**Move It!**

**Overview.** This is the second module of the HEALS toolkit. During this module students will learn about exercise and physical activity. This module, based on the Health Belief Model (Glanz, Lewis & Rimmer, 2002), is designed to:

1. Help students evaluate the serious health risks of inactivity
2. Increase awareness of the benefits of physical activity
3. Decrease the barriers to living an active life
4. Increase students’ confidence that they are capable of incorporating activity into their lives

**Learning objectives.** Students will be able to:

1. Discuss how much physical activity they should get to stay healthy
2. Identify methods to fit physical activity into their lives
3. Articulate the importance of physical activity
4. Describe the stress relieving benefits of physical activity
5. Describe methods to overcome barriers to being physically active

**Materials.** Computer with projector, chalk or dry erase board, internet access for students

**Getting ready.** Before educating your students about exercise and physical activity, you will need to:

1. Read the instructor background information.
2. Review all components to the lesson. You may want to print out the PowerPoint presentations and review the information in the notes section.
3. Decide if you will use some or all discussion topics, classroom lessons, worksheets and projects. Although it will be most effective if you teach all components, you may eliminate some if you face time constraints.
4. Go into the lesson ready to have interesting discussions and make fitness fun.

**Instructor background information.** In this lesson, students will learn about the benefits of exercise and physical activity. Exercise and physical activity are slightly different concepts. Exercise is structured, planned physical activity, usually used to improve fitness levels. Physical activity is a broader term; it can encompass any activity that requires movement, including tasks like walking to the grocery store instead of driving or housecleaning (Teague, Mackenzie, & Rosenthal, 2009). Young people who exercise frequently have better relationships with peers, are less likely to be depressed, use drugs less frequently, and achieve better grades (Field, Diego & Sanders, 2001).

**Discussion Topics**

**Fitting Activity Into Your Life. (20-30 minutes).** Ask “How much physical activity do you think you need each week?” Students will probably think they need much more than the minimums recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (2009). Share the following information:

* Experts recommend that healthy adults get 150 minutes of moderate activity each week (about 30 minutes a day/5 days a week). During moderate activity, you should be breathing harder and your heart should be beating faster, but you should still be able to carry on a conversation. Walking, biking at a casual pace, and playing with kids are all moderate-intensity activities.
* Instead of doing a lot of moderate-intensity activity, you can do about 75 minutes per week (15 minutes per day/5 days a week) of vigorous activity to stay healthy. When doing vigorous activity, you should be breathing too hard to talk to a friend. These are activities like playing sports, running, or doing aerobics.
* You can also do a combination of activities so you do not get bored. You also do not have to do the activity all at one time. You can walk for 15 minutes at lunch and then turn on some music and dance in your room for another 10-15 minutes at night. Or maybe you have a 1-hour basketball game each week. To make up the difference you can go to the gym and lift weights for another 15-30 minutes on another day. Keep in mind, these are just minimums. The more you exercise, the healthier you will be!

Ask:

* What activities do you think are fun?
* What are some ways to fit physical activity into your life?
* Why do you think fitting activity into your life is important?

*This discussion may be used to introduce Worksheet #3.*

**Stress Relief. (20 minutes).** *Follow up to worksheet #2.* Research shows that people who engage in physical activity are less likely to experience anxiety and depression than sedentary people. Scientists do not all agree on the cause of this, but most are in agreement that exercise leads to better mental health and less stress (APA, 2009). To complete the worksheet students were asked use to exercise to handle a stressful event. To have a discussion about this worksheet, consider asking:

* Does anyone want to share their experience with using exercise to relieve stress?
* What did you learn that might be helpful in the future?
* What unhealthy activities to manage stress could you replace with physical activity?

*This discussion can be a follow up to Worksheet #2.*

**Classroom Lessons**

**Stop Talking and Get Active. (As long as you feel it is appropriate and beneficial.)** To teach physical activity, you need to model it. Begin the class with a walk or a stretch. Order inexpensive resistance bands and conduct a few muscle conditioning activities. For demonstrations of resistance band exercises view <http://www.resistancebands.org/>. If available, bring in an outside fitness instructor to teach students activities that they can later replicate on their own.

The more enjoyable you can make exercise, the more likely your students are to incorporate it into their lives (Huberty, Ransdell, Sidman, Flohr, Shultz, Groshans & Durrant, 2008). Have fun with this lesson.

**Fast Facts about Physical Activity**. **(15 minutes).** See the attached PowerPoint presentation that will teach your students the basics. Feel free to add to it.

