

Fitness for Life: Middle School to High School Articulation

Introduction

IDEA is an acronym that we use to describe the unique nature of each of the two *Fitness for Life* programs (middle school and high school). **I** stands for **I**ntegrated, **D** stands for **D**evelopmentally appropriate, **E** stands for **E**ducationally sound, and **A** stands for program **A**rticulation.

Both the middle school and high school programs are designed so that content *integrates* with content taught in the more traditional units in the physical education program, but also with other subject matter areas such as science, math, and language arts. For both the middle school program and the high school program *Fitness for Life* is meant to be a meaningful part of the total program and to complement other parts of the total physical education program. Learning in *Fitness for Life* will help students in other subject matter areas as well (see Teacher's Materials for more information).

Both programs are based on NASPE and selected state standards, but each is designed to meet *developmentally* appropriate standards. The middle school program is based on standards specifically for grades 6-8 and the high school program is based specifically on standards for grades 9-12.

Both programs provide activities (both classroom and activity) that are *educationally* sound. Reading level is appropriate for each level, content is based on educational needs of the students, and activities are selected based on the educational needs of the students (based on level). Lesson plans were developed so that they are educationally appropriate and quite different for each level.

Fitness for Life: Middle School is designed to provide a strong educational foundation for the transition to high school and the upper level *Fitness for Life* program. *Articulation* from middle school to high school was the key feature in developing the unique middle school program. Table 1, presented later in this document, provides more information describing the differences in program content and information to show how both programs meet NASPE standards, but how each program focuses on standards specific to each level (middle and high school).

Fitness for Life: High School

Fitness for Life was introduced in its first edition in 1979. The first program was designed for use in the high school and was created prior to the development of national physical education standards. Lacking such standards, the authors consulted with teachers and experts in the field to develop program objectives that were appropriate for students in grades 9-12. These objectives served as a model for many states that subsequently developed standards, especially standards for required personal fitness courses. The authors of *Fitness for Life* served as consultants to many different states as they developed standards for physical education.

By the date of publication of the fourth edition of *Fitness for Life* in 1997, national standards for physical education had been developed. The fourth edition was designed to meet selected NASPE standards, but it should be noted that previous editions (1st in 1979, 2nd in 1985, 3rd in 1990) met most of the standards even though the standards

were not available at the time. Subsequent editions of *Fitness for Life* have been planned with national and selected state standards in mind. Charts matching *Fitness for Life* content to standards for various states are available on the *Fitness for Life* website (www.FitnessforLife.org).

From the very beginning *Fitness for Life* was proposed as a program designed to meet very specific physical education objectives. It is intended to be a very important **part** of a total physical education curriculum. Accordingly, the program focuses on very specific standards and is designed to help students to become physically educated people. Consistent with the NASPE outcomes project (NASPE, 1992), *Fitness for Life* contributes to building the physically educated person by fostering lifelong physical activity, promoting development of physical fitness (especially health-related physical fitness), promoting knowledge of the benefits of involvement in physical activities, and teaching the value of physical activity and its contribution to a healthful lifestyle.

Specific objectives for *Fitness for Life* (high school) are outlined in the teacher's materials and student objectives are outlined at the beginning of each chapter of the 18-chapter book. The Stairway to Lifetime Fitness (see Teacher's Guide and student text) is also used to show the importance of learning of decision making and problem solving skills that promote independence (ability to plan and use a lifetime activity program). Recent editions (fourth and fifth) have focused on learning self-management skills. In addition to teaching knowledge and understanding of key concepts, learning that promotes behavior change is stressed. This emphasis is based on the evidence that shows the importance, not only of teaching the "facts" about physical activity and fitness, but also teaching skills that will aid students in adopting lifelong healthy lifestyles (e.g., self-assessment, goal setting, self-monitoring, self-planning). Note: Eighteen different self-management skills are included in the high school *Fitness for Life* program.

To summarize, *Fitness for Life* (high school) is designed to meet specific national and state standards for physical education. The emphasis is on those 9-12 standards that help students learn important content (related to all 7 current NASPE standards) and self-management skills. Whether it is taught in the 9th grade, or any of the later grades, the program focuses on teaching the concepts and building skills that produce independent decision makers and problem solvers capable of planning personal programs for healthy living throughout life.

Fitness for Life: Middle School

Fitness for Life: Middle School was first introduced in 2007. It was developed specifically for middle school youth and was developed based on NASPE and selected state standards specifically for grades 6-8. The program is designed to articulate with the high school *Fitness for Life* program, not duplicate it. The middle school program is meant to provide a solid foundation for students who will ultimately enroll in a high school *Fitness for Life* program.

Like the high school *Fitness for Life* program, the middle school program is designed to meet selected physical education objectives. *Fitness for Life* is not meant to be a total physical education program, but an important part of a total program designed to meet selected specific physical education standards and objectives. The middle school

program meets selected goals for grades 6-8 while the high school program focuses on goals for grades 9-12.

