Skill Cards
Planning with Daily Themes

By using daily themes, providers and teachers can ensure a well-rounded physical activity program. Daily themes make it easy to plan for movement throughout the day, while assuring children learn a variety of movement skills. Here is a sample listing of the types of skills that could be included for each daily theme. Providers and teachers are encouraged to modify themes to meet their needs and focus areas each week.

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<tr>
<th><strong>MONDAY</strong></th>
<th>Manipulative Skills</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Toss</td>
<td>• Strike objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Throw</td>
<td>• Dribble (feet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Catch</td>
<td>• Dribble (hands)</td>
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<td>• Kick</td>
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<th><strong>TUESDAY</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• Walk</td>
<td>• Slide</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Run</td>
<td>• Gallop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Jump</td>
<td>• Skip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hop</td>
<td>• March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Leap</td>
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<th><strong>WEDNESDAY</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• Stretch</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pull</td>
<td>• Swing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Push</td>
<td>• Sway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bend</td>
<td>• Twist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Turn</td>
<td>• Yoga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reach</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>THURSDAY</strong></th>
<th>Moderate to Vigorous Physical Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Dance</td>
<td>• Flee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Twirl</td>
<td>• Or any activity listed as a locomotor skill</td>
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<td>• Chase</td>
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<th><strong>FRIDAY</strong></th>
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<td>• Obstacle Course</td>
<td>• Practice all skills through games such as Simon Says, Red Light Green Light, and follow the Leader</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Station Rotations</td>
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Verb of the Day

The sky is the limit with this activity. Choose an action word (verb) and act it out throughout the day; while moving from one activity to another (transitioning), during circle time, or as a quick energy boost.

Materials

• Verb of the Day cards (See Appendix B or create your own)

How to Play

• This activity can be introduced at the start of the day during circle time.
• Place the “Verb of the Day” cards in a jar and ask a child to pick a card each day. This action word will be the “verb of the day.” Write it on the board or add it to the calendar and day of the week instruction.
• Call out the verb as the children transition between activities throughout the day.
• Example: if the skate card was chosen, ask the children to pretend to skate as they move to outside free-play, before circle time, or as they enter a certain zone of the classroom.

Example Instructions

• Tell the children, “Verbs are words that describe actions.” Name some examples for them, such as run, swim, or climb.
• Tell the children, “Today’s verb of the day is ‘Fly.’ Can you give me an example of something that flies?” (i.e., bugs, birds, planes)

Possible Variations

• Begin adding descriptive words to the “verb of the day” (happily, quietly, heavily).
• Use the “verb of the day” during outside free-play by encouraging creative ways to act out the activity.
• Read and role-play from a book about movement (See Appendix D).
Freeze Dance
This activity can be performed using any music and any of the locomotor skill cards.

Materials
- Music, CD player, or drum
- Locomotor skill cards

How to Play
- Spread the children out safely around the space.
- Before starting the music, demonstrate a variety of locomotor skills (walk, run, jump, hop, leap, gallop, slide).
- Instruct the children that when the music starts, they will move around the space (or stay in one space) performing the skill you call out. When the music stops they will freeze like a statue until a new action is called out and the music starts again.

Example Instructions
- Using the locomotor skill cards, demonstrate the activities with the children.
- Tell the children, “When the music starts, I would like you to ________ around the room and when the music stops, you will freeze like a statue as quickly as possible” (until a new action is called out and the music starts again).
- Remind children about general and personal space and how to move safely.

Possible Variations
- Get creative with the movements. For example, have the children move slowly, quickly, quietly.
- Instead of freezing like a statue, have children perform a balance or coordination skill when the music stops like one-foot balancing, stretching, or a Yoga pose.
- Have children count their hops, leaps, and slides as the music plays.
Follow the Leader
This activity never gets old! With some fun and creativity, children can enjoy mastering movement skills and getting their heart rates up.

Materials
- Locomotor skill cards
- Optional: scarves or streamers

How to Play
- Children form a line behind the adult and follow adult cues. If possible, place leaders at the front, back and middle of the line to relay directions.
- Using a variety of locomotor skills, practice moving along various pathways (curved, zig zag, straight) and speeds (fast, medium, slow).
- Get creative with the movements (balance on an imaginary tight-rope, crawl like a cat, tip-toe quietly, fly like an airplane).
- Instruct children to move over, under and around objects when possible.
- If using scarves or streamers, children can use them as tails while acting out animal movements or wiggle them up high, down low, in front of or behind their backs.

Example Instructions
- Instruct children to make a line behind the adult leader. Explain to children that this person will lead the line and demonstrate the movement; the children will follow while copying what the leader does.
- Tell them, “You will need to use your listening ears because I will give you instructions as we move. If I say freeze, you will stop in place and wait for the next instruction.”

