

Homeschool P.E.

(...for the P.E. Challenged Mom)

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by

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“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them”
(Matthew 7:12).

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Are you a P.E.-challenged Mom? I am! I grew up in a traditional school setting, and I just despised physical education class, or “phys ed” as my teachers called it. I didn’t enjoy running around in the heat, making a fool of myself as I tried to catch balls, or changing in the locker room. Yuck!

So as a homeschooling mom, I was in a predicament. I understood the good sense in teaching physical fitness to my children. I realized the need for getting them off the couch and moving. But it was hard for me to set a good example when my memories of exercising and sports were less than fond.

In addition, as the mother of six young children, I lacked the time to make lesson plans for yet another subject. Our day was already full with math, grammar, reading, writing, history, science, chores, music, service for others, housecleaning....

So I needed a plan. I talked to my husband, who has been involved with athletics on a high school level for many years. I read books on physical education, written by and for homeschoolers. I searched the Internet.

The result was a set of simple lesson plans that would take me through several years of physical education. These plans are intended for elementary-age children, since these were the ages of my own children. I planned for ways to get us all up and exercising together, since this was a need in our home. Finally, I tried to make it fun, since I knew that I wouldn’t want to continue if it wasn’t – and if Mom doesn’t want to exercise, why would the kids want to?

Ready to join us? Let’s go!

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Note: Use caution and discernment when visiting any of the websites referenced.
Anne’s School Place cannot be responsible for the content of any of the suggested sites.

Before Your Family Begins:

1. **Set reasonable goals for each person.** Does Johnny need to strengthen his upper arms? Is Suzie a slow runner? Does Philip need to get outside and get more fresh air? Does Melissa want to learn how to play softball?
 - Photocopy the “Challenge Goals” sheet on page 27 and stick it on your refrigerator.
2. **Do an equipment check.** We tried to choose activities that will use things that your family very likely already owns. Of course, you can always feel free to substitute items that might work just as well. Don't have a baseball bat? A long cardboard tube that used to hold wrapping paper can make a fun bat. Don't have bean bags? Fill old socks with beans, then quickly sew the ends up tight. We're assuming if your family members are already huge fans of baseball or bean-bag games, you won't even have this problem. The rest of us can pinch pennies. ☺ We've made a list of equipment you'll probably need, and you can see it on page 13.
3. **Choose a place for everything, and put everything in its place.** We use large plastic storage containers, purchased inexpensively at our local supercenter. You'll also need to think about *where* you'll do P.E. each day, in good weather as well as in bad. Do you have a paved driveway? Do you have a big backyard? Is there a place for balls to be played with without the fear of their rolling into a road? Is there a room in your house where pillow fights and relay races can be enjoyed? Finally, begin thinking about *when* you'll exercise each day. Our family enjoys some variety, but we've found that mid-morning and mid-afternoon are two of our favorite times – you know, when everyone is sleepy!
4. **Assign helpers.** Mom, you can't do everything, and if you try to add P.E. to an already packed schedule, you'll probably “drop out” after a week or two. Allow your children to do your preparation work for you. You'll be teaching them valuable life skills, you'll increase their anticipation for exercising, and you'll relieve yourself of some extra burden. We've chosen the following helpers in our home:

- ❑ **An Equipment Checker** - This helper will look at the week's lesson plans and make sure all the equipment is ready to use. Each day, he or she will bring the equipment to your P.E. area.
- ❑ **A "Water Boy" (or Girl)** - This helper will prepare water bottles (or some substitute) each morning. He or she will make sure the water is cold and ready to drink both before and after P.E. time. (Please, Mom, no sugary drinks. Read all labels! Sugar and popular sports drinks will only sabotage your bodies!)
- ❑ **A Goal Checker** - Homeschooling moms are notorious about good intentions and poor follow-through. Do you want your children to set goals? Allow one of your little helpers to hang a goal chart on the refrigerator each week and to hold his or her siblings accountable. This helper can also make "announcements" at dinner when a family member has done exceptionally well!

