wellness activity guide

Unit 2: Physical Activity

ages 10–12
**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** Let’s learn about ways we can get physical activity in during the day by making small changes that make a big difference! Leading a more active life is good for our bodies and our minds and becomes an easy habit with a big impact.

Did you know? Being active doesn’t just mean exercising. There are many ways to be active in our day to day lives and this can help us be physically active without purposefully setting time aside for a workout, and generally let us live a healthier lifestyle.

Some examples of this include:
- Taking the stairs instead of the elevator,
- Using TV commercial breaks to do exercises or walk around
- Riding your bike or walking to the park/a friends house/restaurants
- Going for walks with family or friends when you spend time with them
- Playing outside with your friends or siblings instead of inside
- Dancing while you brush your teeth

**SUPPLIES:**
- Pens and pencils
- paper
- Tip sheets - provided

**STEPS:**
1. Ask the following questions and hold a conversation around them:
   a. Why is being active throughout the day important?
   b. How does being active affect our mood and health?
   c. Write a prediction about if a person were to be more active, what would happen.
2. Read the information about being active and above examples of ways to be more active
3. From memory, try to write out your entire day from yesterday and the day before (from when you wake up until you went to bed)
4. Using the examples above and the USDA printout tip sheets provided (as well as your own ideas) try to add in or swap activities that can make you more active - make your goal to add in 3 small ways per day
5. Next, turn to a partner and share your 2 days and the activities you added - see what suggestions they have and add 2 more of their suggestions
be an active family

Physical activity is important for children and adults of all ages. Being active as a family can benefit everyone. Adults need 2½ hours a week of physical activity, and children need 60 minutes a day. Follow these tips to add more activity to your family’s busy schedule.

1. set specific activity times
   Determine time slots throughout the week when the whole family is available. Devote a few of these times to physical activity. Try doing something active after dinner or begin the weekend with a Saturday morning walk.

2. plan ahead and track your progress
   Write your activity plans on a family calendar. Let the kids help in planning the activities. Allow them to check it off after completing each activity.

3. include work around the house
   Involve the kids in yard work and other active chores around the house. Have them help you with raking, weeding, planting, or vacuuming.

4. use what is available
   Plan activities that require little or no equipment or facilities. Examples include walking, jogging, jumping rope, playing tag, and dancing. Find out what programs your community recreation center offers for free or minimal charge.

5. build new skills
   Enroll the kids in classes they might enjoy such as gymnastics, dance, or tennis. Help them practice. This will keep things fun and interesting, and introduce new skills!

6. plan for all weather conditions
   Choose some activities that do not depend on the weather conditions. Try mall walking, indoor swimming, or active video games. Enjoy outdoor activities as a bonus whenever the weather is nice.

7. turn off the TV
   Set a rule that no one can spend longer than 2 hours per day playing video games, watching TV, and using the computer (except for school work). Instead of a TV show, play an active family game, dance to favorite music, or go for a walk.

8. start small
   Begin by introducing one new family activity and add more when you feel everyone is ready. Take the dog for a longer walk, play another ball game, or go to an additional exercise class.

9. include other families
   Invite others to join your family activities. This is a great way for you and your kids to spend time with friends while being physically active. Plan parties with active games such as bowling or an obstacle course, sign up for family programs at the YMCA, or join a recreational club.

10. treat the family with fun physical activity
    When it is time to celebrate as a family, do something active as a reward. Plan a trip to the zoo, park, or lake to treat the family.

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.
An active lifestyle

Being more physically active is one of the best things you can do for your health, and it doesn’t have to be hard or involve the gym.

Get social
Get active with your friends instead of going out to eat. Go for a hike, walk around the mall, or play an exercise-themed video game.

Move more at work
Fit more activity into the workday. Stand during phone calls, use a printer farther from your desk, and get up to stretch each hour.

Do something new
Develop a new skill to kick-start your motivation. Sign up for a class to learn how to salsa dance, surf, do tai chi, or play a sport.

Keep cool in the pool
Don’t like to sweat? Hit the local community pool for a swim, water polo, or water aerobics class to stay cool while exercising.

Stay on track
Use SuperTracker.usda.gov to track your activity. Sync your FITBIT® for easy entry and join a challenge for friendly competition.

List more tips

Based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans
Go to ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.
6. View their activities and give them 2 suggestions as well

**HOW TO EXPAND:**
- Make your own tip sheet for your friends and family based
- Interview friends and family members asking the following questions
  - How would they describe their level of physical activity throughout the day?
  - What physical activities do they enjoy participating in?
  - What prevents them from being more active?

**ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:**
- Instead of sharing with a partner, you could share with a family member

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**
- What are the benefits of being more active throughout the day
- Do you see your family members finding ways to be active? In what ways? Where do you think they can improve?
- What makes it difficult to be more active?
BECOMING A SUPERHERO

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION: Let's explore our favorite superheroes! A superhero needs to have many skills and strengths to be able to save the day. Let's think about what these are and how much work goes into being a superhero.

SUPPLIES:
- Pencil or pen
- Paper
- Optional crayons or pencils

STEPS:
1. Pick your favorite superhero. What does your superhero's life look like? Explain what they do and how they save the day.
2. Form a hypothesis on why you think your superhero is able to do cool things and help save the world using the “If...Then...Because” format. For example:
   a. “If I eat ice cream before dinner, then my parents will be upset because I won’t have room for dinner that they made.”
3. Now think about a scene where your superhero saves the day. Describe it in detail. What skills and strengths did your superhero use to save the day? (For example: lift heavy things? Think of a strategy? Run fast?).
4. What would you have to be able to do if you were to train like them? What things would they have to teach you?
5. Share this with your class and listen to what they have to say about their superheroes
6. Brainstorm what all superheroes have in common and any similarities in what they do.

HOW TO EXPAND:
- Draw a picture of your superhero in your favorite scene
- Think about what body parts your superhero uses most – how can they make sure these are strong?
- If your superhero needed to train what exercises do you think they would need to do to make sure they could save the day – can you come up with a superhero workout?

ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:
- Instead of telling your class about superheroes, have your family member come up with one and talk about their similarities and differences together.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

● Why do you think we love superheroes?
● What are the changes you see in a superhero before and after they become one? Does their body look different? What are other differences you can think of?
● What is your favorite superpower and why?
DANCES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** Let's look at dances from around the world. Dance is a great way to express yourself and move your body and helps connect physical activity with culture. Dances require a variety of movements and skills.

**SUPPLIES:**
- Internet connection
- Writing utensils

**STEPS:**
1. Ask the following questions before moving on and hold a conversation around them;
   a. What are dances you have seen growing up? Are these dances special?
   b. What do you think makes some dances more difficult to do than others?
   c. How does dancing affect our health?
2. Watch [this video](#) showing dances from different parts of the world
3. Choose 2 of the dances you saw and the country they came from and write down 3 ways in which they are similar and 3 ways in which they are different.

**HOW TO EXPAND:**
- Look up one of the dances you found most interesting and see why this dance is important to that culture
- Look up a traditional dance from the culture of someone you know
- If you ever took a dance class, reflect on what you learned from it and what you liked about the movement – what muscles did you use most

**ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:** If you’re unable to access the internet, you can make up a dance, or ask someone in your family to teach you a dance they know.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**
- What are the different movements or skills you saw people using to perform the dance
- Are there dances you know of in your family? When are these performed and what do they mean to you
- What is the benefit of using dance as physical activity?
- What skills and muscles are used during the dances you watched?
COORDINATION

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION: Let’s learn about coordination and how this plays a role in being active.

Did you know? Coordination is being able to use different parts of our body smoothly and effectively. For example, hand-eye coordination involves being able to use our eyes and hand at the same time - for example to catch a ball. Overall, coordination is an important skill when it comes to physical activity.

SUPPLIES:
- Ball
- Timer
- Tape
- Writing utensil

STEPS:
1. Do the following activities below followed by the modifications listed afterwards. After each set of exercises note your observations in the differences
   a. For 15 seconds Stand on one leg, stand on one leg with one eye closed, stand on one leg with both eyes closed
      - complete then note observations of differences
   b. Toss a ball to a friend back and forth a few times with 2 hands, toss a ball back and forth with one hand, toss a ball back and forth on one leg
      - do all then note observations of differences
   c. Walk forwards 5, walk backwards 5 steps, walk backwards 5 steps with one eye closed
      - complete then note observations of differences
   d. Hop on one leg, hop on the other leg
   e. Stand next to a friend, tie your leg closest to them to their leg closes to you, and walk forward together with “3 legs”, compare this to walking normally next to each other
      - complete then note observations of differences
   f. Tape a straight line on the floor (about 5 feet), walk on the line like a tightrope, then walk down the line with one eye covered
      - complete then note observations of differences
HOW TO EXPAND:
- Give examples of sports you use coordination in and which parts of your body you are using
- Try this balance workout

ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:
- Follow this link which provides a list of top videos for seated/adapted exercises

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
- What does coordination feel like to you?
- What was the hardest exercise, what was the weakest?
- How do you think you can improve your coordination?
- What is coordination used for in our everyday life?
FAST TWITCH, SLOW TWITCH

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** Let’s learn about fast twitch muscles and slow twitch muscles and learn about the ones we use for different types of exercise and explore the differences in how we feel.

