



Physical Activity Programme for Children



TEACHERS GUIDE & TEACHING UNIT TEXT





1

Welcome!



Al Haraka Baraka means “movement is a blessing”

With this concept in mind we have designed a programme to encourage children to take part in physical activity, not just conventional sports that may be difficult to access, but to get children into the habit where physical activity becomes part of their daily routine.

Al Haraka Baraka has been developed for the Middle East region by a number of Arab and International expert organisations. It is sponsored exclusively by Master Foods as an expression of their ongoing support to community activities in the Middle East and to the development of healthy lifestyles.

The content was created through research by a scientific advisory panel which includes some of the world’s most authoritative institutions such as the UAE Ministry of Education, the Arab Centre for Nutrition and the Faculty of Physiology & Exercise Sciences at King Saud University in Riyadh. We have also drawn upon the guidance and input of numerous international sources, from Australia, Europe and North America.

Al Haraka Baraka consists of 3 main elements:

Teachers Guide

Parents Guide

Teaching Units

Printable resources with a lot of brilliant teaching ideas can be accessed through the website:

www.alharakabaraka.com

2 Changing lifestyles

Lifestyles in the Gulf area have changed dramatically in less than a generation. Only 20 or 30 years ago physical activity made up a much larger part of everyday life, with people walking more often to school, shops or the mosque, and shopping for themselves in the souks and bakalas. Life was generally more active.

Progressively worse

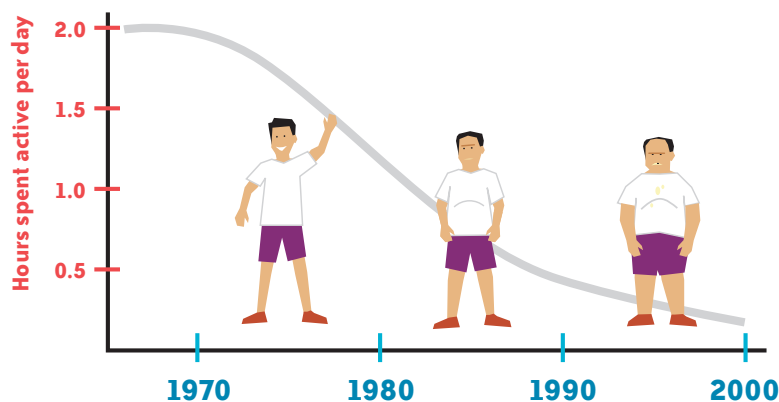
Today, most of us live what we call a *sedentary lifestyle*. This means we do little or no physical activity. For our children, an increase in passive activities like watching TV or playing computer games figure highly as major pastimes and these have been matched with a steady decrease in more active pursuits. This pattern becomes progressively worse as children pass through adolescence and, when combined with changing eating habits, can become a major cause of obesity and other serious diseases like diabetes, certain types of cancer, hypertension, osteoporosis and anaemia.

Behavioural change

As younger children are naturally more active, it doesn't take much to change this tendency. **Al Haraka Baraka** has been developed to help primary school children understand the effects of physical activity and how it influences their health, to show them how movement can really be a *blessing*.

In order for this programme to be successful, it relies upon you as teacher; through your everyday contact with children, to help build physical activity thinking and behavioural change into the school day. You can help them become more aware of the importance of physical activity and its relationship with a healthy lifestyle.

The **Al Haraka Baraka Teachers Guide** provides you with a lot of useful information and a framework to create 4 lessons. These are designed to inspire interest, create fun and, through an activity based process, empower your children with the knowledge to make choices that can improve their lives and wellbeing.





3

3.1 Factors for success

Recent studies on activity programmes have shown that there are three main factors contributing towards a lasting change in our children's lifestyles:

- Co-operation between the school authorities, schools and teachers.**
- The duration of the activity programme and sustaining it as part of a regular activity programme for the school.**
- Combination of educational efforts and a change in a child's environment to promote a healthy lifestyle, both at school and at home.**

Al Haraka Baraka aims to include parents, teachers, school supervisors, schools' health departments and any other concerned organisations in this process by providing various resources. The teaching units included, specifically take into consideration that a certain amount of time is needed for children to adapt and, even more importantly, keep up a more active lifestyle.

Al Haraka Baraka sets out to promote simple lifestyle modifications that can deliver positive physical activity experiences. This programme focuses on a whole list of routine movements that can be undertaken during the course of our everyday lives by eliminating physical, psychological and financial barriers.

3.2 Benefits of regular physical activity

Scientific studies indicate that numerous benefits for children can be gained by taking part in physical activity. Here are just few;

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|--|--|
| Helps kids to make friends | Improves physical self-esteem (the "feel good about myself" factor) |
| Strengthens bones and muscles | Increases relaxation |
| Maintains flexibility | Enhances healthy growth and development |
| Achieves a healthy weight | Improves relationship with family |
| Promotes good posture and balance | Children can sleep better |
| Improves fitness | Decreases stress |
| Strengthens the heart | |



3.3 Consequences of inactivity

It is important to develop physical activity habits in the younger years because the health risks of inactivity in adulthood increases. Recent studies have shown that the relationship between a *sedentary lifestyle* and the diseases mentioned below is alarming and increasing.