5. **Be ready with alternate ideas for busy times.** You probably realize that just because these lesson plans contain 36 weeks does not mean you'll get them all done. However, if you're like me, a few weeks of chicken pox will get you so out of the habit of exercising that you're likely to quit P.E. altogether (until next year). A back-up plan is needed so your children will know that P.E. is a mandatory subject. When your life is crazy, be prepared with a children's exercise video or DVD, a friend you can call on to take your children sledding or bicycling, or a father who might take on the challenge for a week or two. Note: Love to Learn is a company that has several excellent exercise and dance videos, plus fun equipment that would work in a pinch. <http://www.lovetolearn.net>
6. **Photocopy any needed plans, charts, and Movement Cards before you begin.** Laminate things if it would help. Let your kids cut up the Movement Cards. Get a plastic storage container to hold the cards and put the charts on a clipboard. Don't start now and organize later. You'll only be setting yourselves up for failure.
 - If you don't want to bother photocopying, you are welcome to download and print many of the reproducible pages from this book online at <http://www.homeschoolingpe.com>.

Equipment Needed:

- Cones - at least 4
- Jump Ropes - one per child, plus a longer one for group games
- Hula Hoops - minimum 4
- Balls - many sizes and textures
- Bicycles (optional)
- Timer or stopwatch
- Peppy, fun music - to be used on days when enthusiasm lags
- Beanbags or socks filled with rice
- Clothespins
- Pillows
- Balance Beam - 2" x 4" x 8' (or masking tape to mark an area this size)
- Ball attached to a paddle
- Balloons
- Tape Measure - nice & long
- Dice for choosing Movement Cards (optional)
- Most Important - a smile! ☺

Other Equipment You'd Like to Add to This List:

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Some Things to Consider:

1. The Bible says to “train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come” (1 Timothy 4:7-8). Be sure to begin your homeschooling day with Bible study so that no matter what other interruptions come, your priorities will be straight. You’ll have taken time to train your children in godliness. On the other hand, you may want to schedule physical education for later in the day, aware of the fact that outside circumstances might cause you to skip this subject sometimes. That’s okay! Keep your priorities straight.
2. Include some work and service in your children’s day. Hard, physical work is the best form of exercise, and it’s a gift that few children receive. In addition, learning to serve others daily is a life skill that takes plenty of energy and endurance, yet it will further your goal of training your children in godliness. See the Moore Foundation’s website for ideas: <http://moorefoundation.com>
3. We have been asked if our lesson plans conform to state and national education standards. After looking at numerous standards, we realized that many of the standards overlap with other subject areas. For instance, in the state of West Virginia, the following seven components are objectives for their physical education programs:
 - A. Safety
 - B. Lifetime Wellness
 - C. Physical Activity
 - D. Social Skill Development
 - E. Movement/Rhythmic Development
 - F. Motor Skill Development
 - G. Computer and Technology

I’m sure it’s not difficult for you to see how many of these areas you are already teaching to your children, such as social skill development, safety, and computer skills. We chose to focus on the areas of physical activity, motor skill development, and a limited introduction to lifetime wellness.

4. Speaking of safety, injuries are a concern to all homeschooling moms, aren't they? According to <http://www.amateur-sports.com> most injuries are minor, such as sprains and bruises. However, no mother wants a trip to the emergency room or the family doctor. Many injuries can be prevented! In order to prevent them, however, you must understand what causes them.
- ✓ Moving muscles that haven't been warmed up.
 - ✓ Moving muscles that haven't been stretched.
 - ✓ Using improper equipment or space, such as not wearing shoes or running in a tight, crowded space.
 - ✓ Not understanding the rules of a sport or exercise.
 - ✓ Exercising when hungry, sick, or too tired.

This is why common sense must rule the day. We would advise you to help prevent the pain and suffering of injuries by doing the following:

- ✓ Be sure your children get a physical exam before beginning (and at least once a year thereafter).
 - ✓ Don't ask your children to exercise beyond their limits. Toddlers should not be required to do 50 sit-ups.
 - ✓ Do not allow your children to play in organized sports or to exercise without proper supervision and instruction.
 - ✓ Don't stretch or exercise to the point of pain. We used to hear it said, "No pain, no gain." This is just not true! If your child says, "Ouch," then stop!
 - ✓ Exercise sessions should only take place on days in which your children have had nourishing meals, plenty of water, and lots of rest.
 - ✓ You should all be eating nourishing meals every day! ☺
 - ✓ Stretch your muscles every day.
 - ✓ Always start and finish strenuous activity with a warm-up and stretching time.
5. The games and activities in this curriculum were intended for homeschooling families with at least two or three children. Since not all families are this large, you may need to adapt some activities. How? Mom and Dad can play along! You could join with other homeschooling families locally. You could invite your neighbor children to exercise with you each afternoon. Be creative and enjoy exercising together.

