

The information below may be used as a lesson plan to educate your child(ren). It is designed for children ages 7-9 years old. The purpose of this information is to educate and instill habits that lead to increased physical activity levels and teach valuable nutritional lessons that your child can use throughout their lives.

# Why Do We Exercise!

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- 1) What is exercise?
  - It is physical activity that conditions our bodies.
  - Help your child think of examples of activities that are considered exercise. (Ex. Playing tag at recess, walking, playing Frisbee, etc.)
- 2) Why do we exercise?
  - Exercise helps us **feel better, live longer** and have **more energy**.
- 3) What are some benefits of exercising?
  - Exercise can **decrease our risk of developing a serious health condition** later in life.
  - Exercising every day can help you **sleep better**. Children should get about 10 hours of sleep each night.
  - Adding regular exercise into your daily routine can help you **concentrate in school** too.

Can you guess **how long young people ages 5-18 should exercise a day?**

- Children and young people ages 5-18 should participate in **moderate intensity** physical activity for at least **60 minutes a day**. You may think that seems like a lot. What is moderate? Think of it as talking rather than singing!

## Exercise is Cool!

Children exercise all the time without even thinking of it. Just being active, for example when you run around outside or play kickball at school, are types of exercise. What else counts as exercise?

- Playing sports
- Dancing
- Push-ups
- Even Toe Touches!

When you exercise, you are helping build a strong body. Try to be active every day and your body will thank you later!

## Exercise Makes Your Heart Happy

Your heart is a muscle. It works hard, pumping blood every day of your life. You can help this important muscle get stronger by doing aerobic (say: air-OH-bik) exercise.

**Aerobic** means "with air," so aerobic exercise is a kind of activity that requires oxygen. When you breathe, you take in oxygen, and, if you're doing aerobic exercise, you may notice you are breathing faster than normal. Aerobic activity can get your heart pumping, make you sweaty, and quicken your breathing.

When you give your heart this kind of workout on a regular basis, your heart will get even better at its main job — delivering oxygen (in the form of oxygen-carrying blood cells) to all parts of your body.

What are some examples of aerobic exercises?

- Swimming
- Basketball
- Jogging (or walking quickly)
- Soccer
- Bike Riding
- Rowing

And don't forget that skipping, jumping rope, and playing hopscotch are aerobic activities, too!

### **Exercise Strengthens Muscles**

Another kind of exercise can help make your muscles stronger. Did you ever do a push-up or swing across the monkey bars at the playground? Those are exercises that can build strength. By using your muscles to do powerful things, you can make them stronger. For older teens and adults, this kind of workout can make muscles bigger, too.

Here are some exercises and activities to build strong muscles:

- Push-ups
- Pull-ups
- Tug-of-war
- Inline skating
- Bike riding

### **Exercise Makes You Flexible**

Can you touch your toes easily? Most kids are pretty flexible, which means that they can bend and stretch their bodies without much trouble. This kind of exercise often feels really good, like when you take a big stretch in the morning after waking up. Being flexible means you can move your arms and legs freely without feeling tightness or pain.

It's easy to find things to do for good flexibility. Can you name some examples?

- Tumbling and gymnastics
- Yoga
- Dancing, especially ballet
- Martial arts
- Simple stretches, such as touching your toes or side stretches

### **Exercise Keeps the Balance**

Food gives your body fuel in the form of calories. A calorie is a unit of energy. When you hear something contains 100 calories, it's a way of describing how much energy your body could get from eating or drinking it.

Your body needs a certain amount of calories every day just to function, breathe, walk around, and do all the basic stuff. But if you're active, your body may need extra calories. If you're not very active, your body won't need as many calories.

If you eat enough calories to meet your body's need, your body weight will stay about the same. If you eat more calories than your body needs, it may be stored as excess fat.

### **Exercise Makes You Feel Good**

It feels good to have a strong, flexible body that can do all the activities you enjoy — like running, jumping, and playing with your friends. But you may not know that exercising can actually put you in a better mood. When you exercise, your brain releases chemicals called **endorphins** (say: en-DOR-finz), which may make you feel happier. It's just another reason why exercise is cool!