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- Depression
- Colon cancer

Your pupils may not relate too much to these diseases, however threatening they might seem to an adult, but see what their level of comprehension is through the brainstorming sessions included in each *teaching unit*.

3.4 How much physical activity is necessary?

Getting our children off the couch and on the move more often is the most appropriate goal. Guidelines throughout the world recommend being physically active for at least 30 minutes (60 minutes would be ideal) everyday. They also suggest that a combination of moderate and vigorous activities is ideal. Examples can include:

Moderate	Vigorous
Brisk walking	Running
House and garden work	Playing 'tag'
Swimming	Football, volleyball, basketball
Bowling	Horse riding

Having a fit body means being prepared to cope with the challenges of everyday life. Fitness in physical terms means being well suited or well adapted for the task at hand.

If we have a look at different sports and various athletes we realise that there are different levels of fitness. A weight lifter, for example, might be capable to lift heavy weights, but might not be able to run for a very long time like a marathon runner.



In order to increase our children's fitness, a combination of Endurance (or Aerobic), Flexibility and Strength Activities is recommended. In the table below are some typical exercise examples for each section.

Aerobic Activities	Flexibility Activities	Strength Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve continuous movement • Cause rapid breathing • Makes your heart beat faster • Benefit your heart, lungs and circulatory system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve bending, stretching and reaching • Keep the joints moving • Help to relax 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve lifting, carrying, pushing, pulling • Strengthen muscles • Improves posture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Running/jogging Football Basketball Swimming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stretching Gymnastics Yoga/judo Swimming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lifting weights Carrying groceries Bowling Sweeping sand

Studies have shown that children get used to a certain daily level of physical activity. As a consequence, time that is spent being physically active should be increased steadily, while non-active time should be reduced.

The *teaching units* included in **Al Haraka Baraka** show how to steadily increase your class's activity level. Here is just an example of what a programme could ideally look like:

Time-span in minutes	Be moderately active for at least	Be vigorously active for at least	Total of physical activity
1 Month	20 minutes	+	10 minutes = 30 minutes
2 Months	30 minutes	+	15 minutes = 45 minutes
3 Months	40 minutes	+	20 minutes = 60 minutes
4 Months	50 minutes	+	25 minutes = 75 minutes
5 Months	60 minutes	+	30 minutes = 90 minutes



4

4.1 Ways to change behaviour

Attitudes need to be positively effected to ensure the successful and long term outcome of **Al Haraka Baraka**. This will come through a strategy that includes a combination of actions:

a) Develop Awareness

Help your class become aware about how active or inactive they are. Children should pay attention to what they do with their time. The *teaching units* provide you with information and ideas on this issue.

b) Set Goals

Goal setting and a regular control of outcomes is important; make sure that you work out activity goals together with your class. Always consider their opinion, likes and dislikes. Be careful to set realistic and relevant goals.

c) Monitoring and Feedback

Pupils absorb information best when it is repeated. A subject that is only addressed once will soon be forgotten. This is why it is so important to keep track of your classes' efforts. Do frequent reviews, find out if goals have been achieved, what experiences the children have had and provide advice.

d) Reward and Recognise Changes

Of course children should primarily be motivated by the fun factor and the social benefits that a physically active lifestyle incorporates. Nevertheless, every child likes to be praised and will be very happy once a goal has been achieved.

4.2 Ways to integrate your class

Let your pupils participate actively in the programme. Young people are more motivated when they take part in the decision making process and are not just following instructions.

The **Al Haraka Baraka** *teaching units* give you many ideas on how to integrate your class, be it through discussions, role playing, activity games or brainstorming sessions. Let your pupils get active in groups and let them use their problem solving skills.



When setting goals, make sure that you always ask about your classes' opinion.

Be prepared! Have answers ready as you will sooner or later experience resistance - children tend to find a lot of reasons why they can't be active, so make sure you always have good answer ready.

4.3 What about parents?

The **Al Haraka Baraka Parents Guide** is designed to help you in your mission to get children more active. Obviously you want your pupils' parents to be supportive as their home environment is central to the lasting success of the programme, and to the long term effect on behaviour and habits.

A family who are generally inactive will set this example to their children. Conversely, those who set a positive example will reflect well on a child's ability to recognise the value of an active life.

If possible, explain to parents about the programme and your efforts to promote physical activity in your class. This can be done through the *Parents Guide*, by directing them to the **Al Haraka Baraka** website or CD, or by holding a Parents Meeting. You will probably find that a lot of parents might not even be aware of their inactive lifestyles and their consequences.





