

Physical Activity Teaching & Management Tips

The number 1 priority of all physical activity leaders is keeping students S.A.F.E. Here are 4 management concepts for keeping physical activities fun and free of dangers.

S

SPACE | Spot markers and cones are your friends. Space the spot markers out within the activity area to provide students with a visual marker of their personal space (Home Base). Home Base provides the safe personal space needed for students to work independently.

Create boundaries. This can be done with cones (the more the better). Young ones aren't yet adept at visualizing imaginary lines, so place a cone every 3-4 steps along the perimeter of the activity area (create a rectangle or square space). Make sure to scan the activity area for objects that could create a hazard, e.g., a wall, a tree, a door that may open in to the space, etc.

Two Types of Space:

- Personal Space – created using spot markers scattered where students have enough space to move independently and safely.
- General Space – created with cones or floor tape and help to define the boundaries of the safe activity area and keep students safe from hazards.

A

APPROPRIATE EXPECTATIONS | It's important to provide physical and emotional boundaries that allow students to feel safe, take risks, and learn at an appropriate pace. Quickly review the class rules before the start of class. Keep instructions concise and clear. When students demonstrate the ability and maturity to perform safely, then add a challenge. Use encouraging language and prompt children to encourage their classmates. An encouraging environment with appropriate expectations begins with simple, clear, and effective rules.

Physical Activity Rules:

- 1) Active Eyes & Ears – Listen to directions, pay attention, and look where you are moving.
- 2) Helpful Hands – Keep your hands to yourself. Use your hands to be helpful.
- 3) Follow Directions – Learn by listening to and following directions.
- 4) Move Safely – Obey the speed limit and boundaries. Respect personal space.

F

FUN & FESTIVE | If the environment is fun & festive, students are more likely to respond positively and work harder. The physical activity leader's attitude is the single most important factor in the success of a movement sessions. You set the tone. Need a little help? Use upbeat music that inspires you to move (music is also a great stop and start signal). Like music, laughter is good for your spirit. Children want you to be silly in a safe and purposeful way. Your smile is the feedback that they crave.

So Remember:

- Enthusiasm is contagious.
- Fun activities are inviting.
- Music matters.
- Laughing feels good.

E

ESTABLISH PROTOCOLS & ROUTINES | It's critical that you establish systems for managing class routines and student behaviors. The more consistent the routines are, the safer the class is. In the beginning, you will have to teach your procedures and routines, and much like developing a skill, your class will need to practice them to get more efficient. If you are inconsistent with routines, the class will become inconsistent at following them. So be accountable for what you expect and practice until you get the results you need. Repeat learning activities often.

Establish These Early:

- Signals for starting and stopping. (Go/Freeze Commands, Music Start/Stop)
- Transitions from one activity to another. (Return to Home Base)
- Distributing and collecting equipment. (A Place for Everything)
- Responding to and asking questions. (Hand Up, Mouth Closed, Be Patient)
- Entering and exiting the activity area. (Walk to Floor Spots, Line Up by the Wall)