

Jack's **FUN**tastic Day

Early Childhood
Educator
Resource Book

To promote active play and reduce
screen time



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Contents

Introduction.....	4
Background Information	5
National Quality Framework	7
Routine and Environment for Physical Activity.....	10
Activities	11
Support Resources for Services.....	14
Information for Families	14
Other Resources	15

Introduction



Jack's FUNtastic Day is a storybook to encourage active play in children attending early childhood services, primary schools, and with families. Targeting the ages of 3 to 6 years, it specifically promotes the continuity of learning through the transition to school period.

The main messages in the storybook are to increase the amount of active play and physical activity and limit time spent in front of small screens by children. In doing so, the story also discusses other life skills such as imagination, friendship, exploration and cooperative play.

This resource book examines and extends these messages and promotes healthy behaviours through a variety of learning activities. It is hoped these suggestions open up and inspire many other discussions and learning experiences which are possible on these topics.



Background Information



Key terms

Active play – all kinds of play that involve physical activity, including a range of different movements. Includes unstructured ‘free’ play and structured ‘planned’ play, both indoors and outdoors ¹

Physical activity – any bodily movement, including small and large movements, produced by skeletal muscles which results in energy being expended ². Physical activity for children includes both structured activities and unstructured free play, and can be done indoors or out ³

Screen time – time spent using electronic media (such as television, electronic games, portable electronic devices, or computers) for entertainment ³

Sedentary behaviour – time spent sitting or lying down, except when sleeping ⁴

Why more active play and physical activity?

Daily physical activity is important for

- Physical health and fitness
- Social, emotional and cognitive health

Current physical activity guidelines recommend that pre-schoolers (3 to 5 years) should be physically active every day for at least three hours, spread throughout the day ³.

Why less time spent in front of small screens?

Time spent in front of screens is usually sedentary, and can replace time that would otherwise be spent being physically active. It is also associated with snacking and exposing children to advertising for energy-dense foods that are especially prominent during children’s viewing hours.

Current sedentary behaviour guidelines recommend that for children 2 to 5 years of age, sitting and watching television and using other electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games) should be limited to less than one hour per day ³.

Infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers (all children birth to 5 years) should not be sedentary, restrained, or kept inactive, for more than one hour at a time, with the exception of sleeping ³.

¹ Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing 2009, *Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood*.

² NSW Health 2012, *Munch & Move Resource Manual: Birth to Five Years*.

³ Australian Government Department of Health 2014, *Move and Play Every Day – National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 Years*.

⁴ Australian Government Department of Health 2014, *Make your Move – Sit Less – Be Active for Life! – A Resource for Families*, viewed 18 August 2015, [www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/F01F92328EDADA5BCA257BF0001E720D/\\$File/brochure%20PA%20Guidelines_A5_Families.PDF](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/F01F92328EDADA5BCA257BF0001E720D/$File/brochure%20PA%20Guidelines_A5_Families.PDF)

For more information and educator resources, see the following links:

Healthy Kids -

www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/campaigns-programs/munch-move-resources.aspx

Good For Kids -

www.goodforkids.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-services/limiting-small-screen-time

Promoting active play at your service

Services are encouraged to provide an environment which is supportive of physical activity and active play for children of all ages through:

- Equipment and resources
- Indoor and outdoor environment
- Educators role modeling and encouraging children to participate in physical activity
- A routine which enables both structured and unstructured active learning experiences, and planned and spontaneous activities
- Policies to reinforce the practices and procedures of services. A physical activity policy and a screen time policy are recommended
- Limiting screen time to be only for educational or physically active learning experiences (e.g. yoga, dance etc.)
- Communication to families regarding physical activity and screen time e.g. including newsletter messages, discussions with families, or providing fact sheets, brochures or other information in the service foyer or parent library.

If there are areas where your service needs improvement in order to meet best practice, incorporate these into your Quality Improvement Plan to enable monitoring and review of your progress.

These areas will be addressed further as links to the National Quality Framework are established below.

