

Recommendations for Health Education  
Connecting Face-to-Face, Virtually or Hybrid

**Introduction**

\*This is a working document so be sure to check back often for updates.

This year is proving to be a challenging school year from the beginning. Schools are being forced to teach their students virtually or do a hybrid model, which means that not all children will be learning in the classroom 100% of the time like they would in a traditional school setting. Schools and districts need support, resources, and encouragement as they continue to navigate the virtual mode of learning. This toolkit is designed to assist health and physical educators with tips and tools for teaching your students virtually while making sure your students with disabilities are included in your programming.

The importance of physical education, physical activity, health education and exercise for overall health and academic performance is well-documented. Physical activity boosts the immune system, promotes health, and relieves stress. Evidence-based, scientific research also supports the importance of physical activity to a student's academic performance, mental health, self-concept, and overall well-being. Physical education is a key ingredient as schools work to educate the whole child physically, emotionally, and socially.

That is why we have created this Inclusive K-12 Health Education toolkit that provides strategies and suggestions for schools to implement safe and effective health education programs virtually that is inclusive for students with disabilities. Each school community has its own set of circumstances and characteristics that influence what is appropriate for its schools, thus, this is not a one size fits all list. It is important to note that this is a working document as things change daily with guidance, suggestions, and guidelines related to education and learning with COVID-19.

Health Education will continue to address standards while focusing on the skills-based approach to teaching K-12 health education. We want health educators to learn practical approaches for building, teaching, and assessing their health education programs so they can guide students toward becoming health-literate individuals, whether the teaching method is virtual, hybrid, or face-to-face.



## **Social Distancing in Health Class and Physical Distancing in Health Class**

- Educator follows CDC guidelines with the 6 feet rule; therefore, the classroom should reflect this safety measure.
- Students at all grade levels should be educated on the process of entering and navigating through the class as instruction is taking place.

### **Teaching Social and Physical Distancing Ideas**

Social and physical distancing is currently recommended by our health care specialists. It is easy to say, “keep a distance of at least six feet away from others” to lessen your chance of catching COVID-19. However, when you have students who have difficulty with spatial awareness, how do we teach them about social distancing? This can be a very difficult area to tackle with some of our learners. Even when you practice at home, once you go outside to go for a walk, since the environment changes, they find it difficult knowing how FAR is “SIX FEET.” Since we are spending more time at home, here are some activities you can do with your child: Measure how far 6 feet is using a tape measure in the house. (This can be a Math lesson for an older student learning how to use a measuring tool!) Use masking tape and objects that your child likes to play with; then place one object 6 feet away so the learners can visualize how far six feet is.

### **Recommendations for Health Education Grades K-12**

Fortunately, our format of teaching doesn’t need to change, just how we utilize the resources and tools each district has designed for our programs. You will find under our resources tab information to help you enhance your virtual classroom to reflect your age appropriated content.

## **Delivery of Content**

### **In-person**

- In school, have students participate in individual tasks.
- Consider switching from providing direct instruction to more of a student-directed instruction approach (e.g., project-based learning or flipped classroom).

### **Hybrid**

- Consider a flipped-classroom approach where students first learn about a topic at home and then come prepared to learn more about it in class (e.g., students watch a video about The Haka at home, then in school, the teachers answer questions and teaches in more depth).
- Consider switching from providing direct instruction to more of a student-directed instruction approach (e.g., project-based learning or flipped classroom).

### **Virtual**

- Consider assigning tasks for at-home completion and then have students apply the knowledge gained in the school setting (i.e., have students practice a learning task at home and then apply it during a class activity).

- Provide synchronous learning opportunities (distance learning that happens in real-time) as much as possible, but record lessons to provide to students who may not have access in real-time.
- Consider switching from providing direct instruction to more of a student-directed instruction approach (e.g., project-based learning or flipped classroom).
- Allow for optimal student choice and provide opportunities for students to engage with teachers directly and often. This will be crucial to keep students motivated. Additionally, students are more interested in seeing videos created by their teachers than shared videos created by other teachers.



