

KID'S Corner

SPRING is Here!

The snowmen melted and you get to put away those bulky coats, silly hats and knitted scarves. You can get outside and play – spring is here!

Not only does spring mean warmer temperatures, **SPRING** break and being steps closer to school being out for the summer, it is finally a time you can be in the fresh air, play games and sports and make new friends.

As a teacher, I get asked by young **KIDS** (just like you) what they can do when they are outside in the spring. I hear, "Ms. Huett, it's kind of boring going outside. I would rather play video games." Luckily, I always have plenty of ideas for my third graders when they are looking for fun things to do. I always start by telling them the same thing: get more involved at school, but also talk to adults, and look in our neighborhoods. Here are some great ways to help your spring be filled with play, games and organized **SPORTS**.

Getting Active at School

Physical education (PE) class is a great way to move about and get exercise. Ask your PE teacher or coach if your class can come up with ideas for fun **ACTIVITIES** that you want to do. Your teacher will love that you are interested in having fun, but also staying healthy. If you can't think of any fun games to ask your teacher about, try some mentioned at the bottom of this article.

Another great way to come up with a good list is to work with your classmates that you would like to get to know better. This way you all get to come up with something that sounds fun to you, but you also make new friends and teammates!

Online Resources with Ideas for Outdoor Activities and Games

- PBS Kids, Go!: pbskids.org/zoom/activities/games
- Disney's Family Fun: familyfun.go.com/playtime
- The Learning Channel (TLC):
tlc.howstuffworks.com/family/easy-outdoor-games-for-kids.htm
- Kid's Health: kidshealth.org/parent/growth/learning/school_age_games.html
- American Council on Exercise, Operation FitKids:
www.acefitness.org/ofk/curriculum.aspx (your teacher will have to complete a survey, but this gives them free books to help them plan more fun gym classes)



Go team, Go!

Activities and games can be fun, but sports also give you a good reason to get outside and move! But, why play sports? Playing sports means you are making friends with interests like yours and you are participating in **HEALTHY** activities. Being on a team helps you build self-confidence, self-esteem and skills that help you learn how to work with other people to accomplish your goal.

And, the most obvious reason to play sports? You get to exercise! You will be able to get your **HEART** strong and keep it strong as you create healthy **HABITS** that will last your entire life. Depending on where you live, there are tons of places to get involved.

Outdoor Activities for School or Home

Shadow Tag

This is a twist on the **GAME** of tag and best played on a bright, sunny spring day!

The object of the game: The person who is "it" tags a new person to become "it," which will keep going until all players decide to end the game.

How to play: Though many of you probably already know how to play tag, this version is just a little different. You and your friends should start by choosing someone to be "it." The person who is "it" will be the one who starts out chasing to **TAG** other players. In the regular game, a person chases the other kids around, trying to tag one of them with their hand. With Shadow Tag, the person who is "it" will try to tag the kids' shadow with their feet instead of using their hands. This is a game that isn't just better to play on a sunny day; it's the only way!



It's Time to Get out and Play!

by Amber D. Huett

Here are a few places that are dedicated to helping kids, like you, stay healthy.

A Long Tradition: The YMCA

For more than 160 years, the YMCA has worked to help make the communities they are a part of **STRONGER**. They believe that “everyone, regardless of age, income or background, has the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive.” The YMCA is in all 50 states with more than 2,400 locations. You can find a location here: www.ymca.net/find-your-y by typing in your zip code. Your parents can also download the smartphone app to locate the nearest YMCA here: www.ymca.net/yfinder. Ask your local YMCA about their “Swim, Sports and Play,” which you can read about here: www.ymca.net/swim-sports-play. Most locations have pools, camps and groups of kids where you can get involved!

For All Kids: Boys and Girls Clubs of America

The Boys and Girls Club of America (BGCA) has many clubs and they help kids get out and play in the warmer weather. With more than 4,000 clubs, most kids can find one nearby. The BGCA’s “Wanna Play?” program is for children ages 6 to 12 looking to work on their physical **FITNESS**. The program also teaches you about good **NUTRITION**, or what to eat, with a focus on baseball and softball.

Their “RBI” and “Jr. RBI” programs help kids ages 5 to 18 learn about baseball too. But, those three programs are not the only sports or ways to be active at a club. The BGCA’s after-school programs organize activities and games and provide fun ways to be outside and stay out of trouble! You can learn more about the BGCA or find a club location near you by visiting www.bgca.org/whatwedo/SportsFitnessRecreation.

For the Girls–Girls Inc.: Sporting Chance

The group called Girls Inc. has a program just for girls called “Sporting Chance.” Girls Inc. believes that sports will help “girls build a foundation for enjoying physical activity, sports and adventure throughout their lives.” Sounds like a pretty good **GOAL**, right ladies? Their programs are for girls ages 6 to 14 and start with “Steppingstones” for ages 6 to 8, “Bridges” for 9 to 11-year-olds, and “Girls enCourage” for 12 to 14-year-olds. To find out all the details on each program, visit: www.girlsinc.org/about/programs/sporting-chance.html.

Starting it Yourself: the National Alliance for Youth Sports

Remember, if you do not have sports or games in your **COMMUNITY**, ask an adult how you can help organize and plan. It is never too early to play sports, either. The National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS) has a program called, “The Start Smart Sports Development Program,” which helps 3 to 5-year-olds get ready to play organized or team sports. The list of sports that NAYS will help you start include: baseball, basketball, football, golf, soccer and tennis!