5

5.1 How to use the resource

Al Haraka Baraka consists of four consecutive *teaching units* or lessons. Each lesson is divided into four educational sections and follows a simple structure.

PART 1 Be active!

This section contains short games or activities to start the lesson with and introduces the subject of the day.

PART 2 Knowledge

Through brainstorming and discussion your class will widen their knowledge about physical activities in general and about different types of fitness. This section will give them a solid information base to build on.

PART 3 Ways to be active

Our aim is to empower our children with the knowledge necessary to make informed choices than can improve their lives and wellbeing. This process takes time and should evolve step by step. Section 3 gives an outline on how to proceed best by creating awareness, recording and analysing current levels of activity, setting goals and monitoring achievements.

PART 4 What we learnt?

This summarises the lesson's activities and emphasises the most important aspects in order to allow children to memorise quickly and profoundly.

All reference materials, Weekly Activity Diaries and Worksheets are available from the CD and the programme's website: www.alharakabaraka.com

It is our intention to periodically update the website with feedback from teachers and photos of those classes who have taken part. The website will evolve into a vital reference for all teachers and parents who want to know about **Al Haraka Baraka** and contains links to a whole variety of useful references.

The *teaching units* will also evolve as teachers become familiar with the structure and content of the existing four units. So, keep checking the website for more information.



5.2 Summary of teaching units

TEACHING UNIT 1

Free To Be

	Teaching Aims and Activities	Outcome
Be active!	<p>Introduction to the programme focusing on the basics.</p> <p>Pupils given a guide to take home for their parents.</p> <p>Demonstrates 3 types of physical activity by performing some simple P.E. routines.</p>	<p>Introduces children to the three main types of physical activity;</p> <p>Aerobic, Flexibility and Strength</p>
Knowledge	<p>Brainstorming session.</p>	<p>Understanding what each type of activity is and what it does.</p> <p>To understand their effects and benefits.</p> <p>To be aware of the consequences of inactivity.</p> <p>Differentiate between moderate and vigorous activities.</p> <p>Find out why most reasons for being inactive are excuses.</p>
Ways to be active	<p>Distribute <i>Weekly Activity Diary 1</i> and <i>Worksheets 1</i> and <i>2</i>.</p> <p>Set target of 30 minutes per day.</p>	<p>Keep a record of what activities have been performed and for how long.</p> <p>Work towards an easy to attain goal.</p>
What we learnt?	<p>Summary</p>	<p>Enhance retention of information by repeating main issues.</p>



TEACHING UNIT 2

Keep On Going

	Teaching Aims and Activities	Outcome
Be active!	<p>Pupils take part in a variety of exercises to test stamina and strength.</p> <p>Class divides into four to compare experiences.</p>	To clearly understand what happens to your body's heart rate when you undertake different types of physical activity.
Knowledge	<p>Brainstorming session.</p> <p>Debate exercise and effects.</p> <p>Focus on routine / habitual exercises.</p>	<p>Children acquire a better understanding of what fitness is about.</p> <p>To feel the effects and know how to build up stamina and strength.</p> <p>To understand that everyday activities like going to shops and walking to school can really help.</p>
Ways to be active	<p>Review <i>Weekly Activity Diary 1</i>.</p> <p>Distribute <i>Weekly Activity Diary 2</i> and <i>Worksheets 1</i> and <i>2</i>.</p>	<p>Children praised for achievement.</p> <p>New goals set and information provided.</p>
What we learnt?	Summary	Enhance retention of information by repeating main issues.



TEACHING UNIT **3**

Flexible Me

	Teaching Aims and Activities	Outcome
Be active!	Focus on flexibility and coordination by getting the class to take part in some fun activities.	To see how flexible they are and how good at coordinating various moves. To enjoy physical activity by taking part in a fun demonstration.
Knowledge	Brainstorming session. Debate types of activity and effects. Focus on routine / habitual exercises.	Children will learn that flexibility and coordination are two important parts of fitness. Find out which exercises increase flexibility and improve coordination. Think about which everyday activities increase flexibility and improve coordination.
Ways to be active	Review <i>Weekly Activity Diary 2</i> . Distribute <i>Worksheet 1</i> .	Children praised for achievement. New goals set and information provided.
What we learnt?	Summary	Enhance retention of information by repeating main issues.



TEACHING UNIT 4

Show Time

	Teaching Aims and Activities	Outcome
Be active!	To inspire confidence amongst their peer group, the class puts on a demonstration to other classes in the same year group.	Feel good about doing physical activity. To inspire others and show ways in which simple lifestyle adjustments can have a manifest effect on health and fitness.
Knowledge	Children tell their friends about what they have learnt in Al Haraka Baraka . Show examples of the programme and website.	Spreading the word that physical activity is important. Children will be introduced to the website.
Ways to be active		Information provided by downloads.
What we learnt?	Children take photographs of one another performing physical activity tasks they have learnt. Images sent to Al Haraka Baraka webmaster for posting onto the site.	Reward given to class for taking part.