### Virtual Learning Classroom Strategies and Protocols

- Consider having everyone muted as they enter your virtual learning classroom. Usually, this is a setting titled “mute upon entry.” This will alleviate any distractions if students enter a few moments late.
- Consider having a “technical difficulties troubleshooting” slide at the beginning of each class.
- Be consistent with your lesson delivery. For example, if you have a “bellringer” at the beginning of each lesson, be sure that does not change. Routine is just as important with virtual learning as it is with face-to-face instruction.
- Review virtual learning rules for your class (please see an example below).

Example: Health Virtual Health Class Rules
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Come dressed for class.</li> <li>2. No food or drink during class.</li> <li>3. Enter on time.</li> <li>4. Go to the learning management systems Health page on your assigned Health Class day and time.</li> <li>5. Click on the designated link.</li> <li>6. Enter the class on mute.</li> <li>7. Use the chat component when directed or raise your hand and wait to be called on.</li> <li>8. If you think of a question outside of class, please email your instructor or post your question.</li> </ol>

### Face-to-Face Classroom Strategies and Protocols

- Consider having students sanitize their hands as they enter and leave your class.
- Have students enter and leave your room at least six feet apart.
- Place student desks six feet apart.
- Provide more individual work than group work. If providing group work, have the group work be on a shared document (google doc for example) where students can access individually.

#### Tips for Including Students with Disabilities:

Adaptations to a curriculum are made to increase participation and to ensure that everyone can successfully participate in all the activities provided by the curriculum in a safe manner. The adaptations made are not to modify the curriculum but to accommodate activities that allow students with disabilities to participate fully and be successful. All the objectives and outcomes should not be changed.

When creating adaptations, regardless of the type of adaptations made to the activities, they should be goal-oriented so that everyone is successful in the activity that the practitioners/staff are teaching that day. It is important that the staff/practitioners do not over-adapt to the extent that the activity is completely different and does not provide enjoyment and benefits to all the participants involved. Adaptations should never change the curriculum!

There are times when an adaptation is not needed, and simple accommodation is all that is needed to provide a successful outcome for a student. Accommodations are changes presented to participants with disabilities during the activity. For example, a student can use his wheelchair during running activity. It is important that practitioners/staff recognize when accommodations are enough and when adaptations are not needed. Participants are often the best resource when creating adaptations and accommodations. Make sure to involve the participant during the process. They will know with more certainty how to perform a skill or adapt certain activity. This is also a good practice to allow them to fully participate in their own learning experiences. Be sure to use inclusive language when teaching and discussing different ways to do the activity so that a student who needs an adaptation or modification doesn't feel singled out or on display during a lesson.



To create appropriate adaptations to the curriculum, teachers should consider making changes to the skills, instruction, rules, equipment, and environment. One of the simplest ways of adapting an activity is to modify or substitute the skill involved.

### **At-home Adaptations**

Some students will require adaptations to the activity to complete the task. You should be providing the activities that include the adaptations based on the student's needs. When creating adaptations for at-home learning, it is important to consider the space, the equipment, instructions, and the skill or activity in hand. Below are some considerations when making adaptations that you can work through with the family members:

#### **Space adaptations:**

- Always ensure all spaces are open, clear of mobility impediments, and that pathways and other routes are unbroken, seamless, slip-resistant, and feature occasional seating and balance options (e.g., chairs, couches, handrails).
- Modify learning areas by making them smaller or larger.
- Pay attention to the amount of sensory input in a small space (noise, lighting, amount of people moving at once, etc.).

#### **Equipment adaptations:**

- Provide additional or modified equipment for the activity.
- Provide adapted cooking utensils for students who do not have the grip strength to properly participate in a cooking activity.

