



# Stepping Stones Preschool - Dorsett

## Contact Information

<b>CACFP Sponsor</b>	Stepping Stones Preschool
<b>Child Care Facility Name</b>	Stepping Stones Preschool Dorsett
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## Description

Stepping Stones Preschool is in the local elementary school. It is a childcare center that offers a great preschool program to 20 preschool aged children. Stepping Stones Preschool is located in rural North Central Pennsylvania in Tioga County.

## Keystone STARS Level 4

### Category

**Physical Activity Time or Environment** – PA1 Active Play and Inactive Time; PA2 Play Environment

### Goal

Our goal is to create opportunities for children to be active inside, especially during inclement weather.

### Promising Practice

While Tioga County is a beautiful county offering many outside activities, the winter can be long and often very cold. Stepping Stones Preschool, due to weather restraints, has to spend many days inside. We wanted to help the children in Tioga County develop into healthy young children. Our goal was to create opportunities for the children to be active *inside*. This activity improves not only the physical health of the children, but we found it also opens them up for greater cognitive development. We purchased soft balls, a classroom hoop ball goal, toss and learn game board, tossing skill set, rainbow dancing wrist bands, a Classroom Mega Activity Set, and a daily fitness CD set. With these items we changed our daily schedule. Every morning (rain or shine) during circle time we used one of the songs on the daily fitness CDs to get the children moving. The CDs offer a huge variety, so we never "get bored" doing the same thing. The children love the songs and movements, and we found it also got our children focused for the other circle time activities. With the other items, we are able to quickly change the classroom into an active environment. We simply move a few tables over and place all the items around the room for active physical play. We did have to introduce each item and describe the uses to help ensure we maintained classroom management and safety, while still offering children the freedom gross motor movements require. Our classroom and learning environment are amazing, even in the dead of winter, now that the children have the opportunity to move. Our long term goal of promoting healthy children in a county riddled with one of the highest diabetes rates is still yet to be seen. We are hopeful that we are making changes with the children that will last a lifetime.

### Action Steps

- Embrace the craziness that active indoor play can produce.
- Select appropriate resources to encourage active indoor play.

- Integrate structured and unstructured indoor physical activity into the daily routine.
- Be creative and flexible with your space - move things around to allow space.
- Introduce new nutrition and physical activity items to children so they can understand the use and become excited about the materials.

### **Materials**

<b>Item Purchased</b>	<b>Cost of Item</b>
Classroom Mega Activity Set	\$207.75
Rainbow Dancing Wrist Bands(set of 6)	\$9.49
Playground Balls Low Density (6)	\$62.52
Ultimate Ball kit	\$61.43
Classroom Hoop Ball Goal	\$95.34
"See Me" Tunnels	\$24.37
Toss and Learn Game Board	\$41.33
Tossing Skill Set	\$137.75

### **Advice**

I suggest for programs to be willing to embrace the craziness that indoor active play can produce. Encourage specific items that can be thrown, bounced, and hit during this time. Realize that with this active play the noise level will be higher, but it is a healthy noise, resulting in healthier children.

### **Evidence of Success**

We are still measuring our success, but as a start, the children are now active inside for at least an hour when the weather is inclement. The children are now also more focused during our circle time activities. This wasn't one of our initial goals, but it is a great side effect. We also now have enough inside play equipment for all the children to use.