Possible Variations
- Tie the activities to the “book of the day” and act it out. For example, pretend to swim across the creek, step over rocks, or reach for a tree branch (See Appendix D for book ideas).
Hopscotch

Hopscotch is a perfect way to add movement to outside free-play. Note: Children’s ability to play hopscotch varies, make modifications so that every child can be successful.

Materials

- Sidewalk chalk, electrical tape, or playground stencil designs
- Locomotor skill cards
- Optional: spot markers, hoops, music

How to Play

- This activity can be done during free-play or as an independent station.
- Using sidewalk chalk, tape or playground stencils, create a hopscotch course with a series of numbers, letters, shapes and colors.
- Demonstrate jumping, leaping and hopping from space to space.
- Children can also practice tossing beanbags or balled-up paper into areas of the hopscotch outline.

Example Instructions

- Tell the children, “We are playing hopscotch today and we are going to practice jumping, hopping and leaping.” Demonstrate hopscotch for them, using the selected locomotor skills.
- Tell the children, “When it is your turn, start at the beginning and hop with one foot into each shape.”
- Ask the children questions like, “Can you make it all the way to the end without touching the lines?” and “Can you switch feet?”

Possible Variations

- Draw a pathway of colored shapes (square, triangle, circle, oval, rectangle, crescent, star) or letters of the alphabet (A through Z), have children hop along the pathway instead of a traditional hopscotch design; they can call out each shape, color or letter as they land on it.
Walk

Transfer weight from one foot to another while moving across the floor. ¹

Activities

• **All the Ways to Walk**—Choose different adjectives and walk that way. *(Silly, Happy, Quiet, Loud, Heavy, Fast, Slow, High, Low)*

• **Animal Fun**—Walk like a duck, walk tall like a giraffe, walk heavy like a bear.

• **Pathways**—Practice walking on a pathway and pretend it’s a balance beam or tightrope. Count steps along the way. *(Curved, ZigZag, Straight)*

• **Nature Walk**—Take children on an imaginary nature walk. Lead them up and down a steep hill, under branches, or over rocks.

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**Desired Results**

**Developmental Profile**

PD-HLTH 1 - Perceptual-Motor
PD-HLTH 2 - Gross Locomotor
PD-HLTH 9 - Active Physical Play

**California Preschool Learning Foundations**

2.1 Fundamental - Locomotor
2.0 Perceptual-Motor - Spatial Awareness
3.2 Perceptual-Motor - Directional Awareness
1.0 Active Physical Play - Participation
2.0 Active Physical Play - Cardiovascular
Run

Similar to walking, but faster, with a flight phase when both feet are off the ground.¹

Activities

• **Run for Speed**—Practice running in place at different speeds. (Super Fast, Medium Speed, Extra Slow)

• **Red Light Green Light**—Line children up facing you. When you say “green light,” they run towards you. When you say “red light,” they stop. Repeat as desired. Include different speeds for variety.

• **Color Run**—Run to touch 5 blue items and return to base. Change the color and repeat.

• **Run the Track**—Using an existing track or perimeter of play space, have children run a certain number of times around it.

Desired Results

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<td></td>
<td>1.0 Active Physical Play - Participation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2.0 Active Physical Play - Cardiovascular</td>
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</table>
Jump

Projecting of the body into the air from a force generated by arms and one or two feet and landing on two feet.¹

Activities

• **Number Jump**—Call out a number and jump in place while counting to the designated number.

• **Jump for Height**—Practice jumping as high as you can.

• **Jump for Distance**—Draw 2 lines next to one another using sidewalk chalk. Lines should start narrow and get wider. Have children practice jumping at different distances.

• **Stepping Stones**—Set out spot markers or draw spots on the ground and have children jump from spot to spot.

Desired Results
Developmental Profile

PD-HLTH 1: Perceptual-Motor
PD-HLTH 2: Gross Locomotor
PD-HLTH 9: Active Physical Play

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<td>1.0 Active Physical Play - Participation</td>
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<td>2.0 Active Physical Play - Cardiovascular</td>
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Hop

Projecting the body in space by taking off on one foot and landing on the same foot.¹

Activities

- **Hop to the Beat**—Use a drum, music or clap hands. Count each hop.

- **Hop and Freeze**—Children hop on one foot while music is on. When music stops they freeze and try to balance on one foot.

- **Alternating Foot Hop**—Practice hopping on your right foot. Switch feet. Count as you go.

- **Beat Your Record**—Draw a line on the ground. Ask children to hop back and forth and side to side along the line. Count as you go.