Did you know?
**Fast twitch muscles** are the ones we use for short bursts of powerful activity. These muscles have less blood vessels because they don’t need to be used for long periods of time, they get tired quickly. This would be an exercise like sprinting.
**Slow twitch muscles** are the ones we use for longer and slower endurance activities like long distance running, these don’t get as tired as quickly as fast twitch because they have lots of blood vessels but they do less intense activity.

**SUPPLIES:** None needed

**STEPS:**
1. Look at the following activities, think about the kind of movement they take, and write down whether or not they are fast twitch or slow twitch:
   a. Jumping
   b. 100 Meter Dash
   c. Playing tag
   d. Running a marathon
   e. Swimming laps for fun
   f. Seeing how high you can jump
   g. Going on a walk
   h. Riding your bike
   i. Lifting weights
2. Jog in place, walk, or do any other slow twitch activity that you are able to do for 3 minutes and record how you feel
3. Sprint, jump, lift a weight or do any other fast twitch activity for 30 seconds to 1 minute and record how you feel

**HOW TO EXPAND:**
Watch [this video](#) about fast twitch vs slow twitch muscles – what differences do you think you would feel between the two sports described in the video?
ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:
● This activity can be completed from home

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
● What was the difference you experienced in tiredness from fast twitch vs. slow twitch activities?
● How did your muscles feel?
● Can you think of the differences in training that someone has to do if they are a sprinter compared to a long distance runner?
YOGA AND STRETCHING

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION: Let’s practice yoga, which is a form of physical activity that involves strength, breath work and stretching, is a great and gentle way to get strong and stretch your muscles.

Did you know? Stretching is great for relieving muscle soreness, helps you feel more relaxed, and helps your body recover after exercise. Yoga is a great way to combine physical activity with stretching and is a great way to strengthen your muscles, improve your flexibility and balance, and calm your mind. It can even help you focus more in school.

SUPPLIES:
- Internet access
- Pencil
- Paper

STEPS:
1. Ask the questions below and hold a conversation around them:
   a. Have you heard of yoga before? What have you heard about it?
   b. What would happen if a person has bad balance? Why would this happen?
   c. What would happen if a person has good balance?
   d. What are two ways you could measure how well someone balances?
2. Draw a picture to represent your mood today
3. Watch [this video](#) and do this yoga class following the instructor (the video suggests a yoga mat but as long as you are on a soft surface, that will be fine).
4. After you do the yoga class, write a couple sentences about how you feel after finishing it.

HOW TO EXPAND:
What was your favorite pose from the class? What part of your body did you use for it and why was it your favorite?
Watch [this video](#) and learn about why it’s good for kids to do yoga.
ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:
- This activity can be completed from home
- For a seated yoga class follow [this link](#)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
- How is yoga different from physical activity that you have done in the past?
- What did you like about it and what didn’t you like about it?
- Why do you think stretching is good for you - how does stretching make you feel during and after?
BUBBLE WRAP RACE

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION: Let’s learn about force and how we use it when we exercise and in our everyday lives. A force is a push or pull on an object that happens when things interact. Kicking a ball is an example of force, as well as opening a door or just standing on the floor because gravity is a force pushing you into the ground. When we play sports we’re using force much of the time which is partly why it takes work and effort and we get tired. Let’s explore a fun example of force.

SUPPLIES:
- Wide and long roll of bubble wrap, approximately one sheet per 2 kids (wide enough for multiple people to walk on)

STEPS:
1. Do you think you can make the force of your feet on bubble wrap light enough not to pop them? Lay a long roll of bubble wrap out on the ground that will serve as the “course” of the race
2. Take off your shoes and race across the bubble wrap as carefully as possible - the one who pops the least amount of bubbles in the shortest amount of time wins
3. Next, race across the bubble wrap and try to pop as many bubbles as possible with each step
4. Answer the following questions:
   a. What did you have to change about how you raced to pop the least amount of bubbles? What about when you popped the most? What does that tell you about force?

HOW TO EXPAND:
- For a more in depth explanation of force watch this video
- Watch this video about force and motion. With an adult’s help, try out one of the experiments

ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:
- From home you can do the activity on your own and do steps 2 and 3 twice and see if you can improve each time

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
- Which forces do you use when you play your favorite sport?
- What about throughout the day? How many can you name?
CREDIT/SOURCES:

HIDDEN EXERCISES!


DANCES FROM AROUND THE WORLD


COORDINATION


FAST TWITCH, SLOW TWITCH

1. [https://www.healthline.com/health/slow-twitch-muscle-fibers](https://www.healthline.com/health/slow-twitch-muscle-fibers)

YOGA AND STRETCHING


3. [https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/more-than-just-a-game-yoga-for-school-age-children-201601299055](https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/more-than-just-a-game-yoga-for-school-age-children-201601299055)