

Family Fitness Night

Overview

Family Fitness Nights are a great way to extend healthy messages from school to home and educate families about the importance of physical fitness. Family Fitness Nights expose students and families to inexpensive, fun and easy physical activities that can



be enjoyed together at home, as well as help families connect to fitness resources in the community. These nights can also be an opportunity to showcase your school's physical activity initiatives so parents understand how your school is helping students stay fit.

Take Action

- Seek approval from your principal and support from your School Health Team, PE teacher, before/after school program supervisors, etc.
- During a [School Health Team](#) meeting (a month or two before the Family Fitness Night), seek ideas, discuss event details and delegate responsibilities.
- Identify the space where you want to host the event such as the gymnasium or cafeteria. If you don't have a space large enough, consider partnering with another local school or fitness facility (like the YMCA or local park district), or hosting stations in various classrooms.
- Pick a day and time that doesn't compete with other activities and is convenient for your school community. For example, does your school run an

- after-school program that could culminate in a Family Fitness Night when parents pick up their child? Are there less after-school activities in the winter?
- Family Fitness Nights can involve whole group activities, where everyone participates in 3-5 activities together during the night, or small group activities, where families rotate between 5 to 10 stations. Choose what works best for your space and the number of participants.
 - Our favorite station ideas:
 - A Video Game Dance Mat
 - Obstacle Course
 - Putt Putt Golf
 - Balance Beam
 - **Hula Hoop Roll** – *Two teams stand in equal lines with the first child holding a hula hoop. When indicated, the participant holding the hula hoop rolls it the length of the course and returns back to the line, handing the hula hoop to the next player, who repeats the steps. The first team to have every participant run the length of the course with the hula hoop wins.*
 - **Freeze Dance Game** – *All participants stand on the dance floor. When the music begins, players dance. When the music is stopped at random times, the participants must freeze. Anyone still moving is out. The last participant standing wins.*
 - **Five Pin Bowling** – *Place teams several feet apart, such as on the opposite ends of a gym. Place five two-liter plastic bottles weighted with sand in the bottom, or bowling pins, in the center between the teams. When signaled to start, players kick balls from their line, attempting to knock down a pin. A player who knocks down the pin must run out and stand it back up. One point is scored for each pin knocked down. The first team to get five points wins.*
 - **Balloon Basketball** – *Blow up several balloons. Divide players into two equal teams and place the balloons between them. When indicated, teams are to run to the balloons, pick up one, and attempt to get it through the basketball hoop. Once the balloon is near the basket, it can be repeatedly hit to make a*

- Sneak in nutrition where you can - [Taste test fruits/vegetables](#) grown in the [school garden](#), seek donated snacks from local grocery stores or highlight a recipe from the High School's Family & Consumer Science class.
- Promote, promote, promote! Use social media, your school's website and newsletter, backpack flyers, and other family messaging systems to encourage participation during your event. Ask teachers if they're willing to provide extra credit or another incentive for students that attend.

Tips



Double and triple check your activity stations beforehand to ensure they have all needed materials. Encourage families to go to all stations by creating a "passport" - When a family completes each activity, they get a mark on their passport. Once a family has completed all activities, they turn in their card for a chance to win a healthy prize at the end of the night.



Spice stations up by adding music. Get your heart rate up by movin' and groovin' to the beat!



Too busy to dedicate another night for a school event? Consider combining Family Fitness Night with an existing event, such as a Literacy, [Math](#) or STEM nights at your school. Find ways to show families how physical activity can be linked with [classroom-based learning](#).



Make sure each activity is low-cost and requires little equipment to participate. Encouraging easy, hassle-free ideas at this event will encourage the behavior at home.



Coordinate your event so it coincides with a particular



Use Family Fitness Night as a kick-off to a family activity challenge

monthly celebration, like [Heart Health Month](#) (February), [National Physical Fitness and Sports Month](#) (May) or [Walk/Bike to School Day](#) (October/May).

during spring or summer break, like [Family Activity Points](#).



Make sure participants have easy access to water. If the fountain isn't functioning, seek donated water bottles from a local store or remind participants to bring their own bottles.



Always have a backup plan for outdoor activities in case the weather gets bad.



Send a thank-you note to all volunteers after the event.

Additional Resources

[Action for Healthy Kids' Family Fitness and Fun Events](#)

[50 Ideas for a Healthy and Active Family \(Action for Healthy Kids\)](#)

[Tips to Promote Family Fitness \(American Heart Association\)](#)

[Make Physical Activity a Part of Your Family's Routine \(Let's Move\)](#)

[Family Activities Guide \(Let's Move\)](#)

[Healthy Family Calendar \(Let's Move\)](#)

Related Activities

Field Day Fitness

Get Moving During Math

For many schools, Field Day is one of the most memorable days of the year, and it's a great addition to Every Kid Healthy Week. Let the games begin!

Night

Study after study shows kids who get regular physical activity experience improvements in their fitness levels AND brain function. Put this research to practice by including physical activity as part of your school's math night!

Fitness Classes

Fitness classes are a great option for non-competitive physical activity while also appealing to varying levels, abilities and interests.

Health and Wellness Fair

Hosting a health and wellness fair at school is a great way to share information with students, staff, families and the community about healthy eating, physical activity, health services, and other local health and wellness resources.