National Quality Framework

'Jack's FUNtastic Day' storybook and support resources link to the National Quality Framework in the following ways:

- **Early Years Learning Framework**

Learning environments are vibrant and flexible spaces that are responsive to the interests and abilities of each child.

Outdoor learning spaces are a feature of Australian learning environments. They offer a vast array of possibilities not available indoors. Play spaces in natural environments include plants, trees, edible gardens, sand, rocks, mud, water and other elements from nature. These spaces invite open-ended interactions, spontaneity, risk-taking, exploration, discovery and connection with nature. They foster an appreciation of the natural environment, develop environmental awareness and provide a platform for ongoing environmental education ⁵.



⁵ Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia 2009

In regards to physical activity, links are most prominent for **Learning Outcome 3: children have a strong sense of wellbeing**. Across the many themes of the story, the following learning outcomes could be met:

Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing	
<p>This is evident, for example, when children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise and communicate their bodily needs (for example, physical activity) • are happy, healthy, safe and connected to others • engage in increasingly complex sensory motor skills and movement patterns • combine gross and fine motor movement and balance to achieve increasingly complex patterns of activity including dance, creative movement and drama • use their sensory capabilities and dispositions with increasing integration, skill and purpose to explore and respond to their world • demonstrate spatial awareness and orient themselves, moving around and through their environments confidently and safely • manipulate equipment and manage tools with increasing competence and skill • respond through movement to traditional and contemporary music, dance and storytelling • show an increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles and good nutrition • show increasing independence and competence in personal hygiene, care and safety for themselves and others • show enthusiasm for participating in physical play and negotiate play spaces to ensure the safety and wellbeing of themselves and others 	<p>Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan for and participate in energetic physical activity with children, including dance, drama, movement and games • draw on family and community experiences and expertise to include familiar games and physical activities in play • provide a wide range of tools and materials to resource children's fine and gross motor skills • promote continuity of children's personal health and hygiene by sharing ownership of routines and schedules with children, families and the community • discuss health and safety issues with children and involve them in developing guidelines to keep the environment safe for all • engage children in experiences, conversations and routines that promote healthy lifestyles and good nutrition • consider the pace of the day within the context of the community • model and reinforce health, nutrition and personal hygiene practices with children • provide a range of active and restful experiences throughout the day and support children to make appropriate decisions regarding participation

- **National Quality Standards**

Particularly strong connections between the storybook and the National Quality Standards (NQS) are evident in **Standard 2.2 - healthy eating and physical activity are embedded in the program for children.**

Learning about healthy lifestyles, including nutrition and physical fitness, is integral to children's wellbeing and self-confidence ⁶. *Element 2.2.2 – physical activity is promoted through planned and spontaneous experiences and is appropriate for each child* – in particular outlines how this is done. Specific links to the assessment guidance for Element 2.2.2 are made in the next section – routine and environment for physical activity.

Connections to other elements of the NQS are also evident, as outlined below:

Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety	
Element 2.2.2	Physical activity is promoted through planned and spontaneous experiences and is appropriate for each child
Element 2.3.2	Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury
Quality Area 3: Physical environment	
Element 3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources are suitable for their purpose
Element 3.1.3	Facilities are designed or adapted to ensure access and participation by every child in the service and to allow flexible use, and interaction between indoor and outdoor space
Element 3.2.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces are designed and organised to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments
Quality Area 5: Relationships with children	
Element 5.2.1	Each child is supported to work with, learn from and help others through collaborative learning opportunities
Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities	
Element 6.2.2	Current information is available to families about community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing

⁶ Guide to the National Quality Standard 2013

Routine and Environment for Physical Activity

Specific links to the assessment guidance for Element 2.2.2 in relation to the routine and environment of the early childhood education and care service include:

NQS element 2.2.2: Physical activity is promoted through planned and spontaneous experiences and is appropriate for each child	
Practice	NQS assessment guidance
<p>Physical activity is incorporated throughout the day. Opportunities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indoor and outdoor activities • Planned and spontaneous experiences • Transition times • Yoga and relaxation • Music and movement • Group time • Exploration and risky play in the natural environment 	<p>Assessors may observe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • educators and co-ordinators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consistently implementing movement and physical activities as part of the program for all children • children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - having frequent opportunities to engage in outdoor play • opportunities for children to engage in dance, creative movement and drama and to respond to traditional and contemporary music and storytelling <p>Assessors may discuss how the service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintains a balance between spontaneous and planned physical activity, and passive and active experiences, for all children <p>Assessors may sight:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the planned program to consider how it incorporates physical activity to meet the capabilities of the children involved, including how it balances quiet/passive play times with times of more energetic outdoor play
<p>Environment, equipment and resources are provided to facilitate and support physical activity</p>	<p>Assessors may observe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • indoor and outdoor areas that are set up in ways to promote safe physical play and activity for children of different age groups and capabilities
<p>Educators role model a positive approach towards physical activity</p>	<p>Assessors may observe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • educators and co-ordinators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - becoming involved in and enjoying children's physical activity
<p>Educators encourage children's input into planning physical activity experiences</p>	<p>Assessors may observe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - helping to set up and plan for physical play activities and equipment <p>Assessors may discuss how the service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considers children's voices in planning physical activities for each child
<p>Educators support and encourage children to participate in physical activity</p>	<p>Assessors may observe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • educators and co-ordinators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - encouraging and providing appropriate support to children to participate in new or unfamiliar physical experiences - encouraging each child's level of participation in physical activities according to the child's abilities and their level of comfort with the activities • children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being encouraged and supported to use increasingly complex sensory motor skills and movement patterns that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • combine gross and fine motor movement and balance • increase their spatial awareness • use their problem-solving skills



Prior to reading the story

Ask the children: What do you think the story is about?
What do you notice on the front page?

Read the story

Story themes

Ask the children: What was the story about?

Some responses may include: active play, reducing technology use, nature play, playing with friends, family and relationships, exploration, imagination, low-equipment games, indoor and outdoor play, trying new experiences.

Discussion points

- **Details of story and illustrations**
 - Discuss the front cover. What are Jack and Ruby doing?
 - What changes happen during the story?
 - What do you like about the illustrations? Did you notice anything interesting in the images?
 - Discuss the back cover. What are Jack and Ruby doing?
- **What is Jack doing at the start of the story? Does Jack look like he is having fun playing on his screen?**
- **Jack's fall and reaction:** What happens when Jack falls over? How does he feel? Discuss Jack's response to falling, his emotions and how he manages his anger
- **Language:** What is an 'expedition'? What do you think 'zipdiggity' means?
- **What games and activities did Jack and Ruby play in the story?**
 - Jumping like kangaroos, crawling like tortoises and snails, treasure hunt, cloud-watching, making music, hide and seek, statues, indoor cricket, hopscotch, dress ups
 - Discuss which games and activities can be played outside and which can be played inside
- **What do you do when the weather is rainy? What other activities could you do in wet weather?**
- **What activities are Jack and Ruby doing on the last page of the story?**
 - Drawing, dancing, chasing, kicking, throwing and catching, riding a scooter

- **Which other characters appeared in the story?** Jack's mum and dad, Ruby's mum, Jack's pop. If appropriate, discuss the family composition of children at your service. In what ways can children be active with their family members?
- **After all the fun things they find to do, would Jack and Ruby be hungry or thirsty? What should they choose to eat and drink?**
- **Discuss how and when children use screens.** What type of screens do children use? What do they use screens for? How often do children use screens? In what ways can screens be useful (e.g. for learning experiences or to encourage physical activity such as yoga)? What happens if we use screens too much? Are there ways that screen use can be reduced? What can we do instead of using screens? Share these ideas with families.

