

Sustaining and Embedding Healthy Movers

Billy Young Stars Nursery, West Somerset



Introduction

The Youth Sport Trust (YST) has been working in partnership with Somerset County Council to roll out Healthy Movers, a physical literacy intervention, to pre-schools and nurseries in West Somerset.

Funded by the Department for Education's Opportunity Area, the aim is to support some of the UK's most disadvantaged children to improve their school readiness and, in time, social mobility.

YST deliver Healthy Movers working directly with practitioners, in pre-schools and nurseries, as well as parents. The Healthy Movers programme takes a holistic approach to child development, using social, thinking, creative and physical themes to give children the foundations and confidence they need for lifelong participation in physical activity. It is designed to support two-to-five-year olds' physical literacy, self-esteem and wellbeing, helping them to gain a better start in life.



Background

In 2018, Billy Young Stars Nursery in West Somerset was invited to be part of the West Somerset Healthy Movers project. Billy Young Stars is a day nursery and is based at Butlins Somerset World in Minehead. The nursery is a facility for the children of Butlins staff and is open daily, all year round. The nursery is split into three age groups: pre-school, toddlers and babies. The setting currently operates with six members of staff and Zoe is the manager at the setting, who has been in post since March 2020.

Delivering and embedding Healthy Movers

Two practitioners from Billy Young Stars attended the initial Healthy Movers training in 2018. Following this, they began to deliver Healthy Movers daily to all pre-school and toddler aged children in the setting. In 2019, two more practitioners from Billy Young Stars attended the Healthy Mover Network and Refresher Training.

The initial Healthy Movers Champion has since moved on and so the setting was able to allocate a new Healthy Movers Champion amongst their trained staff. All practitioners support each other in the delivery of the sessions.

Healthy Movers takes place at 10.30am every day, straight after snack time. The pre-school group and toddler group still do Healthy Movers daily, while the older children in the babies' group also join in. Staff at Billy Young Stars say that this really helps with transition between the groups as all practitioners get involved.

A different card is chosen by the Healthy Movers Champions each week, focusing on a different physical literacy skill. The staff are very familiar with the cards and are now able to adapt them to suit different children's needs. Staff are able to differentiate and personalise the activities to engage children of all ages. For example, some children will be working on an object control activity at the same time as others working to improve their fine motor skills. The older children are aware of the expectations when doing Healthy Movers and are good role models for the younger children.

Billy Young Stars have a Healthy Movers noticeboard where all staff and children can see the Healthy Movers card that they are working on that week. The Physical Literacy assessment information is also displayed for all staff, which shows the progressions in stability, locomotion and object control as well as motivation and confidence.




We initially wanted to take part in the Healthy Movers training to help with our routine in our setting

HEALTHY MOVER CHAMPION

Parental engagement in Healthy Movers

Practitioners at Billy Young Stars know their families very well as they all work on the site. Over the last 18 months 'Stay and Play' sessions, where parents and families to participate in Healthy Movers activities with their children, have been challenging to hold due to the COVID-19 restrictions. However, prior to the pandemic parents were regularly involved with the 'Stay and Play' club, organised by the Healthy Mover Champions, where up to 15 parents attended each session. Parents reported that they really enjoyed these as it gave them insight into Healthy Movers and loved being active with their children.

Communication with parents is usually through the setting's Facebook page, as well as informal catch ups at drop off and pick up time. Children talk about Healthy Movers to their parents and children practise their Healthy Movers at home. During the most recent lockdown the Healthy Movers Champions delivered weekly Healthy Movers Zoom sessions to families at home. Parents shared photos with the setting and, notably, three families reported that it helped to keep a structure for their children during lockdown.

 The children have come out of their shells and developed more confidence.

HEALTHY MOVER CHAMPION



Longer term benefits

Healthy Movers has had many long-term benefits for all involved at Billy Young Stars. Practitioners say that it has improved their own confidence. Prior to Healthy Movers, some staff would shy away from delivering certain activities, but Healthy Movers has given them more confidence in leading physical activity sessions with the children and parents. This has led to them having more confidence delivering others areas of the curriculum.

"Through Healthy Movers the children have really come out of their shells and become more confident, so have the team!" Healthy Mover Champion

The practitioners have seen a big improvement in the children's' communication and confidence and they say that the children are all happy to have a go at new things now.

Since embedding Healthy Movers into their daily practice, the staff have noticed children are now following instructions better and their listening skills have also really improved. They have also seen improvements in the children taking turns.

Future

Healthy Movers activities are now fully embedded into the daily routine at Billy Young Stars. In the future the Billy Young Stars Manager would like some whole staff training to ensure all colleagues are able to deliver Healthy Movers.

