PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ‘HOMEWORK’

Participating in the What Moves U Challenge to help kids get 60 minutes a day means getting 30 minutes of physical activity at school and 30 minutes at home. Teachers can encourage students to get active at home by assigning homework that requires physical activity.

Active Homework–Ideas or suggestions of physical activities that students can try during after-school hours:

Make these first 5 ideas a tradition for your students:

1. **TV Challenge:** If students are watching TV at night, provide a ‘workout routine’ conducive to commercial breaks (i.e. short 2-3 minute circuits such as push-ups, crunches, squats, etc). Have the class brainstorm to come up with a new circuit for every week and write it down in their Student Game Planners. Here are some ideas:

   - Jump rope 1 minute
   - 3 sets of 12 tricep dips using a coffee table or a chair
   - 15 squats holding a ball or book; lift the object into the air while jumping up from the squat
   - Stand next to the wall and try to tap the highest point on the wall you can by jumping up — repeat 15 times
   - 3 sets of push ups — 15 each set
   - Get on your hands and knees and while keeping your back straight, raise your right leg and left arm at the same time, switching back and forth. Repeat 20 times. Do 2 sets.
   - Walk up and down the hall doing lunges
   - 20 crunches — right elbow to left knee, left elbow to right knee. Do 3 sets.

2. **Rev-up Reading:** When you assign reading homework, also provide students with some activities to help improve concentration, such as stretches before beginning and a break every 20 minutes.

3. **Walk and Talk:** Students often need to talk with their families about things at school, grades, upcoming tests, activities or events. Once a week, assign students to take a Walk-Talk with their families (and pets) and give them a subject to discuss.
4 Quiz Me: Students often get help studying from a family member or another student. While being drilled on spelling words or vocabulary, they can also be doing physical activity drills. Teach students an active study routine — for right answers they do jumping jacks, for questions they still need work on, they do push-ups. They should vary the activity to keep it fun. Their study buddy should join in too.

5 Group Work: If students have group projects that require them to meet outside of class hours, encourage them to make physical activity a part of the group meeting. Suggest a game of catch or going for a bike ride before getting to work as a great way to get to know new classmates you’ve never worked with before, and burn off some energy so you can focus on the task at hand. When students turn in group projects, have them tell you what activities they did so they know you’re going to hold them accountable!

6 Scavenger Hunt: For science class have students explore parks to collect insects or leaves for a project.

7 Now and Then: For a social studies assignment, encourage students to interview a family member or older person they know and ask them about what role physical activity played in their life compared to young people today (i.e. did they ride their bikes to get around, did they walk more places). To incorporate physical activity into this, walk while you conduct the interview.

8 Go Green: Helping the environment is healthy for you too. Have students pick up trash in their neighborhood or around the school grounds as part of an eco-awareness lesson.

9 Walk it Out: Encourage kids to visit a zoo, arboretum or an aquarium where they can walk around while they’re learning as part of a research project.

10 Map It: As part of a geography lesson have students learn about different types of maps. They can make their own maps of the local community either using pencils and paper or an online mapping program. Have students exchange maps and then test their classmate’s accuracy by walking a portion of the map.
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ‘HOMEWORK’ (continued)

11 **Sports Count:** Encourage students to participate in a sporting event and calculate the statistics of the game as a math activity (football, soccer, tennis, etc).

12 **Human Odometer:** Have students measure the length of their stride and then determine the length of their block, length of their driveway and the area of their yard. Ask them to convert their calculations to metric.

13 **Work It:** Have students calculate their heart rate after five minutes of activities, such as jumping jacks, jogging in place and doing push ups. Have them determine which activity was best for their heart. (See science lesson on page 32.)

14 **Dance Around the World:** Have students research dances from different cultures and have them practice them at home—there just might be show-and-dance the next day in class.

15 **Watering Hole:** Send students out to a local park or public place to collect a small water sample from a pond, pool or puddle in a disposable container (like a film canister). Bring the samples into class and using litmus paper, test the samples for acidity.

16 **Visit the Museum:** Offer an extra credit assignment by having kids tour a local museum. Check in your community to see if you have a children’s museum that has an exhibit on health.

17 **Check Out the Library:** Libraries have tons of resources that can help kids get active, from children’s fitness videos to books. Challenge kids to find 2-3 different physical activity resources at the library and report back. If you have time, check out a resource as a class or have a show and tell where students demonstrate physical activity and their classmates join in.

18 **MeasureMEnt:** Assign students to measure different things using physical activities. How many hops long is a soccer field? How many rolls is a basketball court? How many steps between school and their home?
**19. Throw the Distance:** Have students throw a football as far as they can and measure how far it was thrown. Have them repeat 10 times and using their measurements, calculate their average throwing distance.

**20. Walk Across America:** Encourage students to get pedometers and track their steps for 4 weeks. See if the class can walk across America with their total steps! (On a pedometer 2,000 steps = 1 mile)

**21. Calorimeter:** Have students write down the calories they consume on a typical evening using food labels. Traveling 1 mile by foot (walking, running or jogging) burns 100 calories — have students calculate how many miles they would need to go to work off their evening snacks and dinner.

**22. Water Works:** Staying hydrated can help you perform at your peak and prevent unpleasant problems like cramping and early fatigue. Have students work on getting 8 cups of water every day for a week and notice if they’re performing better.

**23. Joint Efforts:** Assign students a list of activities and have them perform the activities and identify what type of movable joint in the human skeleton is utilized — ball and socket, hinge, or gliding (swing a bat, throw a football, jumping jacks, push-ups, wave goodbye, hop on one foot, etc).

**24. Support a Cause:** Have students sign up for a 5K race for a cause in your community and run or walk as a class (students can also walk with their families).

**25. Log-on:** Send students online to www.nflrush.com/health to check out fun games and additional opportunities and ideas for living a physically active life.