggestions or others you find in the *Let's Move! Active Schools* resource database.



Activity: Reflection Walk

Space	Time	Age	# of students	Prep and equipment
Outdoor	5-15 mins	5 th -12 th grade	Unlimited	None

Formation: Small groups

Rules/Directions:

1. The object is to encourage students to incorporate movement, socialization and reflection during instruction.
2. Have students form small groups.
3. Explain that groups will be taking a walk together. On their walk, they should share something with the group about the current class content or review yesterday's content. You may determine the topic depending on the type of session you are leading. Some examples might be:
 - Share at least one thing you remember from class.
 - Share something new or interesting you learned this morning/afternoon.
 - You can also create a specific list of questions you want students to discuss.
4. Send them on a walking course outside (weather permitting) or throughout the building. Be specific about the return time and possibly have a song or signal to guide students back to their seats.
5. Upon returning to the session, allow 2-3 minutes for students to write down items they want to remember from their walk. Depending on your schedule, or the desired outcome, you can extend this by having students share with their table groups, items they discussed outside of the group during the walk.

Activity: Deal or No Deal

Space	Time	Age	# of students	Prep and equipment
Classroom Indoor	10-20 mins	5 th -12 th grade	Unlimited	Minimum of five envelopes with one exercise listed on the outside of each envelope

Formation: Standing at desk or in open space

Rules/Directions:

1. Gather a minimum of five envelopes with one exercise listed on the outside of each envelope.
 - a. Suggested exercises for the outside of each envelope: Seat crunches, pushups, elbow to opposite knee touches, jumping jacks, arm circles, jog in place, forearm jabs, heel raises, toe raises, weight training with textbooks, arm curls, overhead press.
2. Inside each envelope, place repetition variations on separate pieces of paper or cardstock (e.g. 1 more, 5 more, 10 more, none, times 2, one less, -5, divided by, square root of 36).
3. Teacher chooses an envelope and states a feasible number of repetitions.
4. Teacher makes a deal with one student at a time. All students participate in each deal.



Activity: Lazy Eights

Space	Time	Age	# of students	Prep and equipment
Classroom	5-15 mins	5 th -12 th grade	Unlimited	None

Formation: Standing at desk or in open space.

Rules/Directions:

1. The object is to get students up and out of their seats.
 - a. Ideal for breaks after intense or mentally challenging activities.
2. Extend one arm in front of you with your thumb pointing upwards.
3. Trace the shape of a figure eight in the air. The eight should be on its side and as you trace it out in large, slow movements focus your eyes on your thumb. Without moving your head trace three eights in successively larger movements.
4. Now do it with your other hand and then clasp them together and do it with both hands.



Activity: Continuum

Space	Time	Age	# of students	Prep and equipment
Classroom Indoor	5 mins	5 th –12 th grade	Unlimited	None

Formation: Create a medium (20 x 20 paces) activity area

Rules/Directions:

1. The object is to integrate activity while having students process thoughts and level of agreement with various statements.
2. Place a graphic representation of a continuum along the wall of the classroom.
 - a. Example:
 - i. Place pictorial or graphical representations such as a penguin, emu or roadrunner along the wall such that they correspond to participants' comfort levels with the statements.
 - ii. You may also use signs that say, "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree."
3. Explain what the continuum represents.
4. Ask participants to move to the spot on the continuum that best matches their level of agreement.
 - a. Example of lesson content:
 - i. Local waterways need to be protected.
 - ii. A variety of wildlife should be encouraged.
 - iii. People should be involved in local environment care
 - iv. Only ratepayers should contribute to the cost of caring for the waterways.
 - v. United States citizens care for the environment.

Activity: Continuum (Cont.)

- vi. It is better to use an unspoiled river for recreation, rather than keep it as a natural habitat.
 - vii. People should be made to spend some of their free time working towards helping the environment
5. Have students discuss why they selected their spots along the continuum.
 6. Use this to differentiate a group for pacing on a topic.



