

Intro: Fun Fitness

Module
4

This module will help teach you about the many benefits of physical activity, such as weight management, stress reduction, increased energy, and lowered chances of getting chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes. We will also give you tips on how to “work-in” a “workout” and how to start a walking group in your community.

Fitness First

Did you know that adding physical activity to your life will improve your overall health and well-being? Being physically active by riding your bike, playing a sport, taking an exercise class, or taking a brisk walk, gives your body more energy and helps you feel less stressed.

Making exercise fun is the key to keeping it an ongoing part of your life. You don't have to join a sports team to engage in exercise - even doing something as simple as taking a walk outside counts as physical activity. Taking a brisk walk gets your heart pumping, and will help your circulation and burn calories too. In fact, walking is a great way to get moving. It doesn't require any special equipment except comfortable sneakers or shoes, and it doesn't cost anything. It's the perfect activity to do with a friend, and a great way to move your body more. Always remember to stay hydrated by drinking enough water before, during and after your workout.

Some people find it hard at first to set aside some time in their day for fitness. It helps to have some clear motivators or reasons that make doing the activity worth it, such as "I will feel less stressed after I take a walk." Walking with friends on your way to school, or to another destination is a great way to work-in a workout, and filling out the questions on the "Benefits of Physical Activity" handout will help you identify reasons why being fit is important to you.

Gab & Go Walking Club

The CYWH team developed a successful walking club for teen girls called “Gab & Go” to show young women that walking is fun when you walk with a friend and make it a social event. A walking club is a fun way to explore your neighborhood. You can even look for other fitness opportunities while you walk. Check out Activity #3 for step by step instructions on how to start your own walking club.

The following activities were created to help you gain a better understanding of the benefits of exercise. The focus is on walking since it doesn’t require any special equipment, but you can organize any physical activity. By the time you complete this module, you will be ready to develop, recruit, and market a walking (or *fitness*) club for teens in your community.

Fun Fitness

GOAL: Participants will gain an understanding of the health benefits of daily exercise such as weight management, lowering the risk of certain chronic diseases (*such as high blood pressure*), decreasing stress, and feeling more energetic.

ACTIVITIES & GAMES:

My Muscles & Stretching
Stepping Ahead & Benefits of Walking Discussion
How to Start a Walking Club
Gab & Go Walking Exercise
Gab & Go Trivia

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY:

Fitness In Your Community
(Activity 6)

ESTIMATED TIME:

60 minutes for activities 1-3, and an additional 45-60 minutes for the walking exercise and trivia game

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Wellness 101 handouts (*or website on laptop/LCD screen*), a large room with enough physical space to demonstrate stretching exercises, bottled water for each participant, chalk board and chalk, or poster board and markers (*for Stepping Ahead activity*). Providing a light, healthy snack for each participant is optional.

A computer with Internet access works best, so you can access the exercises online and display them on a screen. You can also use handouts from “Stretch It”, located at: www.youngwomenshealth.org/fitness/stretch_it.html.

OPTIONAL MATERIALS:

Inexpensive prizes for the Gab & Go Walking Trivia game, such as water bottles, pedometers, lanyards, pencils, etc.

HANDOUTS NEEDED:

The Benefits of Physical Activity
How to “Work-In a Workout”
Gab & Go sample flyer

PREPARATION:

Choose an icebreaker, copy handouts for participants, and make one copy of the Gab & Go Walking Trivia game, and one copy of the Gab & Go sample flyer to show as a marketing tool

DIRECTIONS FOR FACILITATOR

1. Start the activities you selected.
2. When the activities have ended, pass out the evaluation forms and collect them when participants have finished filling them out.

