

Getting Kids Active Every Day

SINCE IT WAS FIRST HIGHLIGHTED by *Attention* in 2016, Building Our Kids Together (BOKS) continues to strive toward its important mission: making physical activity a part of every child's day. Based on its growing popularity, the program appears to be succeeding. One reason may be how easy it is to bring BOKS to a school, a community, or a family home. All that's really required is an interest in becoming a BOKS trainer. BOKS will provide the rest. And thanks to Reebok, its corporate sponsor, it's all free of charge.

By simply signing up at www.bokskids.org, you gain access to the BOKS Trainer Hub, where you will find all of the recommended aerobic training activities, games, and activities needed to run a BOKS program. Successful implementation of BOKS does seem to require one or more champions to oversee the program and insure that it's being effectively incorporated.

Trainings and activity plans

The BOKS Trainer Hub introduces physical activity plans designed to be incorporated into any part of a child's day—before school, during school, in an afterschool program, or at home. Each activity would take about forty-five minutes. The hub also offers a variety of training ideas, program resources, and other activities, such as monthly fitness calendars. One can learn ways to weave “BOKS Bursts” (short activities lasting one to ten minutes) into a child's day. Various health-enhancing ideas are presented as well, such as yoga and mindfulness activities and nutritional guidance. These resources are constantly updated throughout the year.

Future BOKS trainers are also introduced to a training course designed to address the needs of the child being served. They include trainings on early childhood (one hour), elementary fundamental movement (thirty minutes),




middle school (one hour), high school functional fitness (thirty minutes), and BOKS Bursts (twenty-four minutes). An advanced BOKS training is provided as well. Referred to as Race, Racism, and Anti-Racism Training, the experience is designed to deepen awareness of these three terms, to recognize racism as it exists in different contexts, and to identify anti-racism strategies applicable to individuals, teams, and organizations.

A 2021 study conducted by Dalhousie University School of Health and Human Performance in Halifax, Nova Scotia, notes the potential benefits of BOKS. Based on results of their eight-week study of the program, the researchers felt that BOKS can serve as a tool to improve a child's well-being. Though conducted during the pandemic, parents still noticed improvements in their child's mood, energy level, and sleep (<https://www.bokskids.org/2021-dalhousie-report/>).

BOKS was started back in 2009 by Kathleen Tullie, a mom who was significantly influenced by the work of John Ratey, MD. An expert in the field of ADHD, Dr. Ratey is

well known to the CHADD community for helping all to appreciate how aerobic exercise can benefit children, teens, and adults who are affected by ADHD. Currently being implemented in countries throughout the world, the BOKS program has helped get over 1.4 million kids moving since 2009.

Readers wishing to learn more about BOKS can go to their website, www.bokskids.org, or email Michela North, the marketing and communication manager, at Michela.North@bokskids.org. 



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