Top tips for embedding Healthy Movers from the Billy Young stars staff:

- Keep at it!
- Watch other practitioners deliver to improve your confidence
- Have fun and adapt the cards to suit the group
- Have a Healthy Movers notice board so all staff know the card and physical literacy skill that is the focus for each week



 The children can now share and take turns.

HEALTHY MOVER CHAMPION

Sustaining and Embedding Healthy Movers, Cheeky Cherubs Nursery – West Somerset



Introduction

The Youth Sport Trust (YST) has been working in partnership with Somerset County Council to roll out Healthy Movers, a physical literacy intervention, to pre-schools and nurseries in West Somerset.

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Background

In 2018, Cheeky Cherubs Nursery was invited to be part of the West Somerset Healthy Movers project. Cheeky Cherubs is a purpose-built day nursery, split into 3 age groups with fantastic indoor and outdoor space

The setting is very different from others in the area due to their large numbers of children and staff. They currently have 28 members of staff who work across a flexible day from 7.30am-6.00pm. They also run an apprenticeship programme working closely with the local FE College. The apprentices work within the setting and learn from all practitioners.

Delivering and embedding Healthy Movers

One practitioner from Cheeky Cherubs attended the initial Healthy Movers training in 2018 and started to deliver the activities. Due to the large setting and number of practitioners, an additional six practitioners attended the refresher Healthy Movers training in January 2020. Healthy Movers at Cheeky Cherubs has gone from strength to strength under the leadership of two committed practitioners, Kayleigh and Miyah.

Healthy Movers takes place across all of the age groups in the setting. Not all children attend the setting every day and so Healthy Movers activities are delivered three to four times a week to make sure all children have weekly access to the programme. Each age group room has a noticeboard displaying the activity card that they will be following over each 2 week period.



Healthy Movers has evolved in our setting, we used to just do a card for 1 week but now we do it over a 2 week period and we see great progress in the second week

HEALTHY MOVER CHAMPION

The main reason that Cheeky Cherubs has been able to embed Healthy Movers is by delivering it every day involving all the practitioners across all the age groups

Practitioners use the Physical Literacy assessment tool when they introduce a new card to the children. This tool is a document showing the progressions of stability, locomotion, object control, confidence and motivation. The Healthy Mover Champion chooses an assessment criteria that the children will focus on. For example, when using the card 'Hot Hot Treasure' the children might be lifting and dropping the treasure, passing from hand to hand or moving the treasure around different body parts, taking in turns, and sharing. At the end of the two week cycle the practitioners can see progress that has been made against the object control criteria and highlight areas that might need more time.

'All practitioners deliver Healthy Movers which has really helped to embed it' Healthy Mover Champion

Parental Engagement with Healthy Movers

Miyah, one of the Healthy Movers Champions, shares each week's activity card with parents using the Family App. This enables parents to work on that card with their children at home. Parents are encouraged to share photos of the children doing Healthy Movers activities on the Family App. Around two thirds of parents regularly engage with this. Parental awareness of the programme is high, with children regularly talking about Healthy Movers with their families. Children are very aware of Healthy Mover time throughout the day.

 Children talk about 'healthy Movers with their families and are very aware of Healthy Mover time throughout the day

HEALTHY MOVER CHAMPION

Longer term benefits of using Healthy Movers

The Healthy Movers Champions, Kayleigh and Miyah, work closely with the Physical Literacy assessment statements and now have a clearer understanding of the progressions of movements. These statements break down the progressions of the physical literacy skills to help the practitioners assess the children's improvements linked to the Healthy Mover activities on the various cards. For example, one of the Healthy Mover cards is 'Birds in Trees'. This card focuses on balance activities and the children act as birds flying around branches (chalk markings on the floor) and they balance on the branches. They will start by balancing on two feet legs apart, then progress to two feet legs together and then onto one foot. These progressions are included on the assessment tool.

Importantly, having this increased understanding of the progression of physical literacy skills has enabled the setting to carry out some early intervention support with children whose gross motor skills are below the expected level. Through Healthy Movers, practitioners are also able to identify children who need help with developing their fine motor skills and so provide targeted support.

'Some children who are our early 2-year-olds who are tip toe walkers, not going to be picked up by physio, but we can incorporate into them moving in different ways' Healthy Mover Champion

 The assessment statements are really good for targeted work

HEALTHY MOVER CHAMPION

'The Physical Literacy assessments can highlight children with additional needs and we can support them with early intervention' Healthy Mover Champion

Healthy Movers has helped the setting to create quality outdoor activities that engage all children in the setting, even those who previously would not have chosen to participate in outdoor activities.

Since embedding Healthy Movers into their daily practice the practitioners have also seen improvements in the children's listening skills and understanding. For example, the children are more confident and have improved their communication skills, which will help them as they transition into school.



