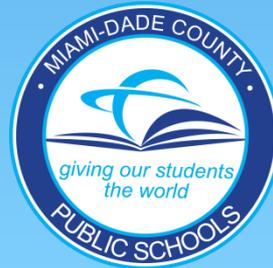


Brain Break Resource Manual

Miami Dade County Public Schools
Department of Food and Nutrition



Tips

- Involve your students in deciding what their physical activity break will be. As students get comfortable performing certain physical activities, ask them to lead the activity!
- Brain breaks Do NOT necessarily have to be a break from learning. Mix academic concepts into physical activity when possible.
- If unsure what physical activity to do with your kids, involve your Physical Education teacher. He/She can teach students activities during P.E. class that they can do in or outside of the classroom.

Outdoor Brain Break Ideas

Duck Duck Goose

Instruction

Have your kids sit in a circle. One person is "it" and walks around the circle. They tap each person's head and say whether they are a "duck" or a "goose". Once someone is the "goose" they get up and try to chase "it" around the circle. The goal is to tag that person before they get to the "goose's" spot. If the goose is not able to do this, they become "it". If they do tag the "it" person, the person tagged has to sit in the center of the circle. Then the goose becomes it. The person in the middle can't leave until another person is tagged and they are replaced.



Hopscotch



Instruction

Draw a hopscotch design on the ground using chalk or tape numbering each square up to about 8 or 10 squares. Throw a flat stone or similar object in one of the numbered squares. Hop through the squares, skipping the one containing the marker. As the kid is hopping have them repeat the number inside the box. Get creative ... instead of numbers, add shapes or colors, possibilities are endless. Pick up the marker on your way back and pass on the marker to the next in line.

Red Light Green Light

Instruction

In order to play, one person is chosen to be the traffic cop. All the players stand on the starting line and the traffic cop stands at the finish line with his back to the rest of the players. When he says "green light," players try to run to the finish line. When the traffic cop says "red light," he turns around and players have to stop in their tracks. Either let the winner be the traffic cop or simply choose a new student each time.



Explore Your School Garden

Instruction

Your school gardens are not merely a place for the kids to plant and harvest produce. Depending on your space this could be a great place to do any of the above activities or simply let your children explore in the garden. Continuous outdoor activities in your school garden could also give your kids the chance to see how the plants from the garden grow over time.



Lake Stevens Elementary School Garden
Provided by The Education Fund

Indoor Brain Break Ideas

Simon Says

Instructions

One person is designated Simon, the others are the players. Standing in front of the group, Simon tells players what they must do. However, the players must only obey commands that begin with the words "Simon Says." If Simon says, "Simon says touch your nose," then players must touch their nose. If Simon says, "touch your nose," those kids who touch their heads may do 5 jumping jacks because it wasn't a "Simon Says" command. Either you be Simon or once the kids are comfortable enough with the game, let them participate in being Simon.



Hokey Pokey

Instruction

This simple dance is a classic and is an easy, fun way to use a brain break to wake up your students on those days that they may be more tired than focused. Simply play the song from your computer and follow the instructions. The dance is done in a circle and the moves involved include putting one of your feet or hands in the circle, out, and shake it in front. “You do the Hokey Pokey...” Turn around in a circle with your hands next to your ears and wiggle your fingers. Keep repeating the movements as the song instructs and that’s what it’s all about!



Four Corners

Instruction

Number the four corners of the room by putting up a sign at each corner, numbered 1, 2, 3, and 4. You can also use colors or words instead especially if they line up with one of your lessons for the day. Clear the area near all four walls, so children can easily move between corners. Ask for a volunteer to be "It". The volunteer gets to stand in the middle with eyes covered and count down from 10-0. Everyone else moves to one of the four corners. When the person in the middle finishes counting, she chooses a number from 1 to 4 (with her eyes still closed). Anyone standing in the corner she chose has to sit down. Anyone who isn't in a corner when the counting is done has to sit down as well. Whoever is the last standing wins and gets to be it. *Disclaimer...* this game is fun for teachers too!



Serve up a healthy/fun snack!

Instruction

For a fun, indoor brain break, serve up a healthy snack such as bite sized fruits, vegetables or whole grain snacks. This option will allow your kids to socialize with their peers and refuel their brains to stay focused throughout the rest of the day. It is also a great opportunity for you to help your kids in forming healthy eating habits. For more information on what constitutes as a healthy, classroom snack refer to the wellness policy at <http://nutrition.dadeschools.net/Wellness.asp>



In conclusion

- Brain breaks can be a great tool to help students refocus and more effectively learn. Please note that school policies and practices support that physical activity, recess, and brain breaks should NOT be withheld as punishment for students.
- For a more in depth understanding of the science behind brain breaks and why they are so beneficial please visit the links below:
 - <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/tools-for-schools/1252-brain-breaks-instant-recess-and-energizers>
 - <http://pathwaystofamilywellness.org/Children-s-Health-Wellness/why-kids-need-recess.html>

References

- Brain Breaks, Instant Recess and Energizers - Action for Healthy Kids. (2015). Retrieved July 22, 2016, from <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/tools-for-schools/1252-brain-breaks-instant-recess-and-energizers>
- Pica, R. (2016). Why Kids Need Recess. Retrieved July 22, 2016, from <http://pathwaystofamilywellness.org/Children-s-Health-Wellness/why-kids-need-recess.html>