#### **Instruction adaptations:**

- Provide simple instructions and basic instructions. Ensure that the student comprehends the instructions given by asking for understanding. Ask the students to repeat the instructions to you instead of asking them: "Do you understand?"
- The parent can demonstrate the activity, task, or skill to provide a visual learning opportunity.
- Make sure all tasks have been demonstrated previously by visual cards, demonstrations, or verbal instructions.
- Provide instructions, agenda, and an equipment list for each of your lessons at least a day before your lesson is being taught. This will allow students to prepare for your lesson before implementation.
- If appropriate, allow siblings or other family members to help with the activities as peer mentors.

#### **Skill adaptations:**

- Allow participants to perform at their own pace.
- Allow extra time to complete a skill or activity.
- Allow students the flexibility to complete the activity, skill, or learning objective.
- Practice slower or less complex teaching strategies.

### **Additional Suggestions for Health Education Teachers:**

- Include COVID-19 safety strategies in lesson plans just as a precautionary method to help children understand the disease.
- Communicate to students on the first day of class that health education may be different than in the past; however, it is still very important to continue having health education classes.
- Consider a Memorandum of Understanding ([contract](#)) between the student and teacher which states the student agrees to maintain required class attendance, follow instructions provided by the health education teacher, follow strategies and routines provided by the health education teacher, follow classroom rules provided by the teacher and let the teacher know if they are feeling ill. This memo may serve to place more accountability on the student. Share how important Remote learning is and will be a different way of still having school each day.
- Communicate with students every day the measures being taken to encourage health education is being taught remotely to ensure everyone stays healthy, especially during this time.
- Communicate and document needs and concerns to the administration.
- Communicate with classroom teachers, administration, and parents on ways that you are keeping children physically active, eating healthy and involved while still providing quality health education.

Health Education, whether in person or at home, is a great opportunity to take an active approach to your student's learning experience. They will value you being a part of their learning process. Pat yourself on the back and remember that what you are doing to ensure that your students are learning how to truly live a healthier life through education is of the upmost importance during this time and a great opportunity to bond and spend more time together. Remember to always have fun.

### **Resources for Health Education Teachers**

The resources listed below are tools for use in guiding your instruction to ensure the success of all students. Some of the resources are around physical activity to help you provide information that will help students learn how to be active for a lifetime.

#### **National Center on Health Physical Activity and Disability**

##### Articles

- [Physical Activity, Leisure and Recreation for Youth with Disabilities: A Primer for Parents](#)
- [Wellness Challenge Coloring Book](#)

##### Guidebooks

- [Discover Inclusive Playgrounds: A Guidebook about inclusive playground elements](#)
- [Discover Inclusive Safe Routes to School: A Guidebook for Including Students with Disability in SRTS](#)
- [Discover Inclusive School Wellness: An Addendum to the Comprehensive School Physical Activity Programs: A Guide for Schools](#)
- [Discover Leisure: A guide on understanding and appreciating the value and importance of leisure-time physical activity for youth with disabilities](#)

- [Get the Facts](#): An online magazine that will help you become more physically active or, if you are a service provider or family member, equip you with the knowledge to provide a more enriching physical activity program.

#### Videos

- [Inclusive Class Design](#)
- [Kids Korner Nutrition: Heart-Healthy Snacks](#)
- [Kids Korner Nutrition: Quick and Healthy Lunches](#)
- [Kids Korner Playlist](#)
- [Mary's Top 10 Communication Tips](#)

#### Alliance for a Healthier Generation

- [COVID-19 & Back to School](#)

#### American Psychological Association

- [Accessibility Guidelines for Speakers](#)

#### Ask, Listen, Learn

- [Health Education Lesson Plans](#)

#### HEAL United

- [Distance Learning Resources](#)

#### Kids Health

- [Free health-related lesson plans](#)

#### Playworks

- [Play at Home](#)

#### Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) America

- [School Reentry Considerations](#)
- [Virtual Resources for Health and PE](#)

#### SPARK™home

- [Free Teacher & Parent Resources for Distance Learning](#)

#### Varsity Brands

- [Believe in you Social and Emotional Learning Empowerment Program](#)

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