



## Nurture – Kids Exercise Class



Overall Learning Goals:

- Participants will understand the importance of exercise and active play
- Participants will know some exercise options that they enjoy and will do

The end of each weekly lesson has an active nutrition game. If you don't have time to get to it, it would be a great activity for the exercise portion of the lesson the following week. If the kids really liked an activity, that would be a reason to use it as the exercise as well.

It's great to start with something aerobic to use up some energy and then end with a little yoga to calm them down. Below are several different exercises you can try. Don't feel you need to follow an entire routine. Ask the kids to show their favorite exercises to the group. Adjust the time spent on exercise to the needs of your group. Remember, exercise should be fun!

### Introducing the kids to exercise

When you hear the word exercise, what do you think of? (running, sports, lifting weights etc).

Exercise is simply moving your body for an extended period of time.

We all have heard that it is important to exercise, but do you know why?

Exercise helps your body stay healthy! It strengthens your heart, lungs and muscles. It helps you feel energized, prevents disease, and enables you to maintain a healthy weight. To keep your body healthy, exercise for 60 minutes a day. Exercise is fun! Kickball, swimming, riding your bike are all examples of exercise? How have you exercised this past week?

### Possible exercises

**Aerobic** exercise increases your heart rate and makes you breathe hard. This exercises your heart, the most important muscle in your body. Hold your hand over your heart to feel how fast it is beating. Do you feel it? Let's do some aerobic activities now.

Everyone stand up! Stand in ready position, legs slightly bent and hands out to your side, palms facing up. You're going to shift your weight to your right foot, then left foot, alternating as fast as you can while your hands stay extended out at your side (think of a defensive basketball position). (Have the participants perform this exercise for 30-45 seconds.)

Now let's try a different exercise. Stand up tall and pull your belly in. Now bring one knee up to a 90 angle, switch legs. Continue to alternate your legs as fast as you can (for about 30-45 seconds).

We'll try one more exercise. Squat down like you are about to sit in a chair, now jump up as high as you can. Repeat 10 times.

Now put your hand over your heart again. Is it beating faster? How do you feel? Do you have a burst of energy? When your heart beats fast and you are out of breath you know you've given your heart a good workout!

Now let's do some strength training. Strength training helps build strong muscles throughout your body, supports good posture, and helps you maintain a healthy weight. Having strong muscles in your back and abdomen, your 'core' area, helps your body stand up tall and also prevents you from falling and hurting yourself. Have you ever stepped on ice and felt like you were going to fall? Did you notice that when you felt the unstable ground, your body, especially your stomach tightened up? This is an example of your 'core' working hard to make sure you stand upright and don't get hurt.

Let's practice a few exercises that you can do to keep your muscles strong!

Let's try a lunge. Stand one foot in front of the other so that your feet are about 2 ½ to 3 feet apart. Slowly lower your rear leg until it is about 3 inches from the ground, or until your front leg is at a 90 degree angle. Make sure your knee does not extend too far in front of your toes. Try this 10 times on each leg.

For your upper body and core, let's get in plank position. Place arms directly under your shoulder, straighten out your back and tighten your abs. Your body should be parallel to the ground. Hold this position for 15 seconds. If you're feeling strong, try doing 5 pushups!

Can anyone think of exercises that help build strong muscles? (Pushups, planks, lunges, squats, crunches/sit-ups, step ups on a step or box or chair, etc). You don't need to lift heavy weights to build a strong body. Using just your body weight, you can build strong muscles.

Finally let's end with some stretches. Stretching helps lengthen our muscles, prevents injury, and helps us 'stay loose'. You should stretch only after you've warmed up your muscles. As you are doing the following exercises breath in deeply to start and slowly exhale as you move into the stretch. Breathe throughout the stretch – don't hold your breath. Only stretch to the point that is comfortable for you.

