

# WELL FOR CULTURE

## INDIGENIZED FITNESS FOR KIDS



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### Part 1: WHAT is "INDIGENIZED FITNESS"?

"INDIGENIZE" means to make something **INDIGENOUS**.

**INDIGENOUS** is what WE and YOU are.

**INDIGENOUS** is another way to say "Native" or "Indian" or "Native American" or "First Nations" ... We are the Original People of the United States or *TURTLE ISLAND*. We are **INDIGENOUS** People.

**FITNESS** is a word for being **PHYSICALLY ACTIVE**

Being **PHYSICALLY ACTIVE** means that we are **MOVING OUR BODIES**.

For Example... stretching; sports; dancing; running; jumping; and ANY other type of **ACTIVE BODY MOVEMENT**

So....

**INDIGENIZING FITNESS** is a way of making **FITNESS** a part of our **CULTURE** as **INDIGENOUS PEOPLE**

## Part 2: WHY is fitness GOOD for KIDS?

**FITNESS** is good for your **HEALTH** and **WELLBEING**

**EXERCISE** can improve your **MOOD** by keeping you **HAPPY**

Kids who are **ACTIVE** have higher **SELF-ESTEEM**

Kids who are **ACTIVE** are better able to **LEARN** in **SCHOOL**

Kids who are **ACTIVE** are less likely to get **SICK** or develop **DISEASES**

Kids who are **ACTIVE** are good **ROLE MODELS** for **LITTLE KIDS**

Kids who are **ACTIVE** are good **HELPERS** for their **ELDERS**

Being involved in **TRADITIONAL GAMES** and **SPORTS** and **DANCING** and **RUNNING** and **ATHLETICS** and other types of **EXERCISE** gives us something to **DO** instead of being **BORED**

Kids who are **ACTIVE** in their **YOUTH** will grow up to be **STRONG ADULTS** with a **HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE**

**IT IS COOL AND FUN TO BE  
STRONG AND HEALTHY**



## Part 3: HOW to be FIT and ACTIVE

- It's EASY and FUN to stay FIT and ACTIVE and HEALTHY
- The first step is to FIND something that you LOVE to do that involves MOVING YOUR BODY in a SAFE and FUN way
- Invite a friend or cousin or sibling to join you.
- Don't be afraid to try new things!

### ACTIVITY: FINDING OUR FITNESS FAVORITES

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**STEP 1:** Think of one type of MOVEMENT or EXERCISE that is FUN for you. Try to think of something that does not require EQUIPMENT - just use your BODY.

*Example: Running, Stretching, Jumping, Wiggling, etc.*

Hint: If you can't think of anything, ask a friend or grown up to help!

**STEP 2:** Write down and describe OR draw a picture of the FITNESS activity you just thought of. Use WORDS or PICTURES to share and describe your favorite fitness movement.

**STEP 3:** As a GROUP, get together and COMBINE everybody's favorite exercises to come up with ONE BIG WORKOUT that we can all do TOGETHER.

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## Part 4: GOOD HABITS for HEALTHY KIDS

A **"HABIT"** is something that we do REGULARLY or REPEATEDLY. In other words, a HABIT is something that we do OVER and OVER again.

Some habits are GOOD for your health and some are BAD.

Here are some GOOD HABITS for HEALTHY KIDS:

1. Eating healthy foods
2. Being helpful and kind to your friends, classmates, teachers, family, elders, coaches, and everybody else
3. Exercising and playing sports
4. Playing outside
5. Drinking lots of water
6. Being a good listener
7. Learning every day and keeping an open mind to try new things
8. Staying involved in your COMMUNITY: Powwow; Ceremonies; Etc.

### ACTIVITY: HEALTHY HABITS

Think of one GOOD HABIT that's not on the list. What do you do that helps you stay happy and healthy?

## Part 5: BAD HABITS to STOP

Almost everybody has some type of **BAD HABIT**.

A *BAD HABIT* is something that we do often that is not good for our health or for the health of those around us.

Here are some BAD HABITS that we should try to STOP:

1. Eating unhealthy foods
2. Being mean, unfriendly, or unhelpful to those around you
3. Being a couch potato and spending too much time indoors
4. Playing too many video games and watching too much TV
5. Drinking sugary, unhealthy drinks
6. Not listening
7. Not willing to learn or try new things
8. The WORST habits of all: SMOKING, DRINKING & DRUGS.

### ACTIVITY: BAD HABITS

Think of one BAD HABIT that you are going to try to STOP. Feel free to share if you'd like. (Don't be ashamed: we all have bad habits!)

## Part 6: Fitness + Culture

PHYSICAL FITNESS has always been a BIG PART of our culture as INDIGENOUS PEOPLE.

Our ancestors were HEALTHY and ACTIVE in their DAY-TO-DAY lives.