The Benefits of Physical Activity

Physical activity is good for you in many different ways. The key to enjoying the benefits of physical activity is making it fun and an ongoing part of your life. **Check off the benefits from the list below that are most important to you.**

- Build and maintain strong bones
- Improve self-esteem and body image
- Have more energy
- Release stress
- Manage weight
- Keep your immune system strong
- Build lean muscle and reduce body fat
- Keep your heart healthy
- Improve blood sugar levels
- Improve cholesterol
- Increase strength and flexibility
- Other

How to “Work-in a Workout”

Between school, work, friends, and family, you may be wondering how you can fit physical activity into your day. You can easily work-in a workout by making a few small changes to your daily routine, or by scheduling in specific times to exercise. For teens, the government recommends 60 minutes of moderate physical activity most days of the week.

The following tips will help you work-in a workout:

- Take the stairs whenever you get a chance to get your heart pumping and muscles working.
- As long as it is safe, get off the train or bus before your stop and walk the rest of the way.
- Walk to and from school.
- Go for a walk with your friends or family.
- Put down the remote, and get up any time you want to change the channel.
- Walk around while you are talking on the phone.
- Put your favorite music on and dance along.
- Offer to help your parents with chores (*wash the car, take out the trash, sweep the kitchen floor, etc.*).

1. Check off the activities you plan on doing this week from the list above.

2. Now, be creative! Write down one new way to work-in a workout.

My Fitness Worksheet

Now that you've learned about the benefits of physical activity and ways to work-in a workout, it's time to set up your own weekly fitness plan. The fitness worksheet on the next page will help you plan your fitness schedule so that exercising becomes part of your weekly routine.

Fill in the calendar with the activities that you've chosen from the list on the 'How to Work-in a Workout" handout, or other ways that you can be active throughout the week. Think about which activities will work best on which days and what are good times for participating in different activities. Remember to balance stretching, toning, and moderate to vigorous activities. You don't have to do all three in one day, and it's best to schedule your week so that you're not doing only one type of exercise.

After you've created your fitness schedule on this worksheet, it's a good idea to mark the days that you plan to exercise on your own calendar or planner. Put this worksheet someplace where you'll see it on a daily basis, as a reminder of what's coming up for the rest of the week.

By thinking about what motivates you to exercise and selecting fun fitness activities, you've taken a big step towards becoming healthier and fit. Be proud of yourself, and keep up the good work!

My Fitness Worksheet

Day & Date	Activity & Location	Duration (Length of Participation)
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

Pre Activity: Quiz Your Brain

You will need a computer or laptop with internet access for a classroom setting to show the exercises, or you can give the participants the website address so that they can take the fun quizzes from home or school before the session. Have participants go to www.youngwomenshealth.org and click on “Quizzes”. They should then scroll down to “Nutrition and Fitness” quizzes and click on “How Fit Are You?” Suggest that each participant review the answers and recommendations they receive and share them with the group.



Activity 1

My Muscles & Stretching

GOAL: This activity teaches participants about their muscles, and how to stretch safely.

AGES:

12-18

become familiar with the names of the muscles, but they do not need to memorize them.

ESTIMATED TIME:

15 minutes

3. Before you try some of the stretching exercises with the group, explain that stretching is a way to prevent injury and improve flexibility.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

A computer with internet access, or print outs from Wellness 101

PREPARATION:

If you know that you won't be presenting the materials on the computer, print out all three views of "My Muscles" and the three stretching exercises

4. Log on to: www.youngwomenshealth.org/fitness/stretch_it.html.

For starters, you can demonstrate the three stretching exercises: Quadricep Stretch, Lunge Stretch and the Back Stretch. You can also print these pages ahead of time and hand them out to each participant. You should never stretch cold muscles, so we suggest that you have participants engage in a light activity (*such as jumping jacks*) prior to stretching.

DIRECTIONS FOR FACILITATOR

1. Explain to the participants that they will be learning about fun ways to stay fit. Remind them that the Food Pyramid recommends 60 minutes of physical activity (*moderate intensity*) most days of the week, preferably daily for general health. Tell the group that they will first review "My Muscles", then the "Stretch It" and "Tone It" sections of Wellness 101.
2. Show all three views (*front, back and side*) of "My Muscles". The group should

Activity 2

Stepping Ahead & Benefits Of Walking Discussion

GOAL: This short brainstorming activity gets participants thinking about fitness and the benefits of walking.