Everyone stand up nice and tall. Place one arm behind your back. Now take your other arm and reach around and try to clasp onto your other hand. Hold this position for 30 seconds and then try the other arm.

Clasp your hands behind your back and raise them up as high as is comfortable.

Now let's reach to the sky, slowly bend to one side, hold this position for 30 seconds, repeat on other side. Slowly bend forward, and try to touch the floor, hold this position for 30 seconds. Now slowly roll your body up, and take a nice deep breath! Now close your eyes and take three deep, slow breaths. Open your eyes and sit back down. Stretching is a great way to relax and calm your mind. You can stretch your muscles every day; just remember it is important to warm up first.

## Small Space and Limited Mobility Exercise Options

### Aerobic Exercises

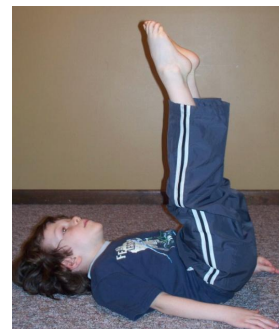
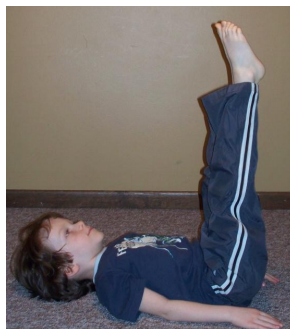
1. Jumping jacks – wide legs and wide arms, bounce quickly of your toes – do 3 sets of 15
2. High Knee lifts– stand in place with your shoulder blades back and down, arms in a 90 degree position. Try not to lean forward or back. Alternate lifting each knee as high as possible – do 10 lifts.
3. Exploding jumps – stand straight and squat down (butt back) to touch the ground and jump/explode as high as you can – do that 8 times. Do 2 sets of 8.
4. Jump rope – hold and imaginary rope , turn it and jump quickly. Do 3 sets of 20.

### Strength Exercises

1. Lunges – stand straight and step one foot in front of you about 2 feet. Lower your body straight down and then push straight up. After 5 up and downs, step your rear foot to meet your front foot and do 5 more stepping forward with the opposite leg. Make sure knee does not extend past toes. This can be damaging to knees if done improperly, so walk around and make sure participants are doing it properly. Do a total of 10 on each side.



2. Squats – stand straight, pretend there is a chair behind you and that you want to slide the chair backward, not sit in it. Lower down and press your butt back at the same time. Try to get as low as you can, press through your heels to come back up. Make sure knee does not extend past toes. This can be damaging to knees if done improperly, so walk around and make sure participants are doing it properly. Do 2 sets of 8.
3. Modified pushups – on your knees and hands, with your body in a straight line, do 2 sets of 6 pushups. Do not rock up, but use your arms and core to get you up.
4. Core lifts – lay on your back, knees in the air at a 90 degree angle, hands behind your head and press your core and lower back to the ground. Do not rock your head or shoulders forward. You should not be able to see your knees with your chin and eyes to the ceiling. Press with your core to lift you a few inches – that's it.

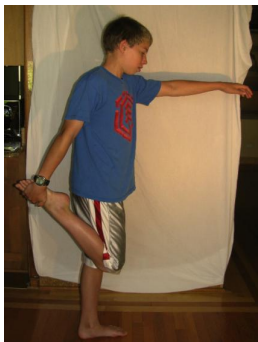


### Sitting Exercises

1. Tighten your core and raise alternating legs, increase core work by raising the opposite arm over your head, add arm weights
2. With or without arm weights, extend both arms in front of you, twist to each side multiple times and then raise weights above the head
3. Extend one leg and flex the heel, lift as high as possible and then push leg out to the side
4. If mobility allows, stand up out of chair and then sit down - continue for several reps to raise heart rate
5. Do "arm" jumping jacks - bring arms out to the side and quickly clap them above your head
6. Arm Circles: extend arms out from shoulders, palms facing up. Do 10 small circles forward then backwards. Repeat with palms down. Rotate arms from shoulder so palms face forward and move arms back and forth 10 times. Repeat with palms facing backward.
7. Tighten your core and lift both feet off the ground without leaning backward - the lift off the ground does not need to be exceptionally high

