PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ‘HOMEWORK’

Participating in the NFL Play 60 Challenge means helping students get 60 minutes of physical activity every day—30 minutes 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:

1. **Bag of Tricks.** Have students draw a physical activity (include yoga poses and stretching positions) from a bag or hat. They will research and learn the proper form for that specific exercise, identify the opposing muscle and then demonstrate this to their classmates and indicate the specific muscles (or muscle group) targeted. (Coordinates with the “Simon Says” physical activity break idea.)

2. **Periodic Table Food.** Produce copies of the Periodic Table of Elements for each student to take home. Each student needs to identify an element from the table that can be found in one of the meals they eat. Have each student perform an exercise of their choice for the same number of times as the Atomic Number in their element they have selected.

3. **Push Along.** Students are assigned to go to the grocery store with a parent or the person that gets groceries for their household. They will push or carry the basket. They will also choose at least one vegetable they like and one new one they would like to try. They will be responsible for preparing their selections for the family dinner. They can make them both the same night or prepare one each night. Students find pictures of their vegetables and write a paragraph about all the things they like about each and why it is nutritious.

4. **Fuel Up.** Have students work with their parents on calculating the amount of money and gas they can save if they walk or ride to the local park, library or work instead of driving. Have them determine their weekly, monthly and yearly savings.

5. **A Family Affair.** Help mom, dad, or a neighbor mow the lawn, pull weeds or trim bushes. This can be seasonal, too. If it is fall, rake the leaves making sure to place them into the appropriate garbage. In winter, kids can help shovel snow or clean the snow off their parent’s car. During the spring, have students help plant flowers or a fruit/vegetable garden.

6. **Algebraic Exercise.** Assign equations similar to the examples: X-7=13, 14+Y=24, and 8=Z-10. Have students solve for X, Y, and Z. X will represent the number of jumping jacks they have to do, Y will represent the number of push-ups they have to do, and Z will represent the number of crunches they have to do.
Getting Juicy. With the help of parents, students will pick at least 2 fruits, vegetables or a combination of fruits and vegetables to create a fruit smoothie, using ice or low-fat yogurt. Come up with a creative name for this new drink and share the recipe with the class.

Geometry Box. Find a box at home; preferably a shoebox. Take the measurements of the box and calculate the surface area and volume of the box. Use the box as an obstacle/prop, and jump back and forth over the box, X times. X = the longest length of any side of the box. Repeat 5 times.

Remember: Surface Area = 2ab + 2bc + 2ac
Volume = abc

Fitness Resources. Have students find a 30-minute physical activity routine that is appropriate for their age in a fitness magazine or from a fitness website. They should do the routine at home.

Harvesting Nutrition. Have students plant a bean or seed in a cup and care for it until it matures. Bring it to class and talk about the food and nutritional value.

In-Flight Fitness. Show students how to make paper planes. Have them launch their man-made airplane at home or outside and document the amount of time the plane stays airborne and also measure the distance the plane travels. Kids must run/sprint for the same amount of time the plane remained in-flight and measure the distance they were able to cover. They should write it down and compare results in class with other students.

Step It Off. Have students walk for one minute and count the number of steps in that amount of time. Have them determine how long it will take to log 10,000 steps. Then have them figure out how fast they have to go to accumulate 10,000 steps in 1 hour, 45 minutes and 30 minutes. (If possible, have them get on a treadmill to “feel” the speed they would be going - running, jogging, fast walking, or leisurely walking.)

Get Ride On It. Give homework points to those kids that ride their bike or walk to school each day. Offer ways for the students to be able to participate even if they ride the bus. (They can run two laps around the track before and after school or during lunch, or do extra sprints after school at a local park and keep track of it in their Game Planner.)

Olympic Greatness. Have the students write one paragraph on an Olympian and their sport. Kids must explain the sport to their family members AND participate in that sport at least once as a part of the assignment. Extra credit is given to those students who get their family to do the activity with them.

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.
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ‘HOMEWORK’ (continued)

16 **Country or Continent Calisthenics.** As students learn various countries or continents (or capitals), have them do an exercise at home that begins with the same letter as the proper noun. For instance, if studying Asia, do abdominal crunches. Do biceps curls for Brazil, etc. They can work on their own or in pairs.

17 **Wash It Off.** Students are to wash (and dry) their family, friends or neighbor’s car(s). If appropriate, have the class coordinate a free (or take donations and use the money for some new fitness equipment) Saturday or Sunday school car wash. Have kids work with their parents to get soap donated, most grocery stores will participate. It is a fun community outreach event and a good old-fashioned way to get exercise.

18 **Bookends.** Have students do 50 jumping jacks before they start their homework, do 15 crunches between subjects, and when they have finished all their homework, end with the “pretend jump rope” exercise, counting 50 revolutions.

19 **Drill Sergeant of the Week.** Students are to design a simple 5-minute exercise routine they can do with their family for one week. Suggest push-ups, crunches, knee-to-elbow lifts, jumping jacks, touch toes then jump up, march in place, and touch fingers to toes. Require they lead the family at least two times each night and for every additional increment of 5 minutes, they get 5 extra credit points. Have them lead their classmates, too!

20 **Seek And You Shall Find.** Have students get in touch with their local YMCA, a local gym, or community center and learn about youth-appropriate classes. Have them find a class that sounds interesting to them and to give it a try. Just about every organization offers at least a free trial if not free classes.

21 **Climb Mt. McKinley.** Mount McKinley (“The Great One”) in Alaska, is the highest point in North America. Encourage students to get pedometers and track their steps for 1 week. See if each student can accumulate enough miles to have climbed to the top every day for the week! At the end of the week total up how many times the class has reached the top.

   - On a pedometer 2,000 steps = 1 mile
   - Mt. McKinley has an elevation of 20,320 ft or 3.84 miles

22 **Everybody Jump!** Have students practice learning to jump rope at home. If they have their own, they should start with 50 revolutions once they get the hang of it, and then increase jumps by 50 every night for a week. If they don’t have a jump rope, see if they can borrow one from the school or use an imaginary rope and go through the motions.

23 **Genetic Code.** Students will create a DNA model out of clay or colored paper to present to class. They will also discuss with their parents a genetic disease that may exist in their family such as heart disease. Each student will then choose an exercise that they feel will help minimize the genetic risk. They are to educate their family and do this exercise with them for a predetermined time.
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:

- Hop on one foot for 30 seconds, switch and hop on the other foot for 30 seconds
- Walk up and down the hall or around the room on your tip toes for 1 minute
- Wall sit: Stand against a wall, slowly bend your knees down into a 90 degree angle, keeping back against the wall. Hold for 30-60 seconds
- Stand with feet shoulder width apart, bend one knee up into a 90 degree angle, balancing on the other leg. Hold for a count of 20 and switch legs. Do 5 repetitions
- Lay on your back and write your first name in the air with your toe. Switch legs and write your last name
- 3 sets of push ups — 15 each set
- Lay on your back, extend both legs into the air at a 90 degree angle from the floor. Slowly lower your legs (knees straight) to the floor. Repeat for 20 repetitions
- Jump tucks: Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent, with arms at sides. Jump up bringing knees up to chest, land on balls of feet. Do 10 repetitions

Log-on: Send students online to www.nflrush.com/play60 to check out fun games and additional opportunities and ideas for living a physically active life.