To summarize, the middle school *Fitness for Life* program meets standards and objectives specifically for middle school students. Students completing the program will have a strong foundation for entering a high school program with minimum content overlap. The high school program that includes 18 chapters, typically taught over a semester or for a full year, focuses on more sophisticated and more detailed concepts and the teaching of self-management skills necessary for developing personal healthy lifestyles for use later in life. The 9-chapter middle school program is designed for implementation in a 9-week or one semester unit or in shorter units across multiple grade levels (6-8). Skill learning concepts, biomechanical principles, social and diversity concepts as they relate to physical activity are taught in the classroom and emphasized in developmentally appropriate activities. Physical activity and fitness concepts are presented in a developmentally and educationally appropriate way to prepare students for more extensive study in high school.

Program Differences by Level

Table 1 (below) lists each of the 7 NASPE standards. The table also presents examples to illustrate how each of the two (middle and high school) *Fitness for Life* programs contributes to each of the standards in their own developmentally appropriate way. Note: The reader is encourage to look at the *Fitness for Life* website (www.FitnessforLife.org) where correlation charts showing how *Fitness for Life* (high school) meets specific state standards for personal fitness course requirements. The NASPE standards for each chapter of the *Fitness for Life: Middle School* are described in detail in the Teacher’s Guide for the program.

Both the middle and high school *Fitness for Life* programs provide materials for inclusion in a portfolio consistent with recommendations in the NASPE for 6-8 and 9-12.

NASPE Standards and Fitness for Life Articulation

NASPE Standard	Middle School Examples	High School Examples
1. Demonstrates competency in many movement forms and proficiency in a few movement forms.	--Learn skill learning and practice concepts with application lessons (Chapter 2). --Be exposed to a wide variety of skills (physical activity pyramid chapters). -Learn tactics and strategies in classroom and activity sessions.	--Focus on choosing activities that can be used for a lifetime. --Exposure to many different activities in physical activity sessions.
2. Applies movement concepts and principles to the learning and	--Special feature in every chapter on Biomechanical principles featured (with	--Extensive coverage of physical activity principles in much greater detail than

development of motor skills.	corresponding activities that reinforce principles. --Training principles introduced. --Practice emphasized (see standard 1).	in middle school program. --Emphasis on self-management and problem solving skills for choosing lifelong activities for inclusion in a personal activity program.
3. Exhibits a physically active lifestyle.	--Performs activity in class --Identifies activity opportunities outside of class. --Learns benefits of activity at basic level. --Begins to develop personal program.	--Analyzes benefits of a variety of activities. --Prepares fitness and activity profiles for use in program planning. --Self monitors activity patterns. --Plans personal lifetime activity program.
4. Achieves and maintains a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.	--Learns about heart rate, target zone and methods of building fitness. --Learns about activities for building many parts of fitness. --Performs activities that build fitness (e.g., resistance training, CV exercise).	--Learns wide variety of self-assessments. --Plans personal fitness self-assessments for all health fitness parts. --Uses fitness profile to set program goals and plan program. --Understands meaning and knows how to interpret criterion referenced health fitness standards. --Applies principles and concepts of fitness and activity.
5. Demonstrates responsible personal and social behavior in physical activity settings.	--Special feature in every chapter that help students learn to respect differences among people in physical activity settings. All nine relate specifically to grade 6-8 standards. --Learns from special features about full participation, safe activity, following rules, bullying, peer pressure.	--Uses self-management skills to such as self-assessment, goal setting goals, self-monitoring, building self-confidence, building healthy attitudes, finding social support, building intrinsic motivation, preventing relapse, managing time, improving self-perceptions, saying NO, learning to think critically, thinking success, and overcoming barriers to be active

		<p>throughout life and to be responsible in activity settings (Taking Charge feature in each chapter).</p> <p>--Learns key concepts related to teamwork, helping others, cooperation, etc. based on study of concepts throughout the text and in activities associated with classroom sessions.</p>
<p>6. Demonstrates understanding and respect for differences among people in physical activity settings.</p>	<p>--The special features described for standard 5 also relate directly to standard 6.</p> <p>--Many sections of text and photos in text are designed to promote learning related to this standard specifically for students grades 6-8.</p>	<p>--Uses self-management skills described in previous section to develop an understanding and respect for differences among people in physical activity.</p> <p>--Learns key concepts related to teamwork, helping others, cooperation, etc. based on study of concepts throughout the text and in activities associated with classroom sessions.</p>
<p>7. Understands that physical activity provides opportunities for enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and social interaction.</p>	<p>--The special features described for standard 5 also relate to standard 7.</p> <p>--Chapters 1, 3-7, and 9 all present developmentally appropriate information related to the benefits of a wide variety of age-appropriate activities.</p>	<p>--Uses self-management skills and conceptual information to build a personal program that is enjoyable, challenging, self-expressive and involves social interactions.</p> <p>--Performs personal program both in and out of school taking advantage of community and school resources.</p> <p>--Evaluates program and self-monitors activity behaviors.</p>

Note: See Teacher's Guides, Student Text, and book specific websites for more information on standards and objectives for the *Fitness for Life* programs.