### Stretching Exercises

1. Hamstrings/Calves - hands on your knees with a flat back – push your shoulders forward and press your butt back
2. Quads – sit on your shin and heels
3. Glutes/hips – sit in a chair with one ankle crossed over one knee and dive forward with your arms
4. Shoulders – clasp your hands behind your back and pull your shoulder blades back and down
5. Lower back – lay on your stomach, hands by your shoulders and press up



## Yoga

Today we're going to do some yoga. Everyone stand up. First let's warm up a bit with 30 jumping jacks. (Modified jumping jacks where you just step to the side are fine also) First let's quiet our minds by starting with a few slow, deep breaths. Close your eyes if you wish. Inhale slowly and hold it (5 seconds total), now slowly exhale (5 seconds total). (Repeat 3 more times.)

First we'll learn the poses then we'll cycle through them twice holding each pose for about 15 to 30 seconds. (Use the routine appropriate for your space and participants.)

### Mountain Pose/Arms Over Head:

Begin by standing still with your arms at your sides. Then stretch your hands above your head. Fill your body with breath on a big inhale as you stretch upwards.

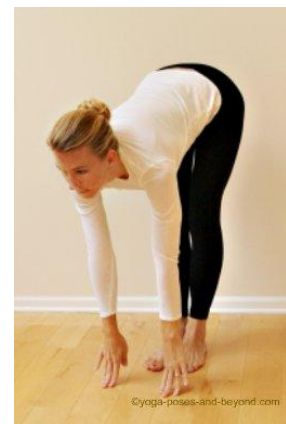


**Forward bend:** Exhale as you bend forward from the waist/hips, keeping your legs slightly bent if your hamstrings (back of legs) are a bit tight. Let your arms dangle or fold at the elbows and clasp the opposite elbow.



**Monkey pose:** From your forward bend, lift your head and look forward as you inhale. Flatten your back as you put your tips of your fingers on the floor or on your shins. Make a monkey sound: "ooo ooo"—this is the monkey pose! Kids love this!

Relax your neck. On inhale, come up from your hips, do not roll your spine.



The following are balance poses, starting with "tree" and then expanding to other variations if time permits. Tell them that you expect them to fall! Part of learning to balance is knowing your limits. This message ties in well with lessons on balancing foods on a plate, snacks, portion size, and sugar intake. (Note: if a child remains perfectly balanced throughout every pose and does not experience "coming out of balance", tell him or her to close their eyes!)



**Tree pose:** Feel the earth below and how that gives us support. Make sure to try on both legs. Do you feel a difference?

Variations:

“growing tree”-lift arms over head

“swaying tree” -move arms around back and forth and side to side

“tumbling tree”- lean body to one side

“pine tree” – touch hands high over head and lean to one side



**Leg out front:** How does your balance change when you lift your leg out in front of you? Does it feel the same on each leg?

Variations:

arms to the sides

arms on the hips

arms in “prayer position”

point or flex foot



**Leg in back:** How about your leg in back of you? How does this feel? Does it feel the same on each leg?

Variations:

arms up (like picture above)

arms to the sides

arms on the hips

arms in “prayer position”

point or flex foot



**Eagle pose:** Wrap your arms around each other, and also wrap your legs around each other. Does this make it easier or harder to balance?

How does it feel when you go out of balance?



**Warrior 1 (variation):** After a quick warm up, step one of your feet forward with a bent knee. Make sure your hips and torso (middle area) are facing the same direction as your front leg. Be careful not to overextend your knee beyond a 90 degree angle. Raise your hands above your head, while keeping your shoulders down and relaxed. Pull in your tummy to keep your back strong. You will transition right to Warrior 2.