What Will You Be Doing During P.E. Time?

- ✓ A daily “Stretch and Flex”
- ✓ **Daily real-life exercising**, such as strength-training, movement of large muscle groups, playing crazy games outdoors, or completing “Challenge Tasks.”

What This P.E. Curriculum Includes:

- ✓ **Monday** - This is a great day to introduce new goals and to teach new skills.
- ✓ **Tuesday** - Randomly choose a Movement Card (see page 105). You may choose to roll two dice to help you choose fairly.
- ✓ **Wednesday** - Use this day to learn about popular American team sports. Some days will involve quiet research while other days will involve active participation. This curriculum allows three weeks to study each sport. See page 29 for more information.
- ✓ **Thursday** - As the week draws to a close, plan for a fun, crazy, wild, and ACTIVE family game. Be sure your chosen helpers have done their “jobs” beforehand.
- ✓ **Friday** - Today is different. The schedule shows no formal exercise time, since many families have one day per week to run errands or join with other homeschooling families. However, it would be wise to take a look at our weekly small research project for interesting peeks at how our bodies work. These projects can be completed as a family throughout the day and into the weekend.

As you might imagine, these days are simply suggestions. Please feel free to take our plan and rearrange it to fit your family and your situation. There is no right or wrong way to do this!

Moving Time Explanation

What should we do today?

- ✓ Monday - Challenges
- ✓ Tuesday - Movement Cards (pick one and play together)
- ✓ Wednesday - Sports
- ✓ Thursday - Games
- ✓ Friday - Quiet health research or none

Movement Cards

Use dice to randomly choose a Movement Card. Unless weather or circumstances prohibit the activity, you should do whatever the activity card says. (Note: If you absolutely can't do a card, choose an alternative activity such as an exercise video today.) You may want to choose the card *before* doing "Stretch & Flex," so that your "Equipment Checker" can have all the supplies you need ready and you can begin playing immediately.

Challenges

Each week, your children will be introduced to fun challenges that they should work on throughout the year. As you introduce a new challenge, allow them to set a goal that they would like to reach. Once challenges have been introduced, Mom should only have to supervise from a distance.

Sports & Games

Once a week, we will introduce a common American sport or game. We will learn the rules and some basic skills necessary for success. Don't expect mastery of any of these games! These activities will only provide enough information to *introduce* the sport or game. Just have fun and keep the competition friendly! More information is found in each week's lesson plans.

Quiet Health Research

Many schools incorporate health into their physical education programs. To touch on this subject, we have incorporated a small research project into each week's lesson plan. You may choose to do these optional projects, or you may also occasionally choose to

skip P.E. one day per week, to allow for activities away from home. You might find books by the following authors to be helpful, although not all are Christians:

- ✓ Sally Fallon
- ✓ Sue Gregg
- ✓ Shonda Parker
- ✓ Diana Schwarzbein

In addition, we will be recommending websites to view for research*. You may wish to supplement or replace our ideas with books and resources of your own. Please note that websites are frequently changed or deleted. You can reference all of these websites online at <http://homeschoolingpe.com/> or notify us if a link does not work.

You can also find some helpful health information on our website, <http://www.anneelliott.com/anneshealthplace.htm>

* Note: Not all of these authors follow a Christian worldview. Please use discretion.

Sports

We will introduce your family to the following sports by spending three weeks on each.

This is the format we will follow:

Week 1 - Learn More

Spend time online researching basic rules, learning basic techniques, and developing ideas for practice.

Week 2 - Appreciate More

Develop an appreciation for the skill and passion of the game by watching others play. Watching a live game is best, but depending on your location and the time of the year, it may be easier to observe by watching movies, reading books, and interviewing local participants. Don't overlook the possibility of renting video games and/or game systems that allow you to "play" the sport.

