



# wellness activity guide

Unit 2: Physical Activity

ages

**16-18**

**Oregon ASK**  
Afterschool & Summer for Kids Network



### SOCIAL MEDIA

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** Let's explore health culture on social media. Is it actual health? How do we compare it to what we learn about health and physical activity? In this activity, we'll learn to discern between what is marketed as "healthy" and what is scientifically proven as healthy.

**SUPPLIES:**

- Internet access
- Writing utensils
- Paper

**STEPS:**

1. Find 3 posts representing health culture on social media from people you know and 3 representations of health culture from influencers
2. Compare how these are represented - find and write similarities and differences in the content you see from people you know and influencers
3. Choose a post that you think is the most problematic and compare it to what you have learned about health and wellness in school or on your own. Do further research on the claims made by the posts you've chosen.
  - a. Write why you think it is problematic, compare it to what you have learned, and be prepared to share your reflections with others with you
  - b. Turn to a peer and take turns sharing your thoughts
4. What are social media health trends you see the most amongst your friends or people your age in general? Come up with a list of about 5 trends and share them with others in the class - did you come up with similar answers or different ones?
5. What is health information that you think is lacking from the social media posts you see? Come up with 2-3 topics.

**HOW TO EXPAND:**

Watch [this Ted Talk](#) about social media and mental health.

**ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:**

- This activity can be done on your own from home and instead of sharing your ideas with a classmate you can share them with a family member or friend

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### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Does social media impact how you take care of yourself?
2. What are positive and negative things you get from social media?
3. Do you follow influencers? If so, how do you think this impacts your life?

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### EXPLORING SPORTS

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** Let's explore the world of sports in this activity and gain an understanding of how athletic performance contributes to health.

**SUPPLIES:**

- Internet Access
- Writing Utensil
- Journal

**STEPS:**

1. Name 6 sports you have heard of, enjoy, or have seen.
2. Once you get a list going, discuss with others what aspects they know about the sport- specifically what movements and skills are used in each.
3. Once you have completed that list, do three basic movements from each sport (sprinting, throwing a football, shooting a basketball, etc.) and explore their similarities and differences
  - a. Which muscles do you use?
  - b. What types of movements are these?
4. Research online what is needed to improve these movements and why.

**HOW TO EXPAND:**

- Choose your favorite professional athlete from one of these sports and do research on what their training regiment looks like
  - What is included in their training outside of practice doing the sport itself?
  - Why do you think this is important?

**ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:**

- If done from home you can make your list on your own or collaborate with a friend over the phone or online

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- How do you think physical activity in sports affects the rest of your daily life?
- Why is getting physical activity from playing sports an effective way to stay healthy?

### TARGET HEART RATE

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** Let's learn about our target heart rate and what it feels like to do activity at that rate.

Did you know? Your target heart rate zone can help you get the most out of exercise and make sure you're working hard enough but not too hard during workouts.

**SUPPLIES:**

- Internet connection
- Timer
- Writing utensils

**STEPS:**

1. Use [this tool](#) to calculate your target heart rate
2. Brainstorm 3 activities that could get your heart rate up (jump roping, jogging, etc.)
3. Do each activity for a couple of minutes and after each, immediately calculate your heart rate using the instructions in the tool in step 1 (by measuring your pulse on your wrist for 30 seconds and multiplying by 2)
4. See if you can get your heart rate close to your target heart rate,
5. If you cannot get your heart rate close to your target heart rate, you may have to try more than once
6. Observe how exercising close to your target heart rate feels - when you exercise you can try to mimic these feelings to know you're in a good zone rather than measuring your heart rate every time:
  - a. What does your breathing feel like?
  - b. How tired do you feel?
  - c. Do you think you could maintain this exercise for a long

**HOW TO EXPAND:**

Watch [this video](#) about target heart rate zones for more information

**ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:** This activity can be completed from home.

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### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- Do you think you reach your target heart rate when you exercise usually?
- What do you think is the benefit of reaching your target heart rate?
- Which activities made it easier for you to reach your target heart rate?

### EXERCISE AND THE BRAIN

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** Exercise is not only important for keeping our bodies healthy but our brains as well. It improves blood flow and helps reduce inflammation which can enhance brain function. While you may not notice those changes as easily, exercise can also help improve our mood and moderate exercise may help improve conditions like depression. Let's explore how exercise impacts our mood.

**SUPPLIES:**

- Writing utensils
- Timer/Clock
- Journal

**STEPS:**

1. Spend 3–5 minutes writing about how you feel mentally. Use these questions to guide you:
  - a. How relaxed do you feel?
  - b. Are there certain things on your mind?
  - c. What is your stress level?
  - d. What is your energy level?
  - e. How happy or optimistic do you feel?
  - f. Do you feel restless or calm?
2. Think of moderate exercise you are able to do – this is something that gets your heart rate up but isn't so strenuous that you would be out of breath and couldn't hold a conversation.
3. Do this activity for 5 minutes – you can put on music or anything that will help you get up and moving
4. Without looking at what you wrote before, repeat step 1 and journal about how you're feeling.
5. Compare the two and discuss with a partner or group the changes you felt and why you think exercise is so highly recommended for mental health.