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Desired Results

- **Developmental Profile**
  - PD-HLTH 1: Perceptual-Motor
  - PD-HLTH 2: Gross Locomotor
  - PD-HLTH 9: Active Physical Play

- **California Preschool Learning Foundations**
  - 2.4 Fundamental - Locomotor
  - 2.0 Perceptual-Motor - Spatial Awareness
  - 3.2 Perceptual-Motor - Directional Awareness
  - 1.0 Active Physical Play - Participation
  - 2.0 Active Physical Play - Cardiovascular
Leap

Running and then taking off with one foot with an elongated step and landing on the opposite foot.¹

Activities

• **Leap Over the River**—Draw a river on the ground with chalk and have children practice leaping back and forth over it.

• **Leap and Count**—Place small objects on the ground for children to leap over. Have them leap over a designated number of items, counting as they go.

• **Leap for Joy**—Move around the play space, leaping as you go. Can you leap 3 times, 8 times, 10 times?

• **Leap for Distance**—Draw 2 lines next to one another with sidewalk chalk. Make them close together at one end, progressively getting wider. Have children start by leaping over the narrowest distance, moving to the widest section.

Desired Results

**Developmental Profile**

PD-HLTH 1: Perceptual-Motor
PD-HLTH 2: Gross Locomotor
PD-HLTH 9: Active Physical Play

**California Preschool Learning Foundations**

2.4 Fundamental - Locomotor
2.0 Perceptual-Motor - Spatial Awareness
3.2 Perceptual-Motor - Directional Awareness
1.0 Active Physical Play - Participation
2.0 Active Physical Play - Cardiovascular
Gallop

Making a forward step motion with a leading foot followed by a leap motion of the trailing foot.¹

Activities

• **Galloping Around**—Mark spots on the ground for each child; have them practice galloping around their spot. Switch directions and switch lead foot if possible.

• **Harvest Time**—Place items around the play space. Have children gallop to collect them and put them in a basket. Pretend the items are fruits and vegetables. Count the items in the basket.

• **Horse Play**—Practice galloping around the general space. Switch the lead foot. Pretend to be a horse.

• **Horse Race**—Gallop around the track and act out different scenarios, such as a rodeo or Wild West stampede.

Desired Results Developmental Profile  
1. **PD-HLTH 1** - Perceptual-Motor  
2. **PD-HLTH 2** - Gross Locomotor  
3. **PD-HLTH 9** - Active Physical Play  

California Preschool Learning Foundations
1. **2.4** Fundamental - Locomotor  
2. **2.0** Perceptual-Motor - Spatial Awareness  
3. **3.2** Perceptual-Motor - Directional Awareness  
4. **1.0** Active Physical Play - Participation  
5. **2.0** Active Physical Play - Cardiovascular
Slide

A form of galloping in which the child steps purposefully in a sideward direction.

Activities

• **Slide Both Directions**—Slide along a line. Once you get to the end, go in the other direction and work your way back to the beginning.

• **Side Step Shuffle**—Place beanbags or draw small spots on the ground. Have children slide around the space while trying to touch as many beanbags or spots as possible with their feet. Have children count the number of beanbags or spots they touch.

• **Squat Sliding**—Have children slide around the general space, call out “squat,” every time you do they will squat down low while sliding.

Desired Results

PD-HLTH 1- Perceptual-Motor
PD-HLTH 2- Gross Locomotor
PD-HLTH 9- Active Physical Play

California Preschool Learning Foundations

2.4 Fundamental - Locomotor
2.0 Perceptual-Motor - Spatial Awareness
3.2 Perceptual-Motor - Directional Awareness
1.0 Active Physical Play - Participation
2.0 Active Physical Play - Cardiovascular
Dribble with Feet

Maneuvering of a ball by a single person’s feet while moving in a given direction.

**Equipment**
- Playground ball
- Soccer ball
- Beach ball
- Cones

**Activities**
- **Basic Dribbling** — Have children practice dribbling from one end of the play space to the other.
- **Stay Between the Lines** — Lay out long jump ropes, use cones, or draw lines with chalk and have children practice dribbling in between from one end to the other.
- **Red Light Green Light Dribble** — Have children dribble in the general space when you say “green light.” When you say “red light,” they should stop the ball (trap) with their feet and freeze.
- **Weave the Cones** — Set up cones in a line with 5 ft. between each cone. Children dribble back and forth around cones.