Week 3 - Play More

This week we'll review the basic rules and play a homeschool-style version of the game. Enjoy!

We'll be learning a little about the following sports:

Baseball

Basketball

Bowling

Cheerleading

Football

Hockey

Soccer

Tennis

Track & Field Sports

Volleyball

P.E. Time - Week 1

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Stretch and Flex | <input type="checkbox"/> (p. 19) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Practice Challenges Learned So Far | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Moving Time | Learn a new challenge. | Choose a “Movement Card.” | Learn about a team sport. | Play a fun game. | Do a health research project. |

This week’s challenge:

Challenge #1 - Curl-ups (Sit-ups)

Goals: Aim to be able to do this many curl-ups in one minute:

- 6-7 yrs. old, 10-15 curl-ups
- 8-9 yrs. old, 20-25 curl-ups
- 10 yrs. and older, 30 and more curl-ups

To do a curl-up, lie on your back, and bend your knees. Cross your arms over your chest, with your hands on your shoulders. With a partner holding your feet (or your feet held under the couch or other piece of furniture), sit up until your elbows touch your knees. Lie back down until your shoulder blades touch the floor. This is one curl-up.

For more information, visit

http://www.presidentschallenge.org/educators/program_details/health_fitness/events_curlups.aspx

This week’s sport: Volleyball

Learn More - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volleyball>

Variations of the Game - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volleyball#Variations>

This week’s game: Alamo

Place five or six balls in the middle of the room. All players touch the outside walls of the room. When a leader yells, “Alamo,” the game begins. Anyone who gets a ball throws it, trying to hit others to get them out. The person who gets hit with a ball is out of the game and must sit down with legs crossed until the game is over. If the ball is thrown at a person who catches the ball, then the person who threw the ball is out. One catch - if you have a ball you cannot walk with it! The only way you can move with a ball is if you roll the ball on the floor. Any person caught walking with a ball is out.

This week’s health research project:

Which fats are good for us, and which can harm us? A good website is:

<http://www.westonaprice.org/knowyourfats/index.html>

P.E. Time - Week 12

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Stretch and Flex | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Practice Challenges Learned So Far | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Moving Time | Learn a new challenge. | Choose a "Movement Card." | Learn about a team sport. | Play a fun game. | Do a health research project. |

This week's challenge:

Review all challenges, especially Challenge #3 - Push-ups or Pull-ups.

This week's sport: Basketball

Play More - If you have access to a basketball hoop, you will probably enjoy the kids' versions of basketball explained at this website:

<http://www.articlesbase.com/sports-and-fitness-articles/4-game-variations-of-basketball-424968.html>

This week's game: Soft Ball Tag

One player ("It") tags other runners by throwing a soft foam ball or rolled-up paper wad. When tagged, the child must do three sit-ups to get back into the game. Variation: The player who is "It" must kick the ball instead of throwing it, and the other players must skip or hop.

This week's health research project:

Sugar - The Sweet Thief of Life

<http://thedoctorwithin.com/sugar/Sugar-The-Sweet-Thief-of-Life.php>

P.E. Time - Week 29

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Stretch and Flex | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Practice Challenges Learned So Far | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Moving Time | Learn a new challenge. | Choose a "Movement Card." | Learn about a team sport. | Play a fun game. | Do a health research project. |

This week's challenge:

Challenge #2 - Endurance Run

This is the final time we will practice this challenge for the year. By Friday, have your children illustrate their abilities to Dad or another special friend or relative.

This week's sport: Baseball

Appreciate More - It shouldn't be hard to find ways to appreciate this popular sport. History buffs will especially love researching the beginnings of America's favorite pastime.

This week's game: Sock War

Bring a basket of socks. Clearly divide the playing area in half. Put half the kids on each side of the divider, giving each team half the socks. Explain that they can only throw ONE sock at a time, and they must stop when Mom says, "STOP." Yell, "Go," and allow them to throw socks over the divider as fast as they can. Let each round go about 3 minutes. Get a 10-second warning, and then say, "Stop." Count the socks on each, and the team with the least number of socks wins.

This week's health research project:

Statistics and Dangers of Soda Pop

http://www.mercola.com/2001/mar/10/soda_pop_dangers.htm