



Overview

ABC for Fitness[™] is a physical activity program for elementary school students. By fitting physical activity into small intervals throughout the school day, this program will enable most children to accumulate 30 minutes or more of daily physical activity in the classroom, in addition to any other exercise already done in physical education class.

Goals

The goals of this program are to:

- (1) promote health and fitness;
- (2) enhance concentration and the behavioral environment in the classroom;
- (3) help optimize academic performance.

Description

ABC for Fitness[™] is a fun, simple, engaging, no-cost program that uses brief "bursts" of physical activity during each session of the school day. It is designed to take the time that teachers spend getting restless students to settle down, or distracted students to concentrate – and convert this time into structured, productive bursts of physical activity spread over the course of the day. Since it fits into small intervals throughout the school day, it is intended to complement rather than replace time spent learning in the classroom. Ideally, the "activity bursts" will add up to at least 30 minutes of daily physical activity.

Each activity burst has three components: a warm-up, a core activity that increases breathing and heart rate, and a cool-down. Teachers can select different options for each warm-up, core activity, and cool-down. In addition, they can choose from a menu of options to apply the activity bursts to meet their classroom needs, including:

- Basic activity bursts to provide a break between classes, meet students' need to move periodically, and help them to channel their energy so they can refocus on learning.
- Advanced activity bursts that combine sets of movements into engaging classroom activities and contribute to overall fitness
- Activity bursts of imagination that use creativity to move in the classroom.
- Activity bursts for learning and fitness facilitate hands-on learning in language arts, social studies, music, math, science, and health classes.

The program was developed by David L. Katz, MD, MPH, FACPM, FACP, Director of the Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center.

Cost

None

Equipment and Supplies Needed

- *ABC for Fitness*™ teacher manual (available free of charge)
- Optional: Music CDs and CD player
- Optional: FitDeck® exercise cards
- Some of the learning-related activities require simple equipment such as paper, pencils, markers, index cards, a compass, wristwatch, masking tape, or a musical instrument

Enhancements

- Use music to accompany the activity bursts.
- Have students take turn leading the class in activity bursts.
- Incorporate the learning-related activity bursts into your curriculum.

For More Information

The ABC for Fitness teacher's manual can be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center, in the section on Programs and Resources:

<http://www.yalegriffinprc.org/Programs-Resources/PRC-Programs-Resources>