AGES:

12-18

ESTIMATED TIME:

15 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Chalkboard and chalk, or poster board and markers

DIRECTIONS FOR FACILITATOR

1. Ask participants to brainstorm about the benefits of walking.
2. Ask for a volunteer to list the suggestions on the chalkboard or large poster board.

Answers may include:

- Gives you more energy
- Decreases stress
- Improves self-esteem and body image
- Helps manage weight

3. Ask the group what they could say to motivate the girls in their community to walk?

Have a volunteer write the responses on the chalkboard or poster board.

Answers may include:

- Walking can be fun-especially when you walk with friends or family members.
- You probably won't realize you are getting exercise.
- Walking is good for bone health.

4. Post the list of motivators that the group came up with. Participants may use this list later when they design a marketing campaign for their own walking club.

Activity 3

How To Start A Walking Club

GOAL: This is a brainstorming and arts & crafts activity that helps participants think about how to recruit girls for their own neighborhood walking club.

AGES:

12-18

ESTIMATED TIME:

1 hour or longer (see *variation*)

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Paper, poster board, pens, markers, sample Gab & Go flyer

PREPARATION:

Brainstorm about why encouraging teens to walk on a regular basis is good for their health.

Make a copy of the sample Gab & Go flyer.

VARIATION:

The arts & crafts part of the activity can be done in a separate session from the discussion.

DIRECTIONS FOR FACILITATOR

1. Ask for a volunteer to take notes.
2. Explain to the group that you will be brainstorming about ways to start a walking club.
3. Remind participants that they should be respectful of everyone's ideas. As a facilitator, you should encourage all ideas and opinions unless the suggestions are inappropriate.
4. Begin the discussion by asking the group, "Who would be likely to participate in a walking club?"
5. Ask participants what day/time would work best for a walk. If there are many different suggestions, you may need to take a vote. Ask how often they think they could meet?
6. Talk about where members could walk. Reinforce that the walking path needs to

be in a familiar and safe area.

7. Now discuss how you can recruit members (*ex. word of mouth, posters, emails, newsletter, flyers, etc.*).
8. Pass out poster paper, markers, and a sample of the Gab & Go flyer.
9. Have participants work together to create posters that will promote the first walk.
10. See sample poster (next page).

The CYWTT Invites you To Take Part
In a Free and Fun Activity!

Gab and Go Walking Club



Join The CYWTT Peer Leaders For:

- ★ A Fun Walk In your Neighborhood
- ★ A Healthy Snack
- ★ A Chance To win A Prize

Date: June 15th Time: 3:30-5:00pm

Meet At: the CYWTT Resource Center
For More Information Call:

617.355.2994

Activity 4

Gab & Go Walking Exercise

GOAL: This is a group walking activity that reinforces the previous lessons, and helps participants realize that exercise can be fun—particularly when done with friends.

AGES:

12-18

Bring sunscreen for participants, or ask them to bring their own.

ESTIMATED TIME:

30-60 minutes

DIRECTIONS FOR FACILITATOR

1. Explain to the group that you will be going on a walk. Tell them where you will be walking, and the approximate distance. Ask if anyone feels that they are unable to walk due to physical limitations. To calculate how much time the walk will take, you can estimate approximately 20 minutes per mile.

You should find out ahead of time if anyone is allergic to bees and if so, ask if they have an EpiPen® (*a special medicine for people with severe allergies to certain things such as peanuts, bees, etc.*) with them.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Gab & Go Walking Trivia Game, bottled water, sunscreen, cell phone, prizes (*optional*)

PREPARATION:

Make one copy of the Gab & Go Trivia Game. Before you begin your walk with your group, you should plan a walking route that is consistent with the fitness level of the group, and in a safe and familiar area. Be sure to walk during daylight hours.

Offer a bottle of water to each participant, or have each person bring his/her own water. Have a planned snack ready for participants when they return.