**Desired Results**

**Developmental Profile**
- PD-HLTH 1- Perceptual-Motor
- PD-HLTH 3- Gross Manipulative
- PD-HLTH 9- Active Physical Play

**California Preschool Learning Foundations**
- 2.0 Fundamental - Locomotor
- 3.1 Fundamental - Manipulative
- 2.0 Perceptual-Motor - Spatial Awareness
- 3.2 Perceptual-Motor - Directional Awareness
Overhand Throw

A large motor skill that involves projecting a ball in a forward direction using an overarm action and stepping in opposition (like a baseball throw). ¹

Equipment

Any soft ball, fluff ball, socks, sponges.

Activities

• **Throw for Distance**—Line children up on a line so they all face you. Have children practice throwing for distance. Have them retrieve the ball and repeat, and switch hands.

• **Target Throw**—Throw a soft item at a bullseye target on a wall, fence, or the ground. Targets can be created using sidewalk chalk or a paint brush with water. Switch hands.

• **Knock it Down**—Knock down empty plastic bottles or cereal boxes.

• **Through the Hoop**—Hang a hoop from a tree and practice throwing a ball through the hoop. Have children count their throws.

Desired Results

Developmental Profile

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<td>1.0  Active Physical Play - Participation</td>
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¹ Adapted from California Preschool Learning Foundations.
Underhand Toss

A large motor skill that involves projecting an object in a forward direction by using an underarm action and stepping with the opposite foot; object is released at waist level.¹

Equipment

Basket, scarves, beach balls, tissue, hoops.

Activities

- **Basket Toss**—Toss items into a basket. Move further back as skills improve.
- **Partner Toss**—Practice tossing a ball to a partner.
- **Number Toss**—Toss a free-floating object (tissue, scarf) into the air and catch it a designated number of times.
- **Bullseye Toss**—Practice tossing beanbags into a bullseye on the ground. Draw a bullseye with sidewalk chalk or use a hoop.

Desired Results

**Developmental Profile**

- PD-HLTH 1 - Perceptual-Motor
- PD-HLTH 3 - Gross Manipulative
- PD-HLTH 9 - Active Physical Play

**California Preschool Learning Foundations**

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<td>1.0 Active Physical Play - Participation</td>
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Kick

A large motor skill that is a form of striking in which one foot is used to apply force to a ball.¹

Equipment

Playground ball, beach ball, balloon inside pantyhose.⁷

Activities

- **Soccer Bowling**—Practice knocking over empty plastic bottles or cereal boxes by kicking a ball.

- **Safety Kick**—Inflate a balloon inside of pantyhose and tie it so there is a tail. Using the pantyhose tail, hang the balloon from a clothesline or tree branch so it touches the ground and have children practice kicking.

- **Kick and Chase**—Line children up in a line facing you and have them kick for distance, retrieve the ball and repeat.

- **Partner Pass**—Children partner up, face each other about 3 feet apart, and practice gently kicking a ball back and forth.

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Desired Results

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*California Preschool Learning Foundations*

- 3.1 Fundamental - Manipulative
- 2.0 Perceptual-Motor - Spatial Awareness
- 3.0 Perceptual-Motor - Directional Awareness
- 1.0 Active Physical Play - Participation
Stretch

Straightening or flexing a body joint in order to temporarily elongate the muscles around that joint.

Equipment

Shape of Yoga booklet (See Appendix E), balls.

Activities

- **Reach for It**—Talk about how plants grow and call out various fruits and vegetables while children pretend to reach up high, down low, and to the side to get them.

- **Crazy 8**—Spread feet out wide while standing. With a ball in hand, lean forward and roll the ball on the ground; making a figure eight around and in between the feet.

- **Shape of Yoga**—Download the Shape of Yoga booklet and practice poses (See Appendix E).

- **Body Shapes and Letters**—Call out various shapes and letters; have children try to create them with their bodies.

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<td>3.0 Active Physical Play - Strength, Endurance, Flexibility</td>
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Balance Pose

The ability to maintain body control while moving and while still. ¹

Equipment

- **Shape of Yoga booklet (See Appendix E), beanbags.**

Activities

- **One Foot Balance**—Practice standing on one foot for 3-5 seconds and then switch feet.
- **Pointing Cat**—Children start on hands and knees and then practice lifting one arm at a time.
- **Balance Beam**—Practice walking heel to toe in a straight line as if on a balance beam.
- **Beanbag Balance**—Practice balancing a beanbag on various body parts while moving to and from designated area.

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¹ For more information on the undesired results, refer to the Appendix.
Appendix B

Verb of the Day Cards

Fly
Swim
Waddle
Skate
Hop
Slither
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<td>Clap</td>
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<td>March</td>
<td>Jump</td>
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<td>Crawl</td>
<td>Bounce</td>
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Stomp

Twirl

Bear Walk

Slide

Wave

Crab Walk