Games and activities

- **Play some of the games and activities that Jack and Ruby play in the story**
 - Jumping like kangaroos, crawling like tortoises and snails, treasure hunt, cloud-watching, making music, hide and seek, statues, indoor cricket, hopscotch, dress ups, drawing, dancing, chasing, kicking, throwing and catching, riding a scooter
 - Connect the animal movements (kangaroo, tortoise, snail, rabbit), treasure hunt, and cloud-watching to learning experiences around nature
 - **What other animals can children move like?**
 - **What natural objects can be found on a treasure hunt at your service?**
 - **What shapes can children identify in the clouds? Can these be connected to movement?**
 - **Play Australian Bush Nature Sounds** - for relaxation and imagination
 - Risky play in the natural environment – climbing trees, rainy play (e.g. splashing in puddles)
 - Connect Jack and Ruby's music time to dance or music and movement. Jack and Ruby are also dancing to music on the last page of the story
 - Extend on the active play theme of the story by linking to fundamental movement skills. Running, jumping, striking a ball, hopping, kicking, throwing, and catching could all be practiced, as these skills appear in the story.
- **Ask the children to use their imagination and create their own games for the group to play**
- **Use various equipment around the service to improvise music and movement time with children, as Jack and Ruby do in the story**
- **Incorporate physical activity into transition times** (particularly fundamental movement skills or animal movements) or other opportunities within the daily routine
- **Use physical activity cards** (included in the online resource pack) for other activities or discussions. Examples include sorting activities (e.g. sort into indoor and outdoor games, equipment free games and games requiring resources, etc.), sequencing, or further discussion about particular movements or games
- **Sustainability:** What resources can be re-purposed or re-used for active play? What resources do Jack and Ruby use like this in the story?
- **Imagination:** There is a power blackout and all of your screens don't have power. What can you do instead?

- **Brainstorm:** What games can be played with minimal or no equipment? Pick a particular resource (e.g. newspaper, ball etc.) – what activities could be done with this resource?
 - What other ideas do children have for finding fun without using screens? Which of these activities can be done at the service? Which of these activities can be taken home to engage families in the messages of the story?

Other physical activity game ideas

- Refer to the *Munch & Move Resource Manual - Birth to Five Years*, Move learning experiences section (pp. 120-156) for physical activity ideas
- Refer to other *Munch & Move* resources at your service:
 - 'Songs to sing and groove to' (*Munch & Move* CD)
 - Fundamental Movement Skills lanyard cards
 - 'Physical Activity for Babies and Toddlers'
 - 'Fundamental Movement Skills in Action: FMS for 3-5 year olds'
 - 'FMS with Franky and Friends: A fundamental movement skills resource for pre-schoolers 3-5 years'.





A range of resources are available on the [Healthy Kids website](#) to support services in embedding physical activity within their early childhood practice, including:

- Physical activity and screen time policy template
- Get active newsletter snippets
- Fundamental Movement Skills - overview and instructions
- Simple, fun ways to get young children active each day - activities and game ideas



The following may help to communicate these messages to encourage more activity and less screen time to families.

Web links

- Healthy Kids website
www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/parents-carers/physical-activity-under-5s.aspx
www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/kids-teens/switch-off-the-screen.aspx
- Mildura Screen Time Social Marketing Campaign -You Tube link
www.youtube.com/watch?v=SfmU95JYRaU&feature=player_embedded

Fact Sheets

- Free brochures can be ordered or downloaded from the Department of Health
 - Fact sheet
 - Tips and ideas for how to build physical activity into your day

Access: www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-publth-strateg-phys-act-guidelines#npa05

Order: www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/pasbr

- Free fact sheets can be ordered or downloaded from Healthy Kids website
 - Get Active Each Day
 - Reducing Young Children's Small Screen Time

Access: www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/campaigns-programs/munch-move-resources/munch-move-fact-sheets.aspx

Order: www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/campaigns-programs/munch-move-resources/resource-order-forms.aspx



- Ideas for families to be active with their kids
www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/downloads/file/campaignsprogramms/Simpleideastogetchildrenactiveeachday.pdf
- Newsletter snippets
www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/campaigns-programs/munch-move-resources.aspx
- SA Health Ideas for parents
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/healthy+living/healthy+places/where+we+live+and+play/opal/give+the+screen+a+rest.+active+play+is+best