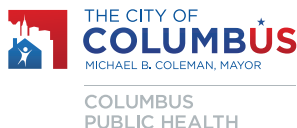


SAFE ROUTES IN THE CLASSROOM

ACTIVITIES FOR GRADES 3 & 4



MAY 2012



ABOUT SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION:

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program is a collection of community and school-based activities designed to improve the health and well-being of students and the community at large. SRTS offers students, including those students with disabilities, with an opportunity to make walking and bicycling to school safer and more accessible and to increase the number of children who choose to walk and bicycle. On a broader level, SRTS programs can ease traffic congestion near the school and improve air quality and the community's overall quality of life. SRTS also provides primary grade teachers with evidence-based lesson plans that can be used as an adjunct to SRTS activities or as stand alone lessons. The Columbus City Schools iteration of SRTS are consistent and inclusive of National Health Education Standards (NHES).

BACKGROUND:

Childhood obesity is a national health problem that impacts the quality of health for children and youth locally. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC 2012), 17% of the nation's children aged 5-19 are "obese"; the percentage for Ohio children and youth is approximately three times higher than the national average. Although childhood obesity is the results of a set of complex conditions, which are societal, cultural and economic, it occurs when an individual intakes more calories than they expend through movement and physical activity.

All children, regardless of their weight, need continuing education and skill building regarding the benefits of being active, how to be active every day, and the health risks associated with being sedentary. Additionally, all students must have access and opportunities for daily movement and physical activity. Columbus City Schools, recognizing the health and educational impact of student's health status has developed a number of programs and curricular to educate children and their families about the benefits and rewards of healthy weight through good nutrition and simple physical activity, and equips students with pragmatic tools to address health on a personal, familial and community level. One program within Columbus City School's comprehensive strategy is the nationally recognized Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program (<http://publichealth.columbus.gov/safe-routes-to-school.aspx>). Further resources are available through the National Center for Safe Routes to School (www.saferoutesinfo.org).

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ABOUT SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL, continued

LESSONS:

Columbus City Schools has selected five (5) lessons from the Nebraska SRTS curriculum to be on the Columbus City Schools' teacher website. These lessons correspond to The National Health Education Standards, particularly Standard 6: Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health enhancing behaviors, avoid or reduce risks and advocate for personal, family, and community health. The lessons can be located on the Curriculum Guide website under Health and can be used by K-5 classroom teachers to fulfill the 30 minute weekly health lesson requirement.

NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS:

Created in 2007, The National Health Education Standards (www.cancer.org/nationalhealtheducation) were developed to establish, promote and support health-enhancing behaviors for students in all grade levels—from pre-Kindergarten through grade 12. The NHES provide a framework for teachers, administrators, and policy makers in designing or selecting curricula, allocating instructional resources, and assessing student achievement and progress. Importantly, the standards provide students, families and communities with concrete expectations for health education.

Standard 1: Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.

Standard 2: Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.

Standard 3: Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.

Standard 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

Standard 5: Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.

Standard 6: Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.

Standard 7: Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

Standard 8: Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

ACTIVITY 1

GROUP POEM

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will collaborate in small groups to relate their experiences/views about walking, biking, and safety by composing original poetry.

NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS:

- **Standard 4:** Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
- **Standard 8:** Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

TIME/DURATION: 30 minutes

MATERIALS:

- None

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Break the students into groups of four or five.
2. Give each group a word associated with walking and biking safety (helmet, stop sign, etc.).
3. Instruct the students to write the word vertically along the left-hand side of a piece of paper, leaving a few spaces between each letter.
4. Tell the students to create a poem as a group, using each letter of the word to start a line about the word's meaning and how it applies to walking or biking.
5. After about 20 minutes, have the groups share their poems with the class..

ACTIVITY 2

BIKE SAFETY PRESENTATIONS

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will collect and examine information about walking/biking safety.
- Students will compose reports on walking/biking safety.
- Students will present their findings to the class.

NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS:

- **Standard 6:** Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.
- **Standard 7:** Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

TIME/DURATION: 1-2 weeks

MATERIALS:

- None

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Assign each student a topic related to walking or biking (the importance of exercise, bicycle safety laws, etc.)
2. Allow the students time to research the topic in the library, using online and off-line sources.
3. Instruct each student to write a paper on their topic, in whatever format you see fit.
4. Each student will present his or her findings to the class in a 5-minute presentation.
5. Encourage students to use creative visual aids in presentations.

ACTIVITY 3

WALKING/BIKING JOURNAL

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will record their observations, thoughts, and feelings in an organized manner.
- Students will recall their experiences throughout the week and begin noticing the physical and mental changes the exercise has on them.

NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS:

- **Standard 1:** Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
- **Standard 7:** Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.
- **Standard 8:** Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

TIME/DURATION: 1-2 weeks

MATERIALS:

- Notebook for each student

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Provide each student with a notebook.
2. Instruct students to record their observations while walking and biking to school (or anywhere, for students who do not walk or bike to school).
3. Observations can include fun experiences with friends, wildlife sightings, safety hazards, safety rules in action, or even just how they feel during and after walking or riding.
4. Encourage students to record their observations chronologically.
5. At the end of the journaling period, allow each student to read an excerpt from his or her journal.

ACTIVITY 4

SAFETY SKITS

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will collaboratively compose original skits.
- Students will dramatize their scripts for the class.
- Students will apply their understanding of safety concepts.

NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS:

- **Standard 3:** Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.
- **Standard 7:** Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

TIME/DURATION: 1 hour

MATERIALS:

- None

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Break students into groups of four or five.
2. Assign each group a topic related to bicycle or walking safety (safe street crossing, hand signals, etc.).
3. Instruct each group to develop a skit (approximately 5 minutes long) that informs the audience about the topic and demonstrates safety concepts in action.
4. After about 40 minutes of writing and rehearsing, have each group perform its skit for the class.

ACTIVITY 5

HUMAN COMPASS

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will identify and memorize the four cardinal directions.
- Students will identify landmarks as they pertain to the four cardinal directions.
- Students will demonstrate a working knowledge of the cardinal directions in their communities.

NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS:

- **Standard 3:** Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.

TIME/DURATION: 20 minutes

MATERIALS:

- None

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Discuss the cardinal directions with students, identifying north, south, east, and west. Explain the importance of understanding these terms.
2. Bring each student to the front of the classroom to act as a human compass.
3. Instruct the student to point in whatever direction you name. Give each student the chance to be the human compass for a while.
4. Once each student has had a turn, it's your turn to play the human compass. Point in a direction, and instruct the class to identify which direction you're pointing.
5. To reinforce this learning, ask students which direction certain landmarks are from the school. This will give them a better idea of how the cardinal directions extend beyond the classroom.

OTHER IDEAS

If you're interested in developing your own activities to teach safety and health to your students, here are some ideas:

- Provide students with a passage to read about the importance of getting enough exercise, eating right, and staying safe. Follow the passage with questions.
- Provide a worksheet with blank street sign shapes, and have the students fill in what the signs should say.
- Provide an intermediate lesson on the food pyramid, why it's important, and what nutritional mistakes people commonly make.
- Have the students create a model of their street and point out safety hazards.
- Create a "connect the dots" picture of a safety-related object on graph paper. Next determine what the ordered pairs of the dots are, and provide those numbers to the students. Have the students graph the ordered pairs on graph paper and then connect the dots to finish the picture.