Future

The Healthy Movers activities are now fully embedded at Cheeky Cherubs. In the future the Healthy Movers Champions hope to maintain this by providing refresher training and create opportunities for colleagues to observe each other. The setting would also welcome additional bespoke training for practitioners within each of the three nursery age groups.

Top tips for embedding Healthy Movers from the Cheeky Cherubs practitioners:

- Having Healthy Movers as part of the daily routine
- Ensure all practitioners are aware of Healthy Movers and empower everyone to take responsibility for it
- Follow an activity card over a 2 week period
- Build in routine for assessments
- Don't over think it, just have fun with the activities



Sustaining and Embedding Healthy Movers at Teddy Bears Nursery, West Somerset



Introduction

The Youth Sport Trust (YST) has been working in partnership with Somerset County Council to roll out Healthy Movers, a physical literacy intervention, to pre-schools and nurseries in West Somerset.

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Background

In 2018 Teddy Bears Nursery was invited to be a part of the West Somerset Healthy Movers project. Teddy Bears Nursery is located in the village of Washford and is a feeder nursery for Old Cleeve C of E First School. The nursery has two staff members and runs a three-hour session ten times a week for up to 22 children aged 3-4 years old.

Delivering and embedding Healthy Movers

One practitioner from Teddy Bears attended the initial Healthy Movers training in 2018, becoming the setting's Healthy Movers Champion. After this training the Healthy Mover Champion cascaded the information to the Pre-School Manager and then both members of staff began to deliver Healthy Movers to all the children in the setting. Over the course of the project, from 2018 to 2020, both members of staff attended the regular network sessions as well as a refresher training day.

Healthy Movers activities are delivered between 3 and 4 times a week, mainly in the afternoon. These sessions are often delivered using a story or theme to link to other areas of the Early Years framework such as children's communication and language skills and personal, social and emotional development. For example some of the activities, such as 'Hide and Seek' are focused on working with a partner so the children are encouraged to share equipment with each other which also helps to develop communication skills. The setting is flexible with its delivery of Healthy Movers which includes putting on an additional session if the children ask in the morning.



One girl only does a Thursday and Friday with us and she asks for Healthy Movers as soon as she arrives!

HEALTHY MOVER CHAMPION

'It's such an easy programme to get involved with, we have some structured sessions written into the weekly plan but often do an extra 5 or 10 minutes here and there, we are so enthusiastic about it, it's really easy to get involved in' Healthy Mover Champion

'Healthy Movers is the best thing since sliced bread!' Healthy Mover Champion

The setting now personalise the Healthy Movers programme to fit in with the learning outcomes for the day. For example, the Healthy Movers Champion uses the 'Birds in Trees' card when they are looking at the different seasons and uses the 'Pop the Bubble' card when working on the 'P' sound to support the children's speech and language skills.

Improving communication and language skills

Communication and language: The practitioners have noticed that the listening skills have improved considerably and the children can now concentrate and follow instructions much better. For example, Healthy Movers has really helped when learning phonics in reception class as the 'Pop the Bubble' card encourages the 'P' sound and the 'Choo Choo' card encourages the 'Ch' sound.

Through Healthy Movers, the children have been taking on a wider vocabulary and using new words that have become embedded in daily practice. These words have been introduced through the cards such as 'slither', 'wiggle', 'balance', as well as shapes, colours and numbers. Repetition of this language through Healthy Movers has been beneficial.

'Healthy Movers is now firmly built into the daily routine at Teddy Bears and we notice a big difference in the hand eye coordination of the children but also in the ability for the children to listen and follow instructions' Healthy Mover Champion

'One child was particularly bright but struggled with sharing, Healthy Movers made such a difference' Healthy Mover Champion

Benefits to the children during transition

School Readiness: Pre-school transition into Reception class has become much easier since the children have been regularly taking part in Healthy Movers activities. The initial Healthy Mover Champion has now moved into the reception class at Old Cleeve First School and says that she has observed a significant difference in the school readiness of the children who have participated in Healthy Movers in their Pre-Schools compared to those who have not.

Knowing they can sit and listen in reception class makes such a difference, attention span and listening skills have improved; some have really missed out by not doing Healthy Movers

HEALTHY MOVER CHAMPION

'There is a significant difference in school readiness between those who have and haven't done Healthy Movers prior to reception class. Healthy Movers children are better at following instructions and sharing' Healthy Mover Champion

'The programme is so flexible; you can make it fit into whatever you want to do!' Reception teacher



Future

Healthy Movers will continue to be delivered between 3 and 4 times a week at Teddy Bears. The Reception teachers are also hoping to deliver Healthy Movers to their children on a weekly basis.

It is such a wonderful programme and the benefits are so huge, it's such an easy programme to follow

RECEPTION TEACHER