**Warrior 2:** Now spread your arms wide, turning your torso to face the side. Make sure both feet are flat on the floor, one pointing ahead (on your bent knee leg) and the other parallel to where the front of the mat would be. Look out over the 3<sup>rd</sup> finger of your outstretched (front) hand, and feel the power and strength of your being!



## Yoga Exercises – Modified Sun Salutations

Yoga is both a great exercise and a great way of managing stress. When stress overwhelms you, the quickest, most sure-fire way to eliminate the anxiety is to tune into the breath and slow it down. When we breathe deeply and slowly, we reduce the heart rate and this in turn steadies and balances the mind.

Pranayama is an ancient practice of working with the vital life force, the **breath**. By practicing breathing exercises that utilize the entire lung capacity, we can restore even mindedness and balance, protecting ourselves from the harmful effects of stress.

### Exercise 1 – Upward Salute:

1. Stand up straight with your feet slightly apart. This stance is called Tadasana. Put your arms straight up and hands together. Slowly spread your arms apart while dropping them gradually. Inhale and sweep your arms out to the sides and straight up.
2. If your shoulders are tense, do not put your palms back together, keep your arms parallel. If you can put your hands back together without hunching your shoulders, do so.
3. Stretch your arms up as high as you can and turn your palms slightly down toward the top of your head. Try not to tense your neck and tip your head back slightly and look at your thumbs.
4. Keep your back straight and your rib cage centered over your pelvis. Lift your rib cage straight up while maintaining the centering. Hold for a few breaths.
5. Start the Forward Bending Salute.

### Exercise 2 – Forward Bending Salute: (Picture on Page 2)

1. Bring your arms to your sides. Exhale and bend forward from the hip joints, not from the waist. As you bend forward, maintain the stretch between your rib cage and pelvis. Try to lengthen your torso as you move more deeply into position
2. Trying to keep your knees straight, bring your palms or finger tips to the floor or your ankles. If too difficult, cross your arms and hold your elbows. Press your heels downward while lifting your buttocks toward the ceiling.
3. With each breath lift your torso slightly during inhale and relax deeper into the pose during exhale. Your head and neck should hang fully relaxed.
4. This pose can be used independently to rest and relax. Hold for 30 seconds to a minute.
5. During an inhalation, come up from your hips. Don't roll your spine.



Exercise 1





Exercise 2



Exercise 3

### Exercise 3 – High Lunge Left:

1. From Forward Bending Salute, bend your knees and, with an inhale, step back with your left foot onto the balls of your feet.
2. Lie on your right thigh and stretching your torso forward. Imagine your right thigh lowering into the floor. Look forward. Lower your left heel to the ground, keeping your left knee straight.
3. Move onto Downward Dog.

### Exercise 4 – Downward Dog:

1. Get on your hands and knees – like a dog. Knees should be right below hips and hands a little in front of your shoulders. Spread your fingers and turn your toes under.
2. Exhale, straighten your legs with knees slightly bent, and come up on balls of feet. Lengthen your back and stretch your buttocks toward the ceiling.
3. Exhale, stretch your thighs back, and put your heels on floor. Straighten your knees but don't lock them.
4. Your hands and arms should be pressing and lifting so your arms and upper back are firm and stretching toward your buttocks. Head should be in line with spine and arms; don't let it hang.
5. Move into Table pose.

Exercise 4



**Exercise 5 – Table:**

1. Get on your hands and knees – like a table. Knees should be right below hips and hands right below your shoulders. Look at the floor with your neck and head relaxed, but in line with your spine.
2. Exhale, round your back like a cat, keeping your knees and shoulders in place. Let your head drop, but don't force it to your chest.
3. Inhale and return to original table position.
4. Move into Child's Pose.