Activity: Find Your Partner

Space	Time	Age	# of students	Prep and equipment
Classroom Indoor	10-20 mins	5 th -12 th grade	Unlimited	Index cards with questions

Formation: Students scattered throughout the classroom

Rules/Directions:

1. The object is help students when reviewing for a test.
2. Come up with 3-5 review questions and answers.
3. On an index card, write the questions.
4. Students are scattered throughout the classroom. The teacher will say start with question number 1 and walk to a partner across the room.
5. Each student will walk briskly to find a partner and identify the answer to that question.
6. The teacher will then say start question number 2 tippy toe to a different partner.
7. This continues for three to five minutes.
8. As a review, the teacher can say find your question number 1 partner and students will find their original partner relative to that question.

Variations:

Use different movements to find a partner. Have students create the questions. Use music as students are finding a partner. Time students (e.g., give students ten seconds to find a partner)

Activity: Don't Fall!

Space	Time	Age	# of students	Prep and equipment
Outdoor Open Space	< 5 mins	5 th -12 th grade	Unlimited	None

Formation: Standing in an open space

Rules/Directions:

1. Point your arms toward the ceiling.
2. Lift your right leg and put it to the side of you. Try to keep it straight.
3. Point your body in the opposite direction. Try to make your body, arms and leg parallel with the ground. Hold for 15 seconds.
4. Now try the same sequence with your left leg to the side.



Activity: Airplane

Space	Time	Age	# of students	Prep and equipment
Outdoor Open Space	<5 mins	5 th –12 th grade	Unlimited	None

Formation: Standing in an open space

Rules/Directions:

1. Point your arms toward the ceiling.
2. Lift your right leg and put it behind you. Try to keep your knee straight.
3. Lean forward with your body. Try to make your body, arms and leg parallel with the ground. Hold for 10 seconds.
4. Now try the same sequence with your left.



Activity: Higher or Lower

Space	Time	Age	# of students	Prep and equipment
Outdoor Open Space	5-10 mins	5 th -12 th grade	Unlimited	None

Formation: Standing at desk or in open space

Rules/Directions:

1. One student comes to the front of the room.
2. The teacher writes a 3 digit number on the board behind the student so he/she cannot see it.
3. The student calls out a number while marching in place.
4. The remainder of the class marches in place until the number is called out.
5. If the number is too high, the class squats (guess lower). If the number is too low, the class jumps up and down (guess higher).
6. When the correct number is identified, select a different student to come to the front and repeat.



Activity: Fit for a Healthier Generation Videos

Space	Time	Age	# of students	Prep and equipment
Outdoor Open	3–8 mins	5 th –12 th grade	Unlimited	Computer and/or projector Space

Formation: Standing at desk or in open space

Rules/Directions:

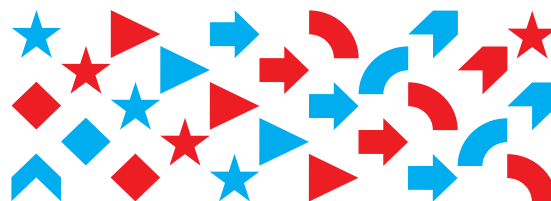
1. Select a video created by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation’s fitness team - Billy Blanks, Tara Stiles, Bob Harper and Zumba - to get you and your students on their feet and moving.
2. Access [videos here](#).



Acknowledgements:

Playground artwork credit:

Designs © Peaceful Playgrounds, Inc.



Let's Move! Active Schools National Collaborative

Action for Healthy Kids

Alliance for a Healthier Generation

Athletes for Hope

BOKS

ChildObesity180

GENYOUth Foundation

GoNoodle

Good Sports

Kaiser Permanente

KIDS in the GAME

Let's Move!

NBA FIT

NIKE, Inc.

Partnership for a Healthier America

President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition

Safe Routes to School National Partnership

SHAPE America

SPARK

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

USA Track & Field