**Worksheets and Projects**

**Worksheet #1. Barriers to Exercise.** We all face barriers to physical activity—even those of us who exercise regularly. This worksheet should be completed in class as part of a group activity. In each group there should be at least one person who exercises regularly and one person who is sedentary. Ideally, four or five students should be in each group. To assign groups, ask anyone in class who exercises three or more times per week to raise their hands. If at least one out of every five students does not raise their hand, lower the threshold by asking for anyone who exercises at least twice a week. If need be, decrease the frequency of exercise until you have enough “exercisers.” These “exercisers” should serve as team leaders. Have students form groups around their team leaders. Distribute the worksheets to students.

**Worksheet #2. Stress and Exercise.** This worksheet should be completed out of class. *See discussion topics for suggestions for follow up.*

**Worksheet #3. Fitting Physical Activity into the Day.** Many people want to exercise, but somehow during the course of the day, they get distracted by other responsibilities. This worksheet is designed to help students find activities they enjoy and to schedule them into their day. *This worksheet compliments discussion topic #1.*

**Project #1. Creating a Center Garden.** Gardens offer opportunities for physical activity, a chance for students to learn about healthy food, and build a sense of community. In addition to health benefits, school gardens lead to environmental sustainability (Ozer, 2007). Many Job Corps centers already have successful center gardens. Visit the School Garden Wizard (<http://www.egarden.org/wizard/>) to learn how to create a successful garden at your center.

**Barriers to Exercise**

1. Appoint a note taker for the group.
2. List all group member names here.
3. **Member(s) of the group who exercise regularly:** Please answer the following questions. The answers should be shared with the group and the note taker should write them down.
   1. What motivates you to exercise?

* 1. What barriers do you face to exercise? *(Because we all face some barriers.)*

* 1. How do you overcome these barriers?

1. **Members of the group who do not currently exercise:** Share your barriers to exercise one at a time. Together with the group, you will work to identify strategies to overcome these barriers. There is a chart is on the back of this sheet to help you organize your thoughts. Use one line for each barrier. You do not need to complete the entire chart. Team members may use multiple lines if multiple barriers exist.
2. What did you learn from this activity?  *(Everyone might have a different answer. Jot down all that apply.)*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Group Member** | **Barrier to Exercise** | **Strategy to Overcome Barrier** |
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**Exercise and Stress**

We all experience stress in our lives. In Job Corps, you might be stressed out about classes, friends, a boyfriend or girlfriend, your future, or your family. Feeling stressed is normal. Sometimes people deal with stress in unhealthy ways, like drinking and smoking. Exercise is a healthy and effective way to handle stress.

Sometime this week, you will probably get stressed out. When you are stressed this week, try exercising. You can go for a walk, go to the recreation center, play a sport, or anything else you want to do. As long as it gets your blood pumping, it should help to relieve stress. After you have your stressful moment and you exercise, complete this worksheet.

1. This week, I was stressed out because:
2. Before I exercised, I felt:
3. I exercised by (name the activity):
4. After exercising I felt:
5. Next time I feel stressed, I will consider doing something active.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Not likely at all | Not very likely | Neutral | Somewhat likely | Very likely |

**Fitting Physical Activity into the Day**

You have a lot to do. You wake up in the morning, eat breakfast, go to class, go to lunch, and then to more classes. After the training day, you might have meetings or groups you attend, family to take care of, or you just want to relax. You pay attention to the world around you and you know that physical activity is good for you—but where is the time?

This worksheet will help you find activities you enjoy (or at least don’t hate) and will help you figure out how to fit them into your day.

Rate each activity:

L = Like it O = It’s o.k. H = Hate it

\_\_\_ Walking

\_\_\_ Jogging or running

\_\_\_ Biking

\_\_\_ Dancing

\_\_\_ Lifting weights

\_\_\_ Swimming

\_\_\_ Basketball

\_\_\_ Playing with kids

\_\_\_ Hiking

\_\_\_ Aerobics

\_\_\_ Volleyball

\_\_\_ Using gym equipment like the elliptical

\_\_\_ Playing a sport not listed

\_\_\_ Other:

In the chart below, see if you can add your activities up to at least 150 minutes over the next week. Remember, you don’t have to do it at one time. You can exercise for 10 minutes at lunch and another 20 minutes after the training day. You don’t have to exercise every day. It’s good for you body to take at least 1 day off each week.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| Activity #1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Activity #2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total minutes for the day |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Total minutes for the week:

How confident do you feel that you will be able to fit 150 minutes of activity into your life during the next week?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Very confident | Somewhat confident | Neutral | Not very confident | Not confident at all |

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