Schedule the walk ahead of time so participants can plan on arriving in comfortable and appropriate clothing for the weather. Every walker should wear sneakers or comfortable shoes (*not flip-flops or shoes with high heels*).

2. Have participants choose a partner or walking buddy.
3. Review and demonstrate the stretching activities that you learned in Activity 1.

4. Make sure everyone drinks about a cup of water *before* the walk. Explain that water is necessary to keep their body hydrated.
5. Suggest that participants apply sunscreen.
6. Give each participant a bottle of water to take with them or have them bring their own.
7. Now you are ready to start your walk. As you are walking, you can play the Gab & Go Trivia game. You may want to keep track of the winners if you are going to give out prizes when you return.
8. When you are done walking, encourage participants to drink more water, and consider serving a light, healthy snack.
9. Give out prizes for the Gab & Go Trivia game (*optional*) and thank participants for coming.



Gab & Go Walking Trivia

How much water should you drink before you walk?

You should drink about a cup or 8-12 ounces of water before you begin walking. Don't wait until you finish your walk to re-hydrate. Remember, drink water before, during and after your walking workout. If you drink too much water before you start walking, you may feel uncomfortable.

What should you wear on a walk?

Comfortable sneakers and loose fitting clothing are the best things to wear when going out for a walk.

How long is a marathon?

Approximately 26 miles, or about 42 kilometers.

True or False: Daily exercise such as walking will lower your risk of heart disease, and type 2 diabetes.

True. Researchers have discovered that daily walking can actually lower a person's risk for heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

When should you replace your sneakers?

Experts recommend that you should change walking footwear when the treads or bottoms of your sneakers wear down, or about every 3-6 months, if you walk a lot.

True or False: You don't have to worry about your posture when you are walking.

False. You should be concerned about your posture while you are walking. Stand tall while relaxing your shoulders, to help prevent lower back pain.

True or False: Racewalking is an Olympic sport.

True. Racewalking first appeared in the Olympics in 1904.

Name a walk for charity, such as:

Avon 2 Day Walk
American Cancer Society Relay for Life
Great Strides Walk for Cystic Fibrosis

What is the name of the device (*thing*) that counts your steps?

A pedometer or Fitbit®. Both devices count your steps by measuring the motion of your body. Many people feel that their Fitbit® challenges them to walk further each day.

About how many steps are in a mile:

- A) 100 C) 2000**
- B) 1000 D) 5000**

C. It takes approximately 2000 steps to walk a mile.

What is the best brand of sneakers to walk in?

There is no best brand! The best kind of walking footwear fits well, is comfortable, and supports your arches. Your sneakers don't need to have a fancy brand name and you really don't need to pay extra for designer footwear.

What is the best fluid to drink before, during, and after a walk?

- A) Juice C) Sports Drink**
- B) Milk D) Water**

D. Water is the best fluid to drink before, during, and after a walk. Drinking water is the best way to keep your body hydrated.

Activity 6

Fitness In Your Community

GOAL: Participants will learn about fitness facilities that are accessible for teens in their community. This activity is divided into two sessions. The first session involves explaining how to complete the Fitness Reporting Form as a take-home assignment. The second session involves bringing the group back together to discuss their findings.

AGES:

12-18

ESTIMATED TIME:

Session 1: 20-30 minutes

Take home assignment: 1 to 2 hours

Session 2: 1 hour

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Fitness Reporting Form, Helpful Abbreviations Form, pens/pencils, yellow pages (*or other printed business directory*) and/or computer with internet access, and a telephone

PREPARATION:

Copy one Fitness Reporting Form, and one Helpful Abbreviations Form for each participant (*It is best to make a double sided copy so that abbreviations will be on the flip side of the Fitness Reporting Form*)

SESSION 1

DIRECTIONS FOR FACILITATOR:

1. Explain to the group that the purpose of this session is to prepare for the take home assignment in which participants will do their research and fill out the Fitness Reporting Form. The participants will use the form to document different areas in their community in which young people can participate in fitness activities.
2. Suggest that the participants use one or more of the following resources to conduct their research: yellow pages (*or another business directory*), the internet, a telephone.
3. Pass out a Fitness Reporting Form to each participant.

