

Movement and Play Policy

Rationale

We want to increase the availability and use of safe places to play and be physically active for all young children and their families. ***Physical Activity is fun and good for everyone!***

Providing physical activity opportunities for employees improves their ability to role model and encourages clients to adopt healthier lifestyles.¹

For young children active play...

- ***Supports growth for young children and encourages lifelong healthy behaviors***
- Promotes healthy weight and reduces the risk of chronic disease
- Promotes physical motor development, increases self-esteem, and helps with cognitive skills such as reading and writing.
- Sets the stage for reduced screen-time.

For adults movement and physical activity...

- Improves performance at work and school
- Improves mood and mental health
- ***Models healthy behavior for young children and others***
- Reduces risk for chronic diseases and the need for associated medical costs (*People that engaged in moderate levels of physical activity have lower direct medical costs than those who are inactive.*
Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; <http://1.usa.gov/otXBXZ>)

Brighter Beginnings is committed to promoting an atmosphere of movement and play!

Brighter Beginnings will adopt activities that support families and/or clients with children to be active at our agency. *Examples include:*

- Provide a small area for movement and play equipment (floor mats, balls, small towels, water bottles, etc.)
- Recommend child friendly physical activity plans with families that promotes laughter and fun. This can be highlighted with Ages and Stages Developmental Screening activities that also promote gross & fine motor, communication, problem solving, and social emotional skills with infants and children, ages 0-5 years.
- Offer socialization and play group opportunities for infants and toddlers at each of our respective centers.

Brighter Beginnings will adopt activities to raise awareness and to support employees to be more physically active. *Examples include:*

- Add a physical activity/or stretch break to all meetings that last 90 minutes or more.

¹ Crawford, P.B. *Walking the Talk: Fit WIC Wellness Programs Improves Self-Efficacy in Pediatric Obesity Prevention Counseling.* American Journal of Public Health | September 2004, <http://ajph.aphapublications.org/cgi/reprint/94/9/1480.pdf>

- Conduct short physical activities during staff time; i.e. hold “Walking Meetings” in the neighborhood or at the local park. Encourage staff to lead physical activities on a rotating basis.
- Encourage staff to coordinate physical activities at our annual picnic; i.e. hula hoop contest or a potato sack race. This would be a voluntary leadership opportunity staff to organize annually.
- Play music or DVD/videos that encourage movement, i.e. Zumba© or yoga classes in conference rooms at our respective BB Centers. These activities are scheduled to occur weekly during work hours, and voluntary participation is contingent upon approval of supervisor.