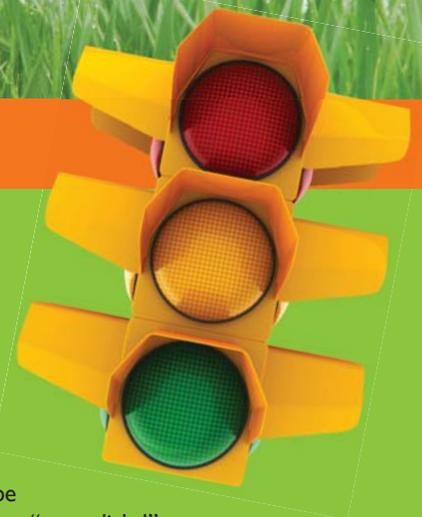
On their Web site, you can find a sample one hour session about how to learn how to play, and “program exercises” that have pictures to help you see what stations and moves you can do. Have your coach, community center leader, parents or others help you research ways to start sports. Adults can find out how to buy the full starter kits with the “The Start Smart Sports Development Program” by visiting: www.nays.org/Sports_Programs/start_smart/cat_sports_dev_program.cfm.

Red Light, Green Light

This classic game can be played with lots of people (no limit), has simple rules and lots of **RUNNING** around!

The object of the game: Try to get to the end of the field or gym, and tag the “stop light.”

How to play: One person is the “stop light.” Start with the youngest or oldest person in the group (you should compare month and day if you were born in the same year). At the start of the game, the “stop light” will stand at the end of the **FIELD** or **GYM**, and face away from the rest of the kids. The line of kids should be about 20 to 25 feet away from the “stop light.” When the “stop light” faces away from the kids, he or she will say “green light!” At this point, the kids will begin running toward the “stop light” to try and tag them. The “stop light” may turn around and say “red light!” at any time. If any of the kids are caught moving, they are out. Play continues until all kids are out or until someone tags the “stop light.” The person who tags the “stop light” will become the new “stop light” and you may begin another game.



KID'S Corner

WORD Search!

In the story you just read, you may have noticed certain words in all caps and bolded. These words are important terms for staying healthy and enjoying the spring season. Below, you will see a word search with all of these words hidden. Try to find each word!

A C T I V I T I E S C T J L Z
 S L E F G A M E C O Q R A N T
 T P H R B N C U M G W A U U N
 C M R Q E U I M O Y C E X T L
 F K J I F Y U N S M K H N R A
 N S I N N N N T N K Z I V I U
 A W P U I G P S M U X X S T X
 W I J T T Y T I V F R S P I Y
 I F Y O U T S I D E E E O O H
 R E G N O R T S M N E H R N T
 S L L I K S P D T E A K T C L
 G C R S G Z U I L B I A S V A
 H X D C L O F B I E G C G Z E
 Q I X O F S A T T X I P O J H
 K P G R A A S L A H J F P V R

Why it is Important

You do not have to be in a club, a paying member to any group or even have equipment. There are many things you can do to get **OUTSIDE** and play that do not cost a thing. While television, computers and video games may be common in your house, you should remember the benefits of play. By playing with friends and classmates, you build **SKILLS** to be a leader and a person who works well with others. If you learn to work well with others and work toward a goal – well, you are ahead of the game!

Plus, using **SPRINGTIME** to get outside gets you exercise, which helps prevent you from getting sick and lowers your chances for obesity. When you begin life healthy, it is easier to maintain. Just think of your health like grades – it is much easier to get A's the first time and keep getting them than getting some not-so-good grades, and raising them. Trust me; I know plenty of kids who would agree!

So, when you are playing games or sports, remember how you feel. Doesn't it feel good? As an American writer, Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "It is a happy talent to know how to play."

About the Author:

Amber D. Huett is a member of the OAC National Board of Directors and a gastric-banding patient. She is a third grade teacher in Memphis, Tenn. with Teach for America. She has a bachelor's degree in political science and journalism from Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois and a master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Illinois-Springfield.

WORDBank

ACTIVITIES	KIDS
COMMUNITY	NUTRITION
FIELD	OUTSIDE
FITNESS	RUNNING
GAME	SKILLS
GOAL	SPORTS
GYM	SPRING
HABITS	SPRINGTIME
HEALTHY	STRONGER
HEART	TAG



ABOUT THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC)

The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



VIBRANT COMMUNITY



NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS



ANNUAL CONVENTION



ADVOCACY



PUBLIC EDUCATION

LEARN, CONNECT, ENGAGE

The OAC knows that the journey with weight can be challenging but we also know that great things happen when we learn, connect and engage. That is why the OAC Community exists. Our Community is designed to provide quality education, ongoing support programs, an opportunity to connect, and a place to take action on important issues.

Through the OAC Community, you can get access to:

- Weight & Health Education • Community Blogs
 - Community Discussion Forum
 - Ongoing Support • Meaningful Connections
- AND MUCH MORE**



JOIN TODAY: GO TO OBESITYACTION.ORG/JOIN

info@obesityaction.org

(800) 717-3117 | (813) 872-7835 | Fax: (813) 873-7838



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