**HOW TO EXPAND:**

- Watch [this TED Talk](#) about the benefits of exercise on your brain and write down 3 benefits you didn't know about before

**ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:** This activity can be completed from home

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### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- Why do you think exercise helps your mood?
- What do you think is occurring in your brain as you are actively working out?
- What are the reasons you exercise - is mental health one of them?



### ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

**Activity Description:** Usually when we think of physical activity, we tend to think of doing a workout. However, an easy way to be active is to include more movement throughout our normal day. Let's figure out how to turn our day into a more active one and record our experience.

**SUPPLIES:**

- Writing Utensil
- Journal

**STEPS:**

1. Write out, as detailed as possible, your typical day. Include everything you can think of from getting to school to brushing your teeth.
2. Think of ways to include more physical activity during your day. This could include walking somewhere instead of driving, walking around while you talk to your friend on the phone, taking the stairs, etc.
3. Write out your updated typical day and share it with a partner to see if you can come up with other ideas together
4. Challenge yourself to follow your more active day for the rest of the day or tomorrow and write a short reflection on how your experience went.

**HOW TO EXPAND:**

Watch [this video](#) about living an active lifestyle. Are there any ideas from this that could help you be more active?

**ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:** This activity can be completed from home

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- Do you think that your life is generally active or sedentary?
- Why do you think that being more active throughout the day could be beneficial compared to relying on a workout?
- Who do you know who leads an active lifestyle? Describe how you can tell that they do?

### **BODY IMAGE AND MOVEMENT**

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** Issues with body image, which is how we view our own body, affect many people, especially teenagers and young adults. Unfortunately, much of the discussion surrounding fitness and fitness culture revolves around physical appearance and changing our bodies to look a certain way. However, we can still accept our bodies and enjoy exercise in a healthy way. Let's explore how body image affects us and how we can change our mindset to be able to enjoy exercise for reasons other than physical appearance.

#### **SUPPLIES:**

- Writing utensils
- Paper

#### **STEPS:**

1. Discuss with a partner on what the connection is between body image and exercise. Why do individuals struggle with body image?
2. Individually reflect on the following questions and write out a few sentences on your thoughts:
  - a. What does body image make you think of?
  - b. What comes to mind when you think of your own body image?
  - c. Does body image affect how you view exercise?
  - d. What are the reasons you exercise?
  - e. What are the reasons people you know an exercise?
  - f. How is exercise and body image shown on social media?
3. Turn to a partner or group and come up with 5 reasons to exercise that are not related to how you look
4. With the same partner or group, collaborate to come up with 5-10 kind and positive things you can say to someone who is either stuck in negative talk about their or someone else's body or who is discussing exercise only in the context of physical appearance.

#### **HOW TO EXPAND:**

- Watch [this video](#) about girls and women of different ages talking about body image.
  - Why do you think so many ages are affected by this?
  - What would you say to each age?
- Watch [this TED Talk](#) about pursuing perfection and how to practice self-care

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### **ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:**

- If doing this from home, do steps 2 and 3 on your own and discuss with a family member or friends over the phone

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- What contributes to poor body image? Do you think discussions around body image are helping this issue?
- What can be the consequences of poor body image? How do we help people who are struggling?
- When do you remember first becoming aware of your body? How has that awareness changed over time?

### EXERCISE AND BONES

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** We often forget that bone is living tissue. It is constantly being replaced, or remodeled, by cells called osteoclasts which break down aged bone, and osteoblasts which form new bone in its place. Bone reaches its peak mass typically by our early 20s and bone density declines with age, especially for women. This can lead to osteopenia or osteoporosis, which is a condition in which weakened bones can compromise our ability to. Along with a healthy diet, exercise is important for keeping our bones strong – the force from exercises with impact (like jogging, jumping, stairs, etc) and resistance training, like using weights, help build bone and increase your bone density. This means that as you get older you have a strong foundation and can protect yourself from bone injuries and osteoporosis down the line.

\*Important note: Exercises like biking and swimming are great for cardiovascular health, but are very low impact so they don't make your bones stronger.

#### SUPPLIES:

- Writing utensils
- Paper

#### STEPS:

1. Do research on exercises that involve impact and are good for your bones
2. Write a workout for yourself (at least 15 minutes long) that would help strengthen your bones and that you could do multiple times per week
3. Along with your workout, come up with a healthy bone plan for yourself to ensure that your bones are as dense as possible by the time you reach peak bone mass

#### HOW TO EXPAND:

Watch [this video](#) about bone remodeling

#### ADAPTATIONS/GOING VIRTUAL:

- These activities can be done from home

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Why do you think force impacts our bones?
- Do you know which foods help bones?

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- What would be some of the consequences of osteoporosis?
- Why do you think an eating disorder might put someone at risk for low bone density?

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### **CREDIT/SOURCES:**

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