The reason that we have so many HEALTH PROBLEMS in our Reservation communities today is because our WAY OF LIFE and HEALTHY HABITS were SUDDENLY CHANGED about 200 years ago when Americans first arrived in our territory. It's not anybody's FAULT and it's nothing to be ASHAMED of. We can fix it with EFFORT and POSITIVE THINKING.

We are the descendants of some of the TOUGHEST PEOPLE on the PLANET in the HISTORY of the UNIVERSE. Be PROUD of who you are!

Our ancestors fought very HARD and made a lot of SACRIFICES for us to be here today. We can HONOR our ancestors by taking care of OURSELVES and EACH OTHER.

We are still strong like our ancestors! We can start a HEALTHY PATTERN by showing the YOUNGER kids how to be strong, too!

FITNESS AND HEALTH is still a part of our CULTURE today: Gardening, Farming, Ranching, Gathering food, Hunting, Fishing, Ceremonies, Powwow, etc. etc. etc. We need to be STRONG to do these things!

## Part 7: The SEVEN BASIC MOVEMENTS in OJIBWEMOWIN

There are SEVEN BASIC MOVEMENTS that everybody should learn.

Each of the *seven basic movements* will serve as the foundation for more complex exercises. It is recommended that every workout routine should include at least 5 of the 7 basic movements.

Full-body training is the best way to accomplish a well-rounded exercise regimen (rather than focusing on one body part at a time, like body builders). It is important to encourage FUNCTIONAL fitness (as opposed to aesthetics-based fitness).

It is critical that we learn how to SAY the exercises in OJIBWEMOWIN so that we can break down the barriers between language learning and physical fitness. Learning the exercises along with the word will help us to remember both the exercise and the word.

### 7 BASIC MOVEMENTS

English	Ojibwemowin	Pronunciation Guide
Squat	Jiingwanabi	jeen gwun nub bih
Lunge	Niigaanigaadeni	NEE gah nih GAH day nih
Push	Gaanjwebindindizo	GAHNJ way bin nid diz oh
Pull	Wiikobinidizo	wee KO bin nid diz oh
Bend	Nawetaa	nuh WAY tah
Gait (run)	Bimibatoo	bim ME but TOO



## Part 8: EARTH GYM for KIDS

### WHAT IS "EARTH GYM"?

**EARTH GYM** is when go outside and spend time in our NATURAL ENVIRONMENT while EXERCISING

### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

EARTH GYM is important because spending time OUTSIDE helps us stay HAPPY and HEALTHY and HOLISTICALLY WELL.

It is NECESSARY for our MIND, BODY and SPIRIT to spend time OUTDOORS just like our ancestors always did.

It is good to get away from things like TECHNOLOGY and SOCIAL MEDIA and TV and VIDEO GAMES because we can CLEAR OUR HEADS.

### EARTH GYM EXAMPLES:

1. Running or jogging or riding your bike
2. Playing sports or games outside like tag, double ball, or lacrosse
3. Going for a hike or walk in the woods or near the water - SAFETY FIRST - always make sure you are with an adult or that an adult knows exactly where you are going. Do not wander too far alone!

## Part 9: EXERCISE IDEAS

There are SO MANY ways to break up the day with a little bit of movement. Here are some QUICK and EASY exercise break ideas when you need a burst of energy or a chance to relax:

1. Jumping Jacks
2. High Knees
3. Nature Walk
4. Partner Stretch
5. Dance Circle
6. Arm Swings
7. Toe Touch
8. Shake and Wiggle
9. Rub your head and pat your belly (vice versa)
10. Run in place
11. Foot races across the lawn
12. Push-ups
13. See how high you can jump
14. Miscellaneous... Ask the children for ideas!

## Part 10: INDIGENOUS GAMES and SPORTS

Since the beginning of time, Native people played many different types of Indigenous games and sports. Some of these games are not played often anymore. Here are a few that are fun and easy for kids to learn. Revitalizing Indigenous games is a fun and simple cultural athletic activity.

### GAME 1: TUSKA

*TUSKA is an intertribal game much like tag (with a twist). Originally, it was played using sticks, but that can be a bit rough. Today, we use a foam noodle in stead. Two foam noodles are the only equipment you need.*





**TUSKA DIRECTIONS:**

1. Choose two players to start the game. The two players will be "it" first.
2. Designate a playing field, about the size of an area you would use to play a regular game of tag or dodge ball. The boundaries must be made clear to the players as no one is to run outside of the boundaries during play.



3. Each player will hold a foam noodle. They will link arms with one another and each hold their foam noodle in their free hand.



4. The players will then run together and try to tag free players. If a free player is touched with a noodle, they are tagged. Every time somebody gets tagged, they must join arms with those who are already "it". The row of "it" players will grow and grow as more people are tagged.
5. The players who are "it" must be linked in arms with each other while others are tagged. If somebody is tagged while the arms of the "it" players unlink, the tag does not count. The "it" team must stick together.
6. The last person remaining untagged will be the winner.