Exercise 6

**Exercise 6 – Child's Pose:**

1. From the Table Pose, slide your big toes together and spread your knees about as wide as your hips.
2. Exhale, sit back on your heels and rest your torso down between your thighs. Your hands should be palm down, arms stretched out in front of you.
3. Inhale and stretch your arms out a little farther. Exhale and stretch your torso back toward your heels and down toward the ground. Keep head and neck relaxed.
4. Stay in the pose from 1 to 3 minutes.
5. Repeat Table Pose.

Exercise 8

**Exercise 7 – Table**

(See directions top of this page):

**Exercise 8 – Downward Dog**

(See directions on page 3):



**Exercise 9 – High Lunge Right (See directions on page 2 but use opposite leg):**

**Exercise 10 – Forward Bending Salute (See directions on page 1):**

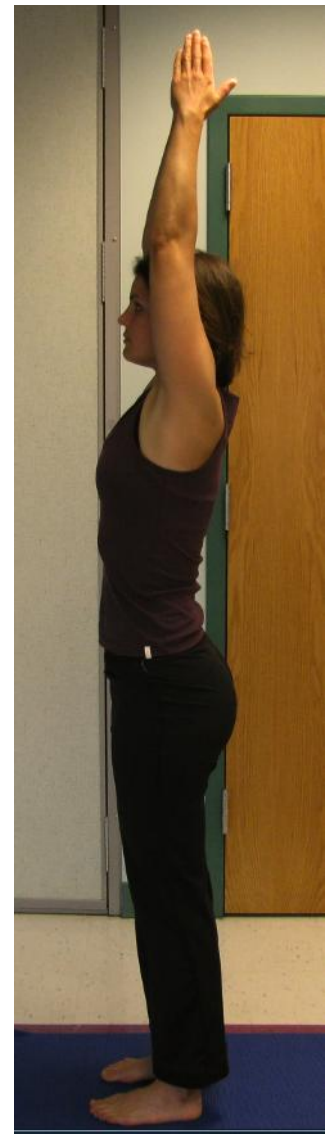
**Exercise 11 – Upward Salute (See directions on page 1):**



Exercise 9



Exercise 10



Exercise 11

## Dance Party Exercise Routine

**Supplies needed:** Radio or iPod or CD of favorite “Energy” Songs with at least 5 songs in a row.

### During First Song:



Dance! Hop, Shake, Reach, Turn, Drop, Spin.

### During Second Song:

#### 1. Do 20 Mountain Climbers.

- Get into the push-up position (arms straight), balls of your feet on the floor.
- Lift your right knee straight up towards your right arm, then back down.
- Bring knees in straight under your body.
- Repeat with your left knee to left arm.
- Increase the speed so your legs are moving up and down.
- Continue for 20 seconds.



#### 2. Flying Superman

- Lie face down on the carpet.
- Raise one arm and the opposite leg, then progress to both.
- Hold for 30 seconds.
- Relax for a count of 3, then hold again for 30 seconds.





### 3. Repeat 20 Mountain Climbers

### 4. Side to side Jumping Jacks

- Instead of jumping, move one leg to the other and raise both hands.



### 5. Balance

- Tighten your stomach to keep you upright, do not lean back or forward.
- Try to hold for a maximum of one minute.



### During Third Song:



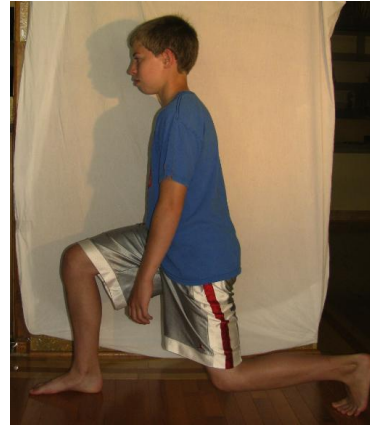


Dance! Hop, Shake, Reach, Turn, Drop, Spin.