4. Explain how to fill out each column.

Column A: What is the fitness facility?

In column A, participants should write down the name of the fitness facility that they are evaluating. The example on the Fitness Reporting Form is “Boys and Girls Club”. If there is time for participants to evaluate more than one facility, they should list one per row in column A.

Column B: What types of activities are offered at the facility?

In column B, participants should write the full names of the activities offered, or use the abbreviations found on the Helpful Abbreviations Form.

Column C: Are the activities indoors or outdoors?

Participants should state if the fitness activities are offered inside, outside, or both. For example: If the fitness facility has an indoor basketball court, the participant would write “I”, signifying that this is an indoor activity.

Column D: What are the hours?

Participants should write in the hours of operation of the fitness facility. For example: A local community pool is open from 9am-6pm in the summer.

Column E: Is there a fee?

Participants should simply write yes or no. If there is a fee, participants should note how much it costs for young people to use the facility.

Column F: Is there an instructor?

In this column, participants should indicate if there is an adult or fitness instructor that supervises the activities that are being offered.

For example: If the facility has a swimming pool, is there a lifeguard on duty? If aerobic classes are offered, is this activity supervised by a fitness instructor?

Column G: How can you get there?

Participants should write in how they would get to this fitness location. For example: Is this location within walking distance? Would public transportation or a car be necessary?

Column H: What ages are allowed?

Have participants write in the age range of people that can use this facility. For example: 12-18 or “all ages”.

Column I: Would you recommend this location to a friend?

This question is subjective and can be answered yes, no, or unsure. Participants can explain their answer later on when the information is discussed with the group.

5. Provide your mobile number (*or e-mail address*) so that participants can reach you in case they are having difficulty with the assignment.

SESSION 2

DIRECTIONS FOR FACILITATOR:

1. Encourage participants to share the information from the Fitness Reporting Form with other members of the group.

For example: Participants can sit in a circle and take turns presenting their findings.

2. Pay special attention to the “would you recommend to a friend” column and ask the group the following questions:

- Why *would* you recommend this fitness facility to a friend?
- Are there any reasons why you would *not* recommend this fitness facility to a friend?

3. Ask the group if they think there are enough fitness facilities in their community.

4. Ask what kind of facilities are missing.

5. As a follow-up activity, suggest that participants contact a city counselor or representative in their community whom they could talk to about the need for a specific fitness facility, such as a playground, soccer field, or pool.



Fitness in Your Community

FITNESS REPORTING FORM

Thank you for agreeing to be a fitness reporter. As a reporter, you will be doing detective work. Your mission is to find locations in your community where young people can participate in fitness activities. Just complete the form below. Congratulations on helping to make fitness count!

Fitness In Your Community

HELPFUL ABBREVIATIONS

A = Aerobics

B = Biking

BB = Baseball

BKB = Basketball

C = Cheerleading

D = Dancing

DDR = Dance Dance Revolution

FH = Field Hockey

H = Hiking

KB = Kick Boxing

N = Nautilus

P = Pilates

RB = Raquetball

SK = Skating

S = Soccer

SA = Step Aerobics

SW = Swimming

SKI = Skiing

ST = Stretching

T = Tennis

TO = Toning Exercises

TR = Track

V = Volleyball

WII = Wii Fit/Wii Sports

WL = Weight Lifting

Y = Yoga

Program Evaluation

Please help us to improve our presentations by giving us your comments. Thank you!

Topic:

Date:

Presenters:

1. Did you like the presentation? Yes No

Why?

2. Do you think the presenters were prepared? Yes No

3. Do you think this topic was valuable? Yes No

Why, or why not?

4. List two important points that you remember from the presentation.

1.

2.

5. List one thing you plan to change (*or you will do differently*) because of what you learned during the presentation.

6. Do you have any suggestions for the speakers to improve the program?