## GAME 2: THE CHIEF

*THE CHIEF is an intertribal game which was also, at one time, played with sticks. Today, we use foam noodles instead. Like Tuska, the only equipment you need for this game are two foam noodles.*

*This game is a safe way for children to mimic a fight scenario without actually fighting or risking injury. Encourage the kids to move quickly and creatively in order to dodge the moves from their opponent. This is an exercise in agility, speed and technique.*





**THE CHIEF DIRECTIONS:**

1. Designate two players to play. Only two players per round are involved (much like a wrestling match).
2. Designate a circular area for the match using cones, bases or other markers so that the players can clearly see the boundaries of the ring. The area should be about 15-20 feet in circumference.
3. Designate a referee to see that the rules are being followed.
4. When the match begins, each player faces each other and attempts to hit the other player on the leg, below the knees, with the foam noodle.
5. Only hits below the knees are allowed. Any hit on another part of the body will not count as a tag. Only hits using the foam noodle count. Any hit using hands or other parts of the body are now allowed.
6. Each below-the-knee hit will count as one point.
7. Each time a point is scored by a player, the players will face each other and square off again to start a new round. The referee should call out when the round begins and ends and when a point is scored.
8. The first player to reach 10 points is the winner or **THE CHIEF**.

## Part 11: ANIMAL EXERCISES in OJIBWEMOWIN



Our people have always understood and respected the animal population around us, which is part of the reason why we have always been so strong, active, and healthy. The animals have much to teach us about movement, agility, and survival.

Mimicking the movements of the animals while learning the animal names in Ojibwemowin is a great way for the children to learn to move creatively while exercising their minds to remember the vocabulary words of the animals.



## TEACHING ANIMAL MOVEMENTS IN OJIBWEMOWIN: DIRECTIONS

1. Learn how to say each of the names of these animals in Ojibwemowin and repeat them with the children.
2. Think of movements that go along with each of the animals.
3. Invite the children to think of some on their own. There's no wrong way to do it!
4. As you call out each animal name in Ojibwemowin, instruct the children to repeat the name while showing the animal movement. Try to use as little of the English language as possible.
5. Repeat daily so that the children can remember all of the animal names and corresponding exercises. After this, they'll never forget it!

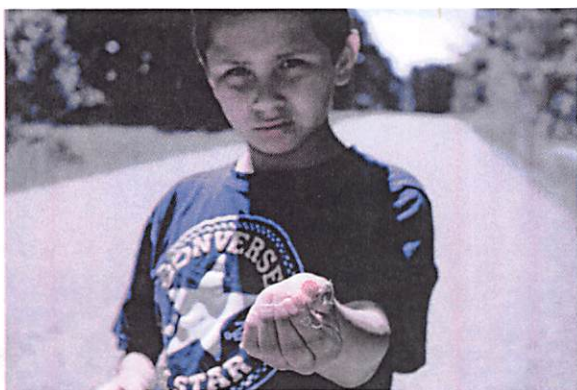
Here are a few to get you started. Feel free to add to the list!

ANIMALS IN OJBIWE & ENGLISH WITH EXERCISES

OJIBWEMOWIN	ENGLISH	EXERCISE
MAKWA	BEAR	Crawl on all fours like a bear
MIIGIZI	EAGLE	Flap arms like wings
AJIDIMO	SQUIRREL	Lay on belly and lift arms and legs all at once
MIKINAAK	TURTLE	Roll on back (like a turtle shell)
OGAA	WALLEYE	Start in the plank position and wiggle hips from side to side to mimic swimming through water
OMAKAKII	FROG	Leap like a frog
MA'IINGAN	WOLF	Stretch back like a howling wolf
WABOOSE	RABBIT	Hop high in the air

## Part 12: EXERCISE IDEAS for the BAD RIVER FIT TRAIL

The BAD RIVER FIT TRAIL can be used for a variety of exercises and activities. Here are a few ideas:



Look for berries, birds, and other cool sites on the way to and from the trail. Stop to talk about it.



Use the parallel bars for strengthening the arms and stomach muscles.



Hang on the pull-up bars. Feel free to make it a competition - see who can hang the longest!



Between stations, circle up for a stretching session, a warm-up, or even a talking circle.



## Part 13: Safety Rules

1. Be sure to warm up prior to strenuous exercise or sports.
2. Save static stretching for the end of the workout after the muscles have already been warmed up.
3. Monitor aggressive behavior during sports and activities.
4. Always stay hydrated and keep extra water on hand in order to prevent exhaustion. (Juice and other sugary drinks are not hydrating.)
5. If an exercise or movement is causing pain or discomfort, stop immediately.
6. Don't be afraid to stop and rest if you are feeling faint or exhausted.
7. Be aware of your surroundings and keep an eye on one another.

**THE END!**

Thank you for participating in the BAD RIVER  
YOUTH FITNESS CURRICULUM.

For more information about health & wellness from  
an indigenous perspective, visit  
[www.wellforculture.com](http://www.wellforculture.com)