### During Fourth Song:

#### 1. Lunges

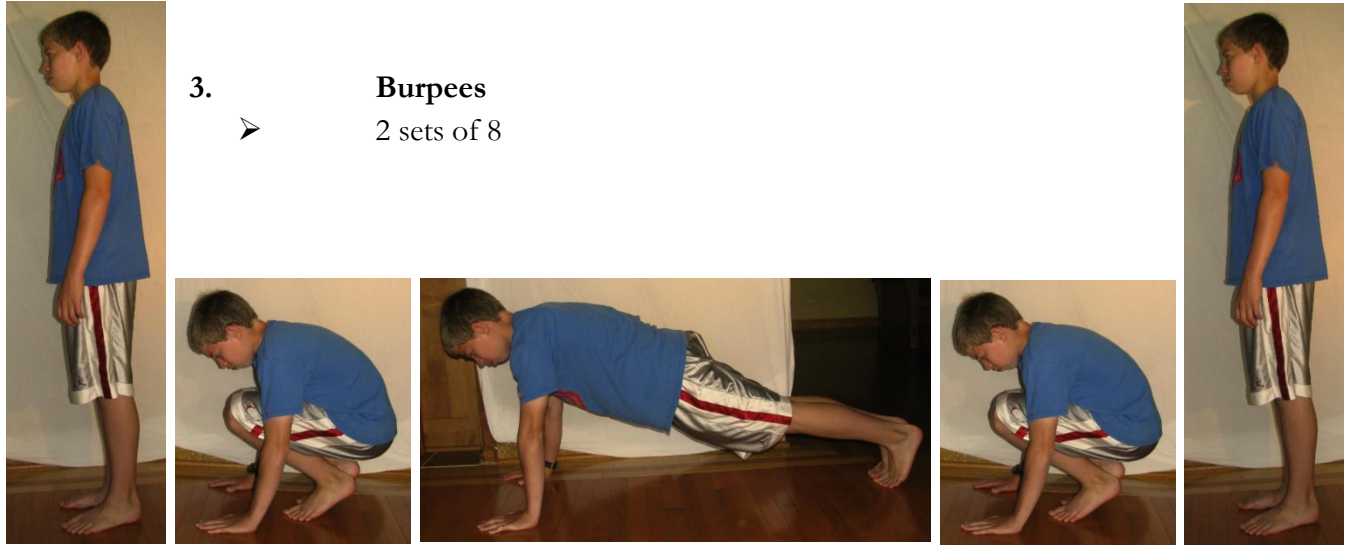
- Make sure your shoulders are back, and your knee does not cross over your toes.
- 3 sets of 8 on each side



#### 2. Lifts

- Lift lower back slightly off the ground.
- Lift toes straight up to the ceiling. Do not move legs toward head.
- Small movements, think “seesaw”
- 3 sets of 8 lifts



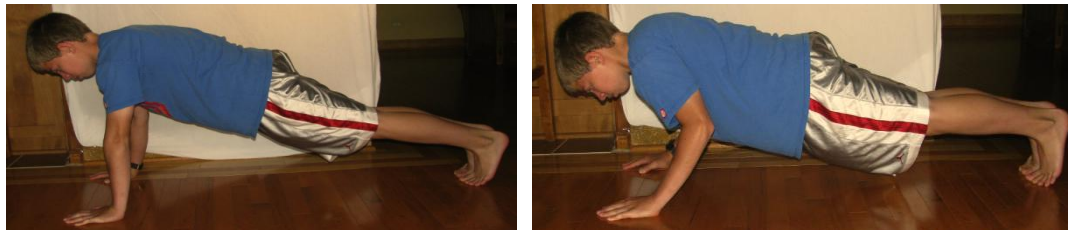


**4. Plank for one minute**

➤ Make sure the buttock does not stick up or dip down.



Or do 10 push-ups



**5. Marching Band leg lifts**

➤ 3 sets of 8





### During Last Song:

Dance! Hop, Shake, Reach, Turn, Drop, Spin

### Stretch



