

Interrupting Prolonged Sitting with Activity

InPACT

FAMILY TOOLKIT



CHILDHOOD DISPARITIES
RESEARCH LABORATORY
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



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Who We Are



Our Collective Vision

The *Interrupting Prolonged Sitting with ACTivity (InPACT) at Home Family Toolkit* is the premiere resource in the state of Michigan to strengthen school-home connections around children's health, wellness, and achievement.



Our Mission

To empower families to move together, think together, and be together, and to practice health behaviors through the common thread of physical activity.



Our Core Value

We believe engaging in regular physical activity is one of the most effective ways to promote mental and physical health, well-being, and achievement for children, families, and communities.

About this Toolkit

Move. Think. Be.



Children's well-being improves when schools and families work together. The InPACT at Home Family Toolkit makes these connections through movement. This program is meant to help you enhance your family's wellness – you can Move Together, Think Together, and Be Together!

One of the most important things we can do is encourage families and schools to work together. Collaborating can enhance your child's well-being and success in school and at home! Family time can boost your child's motivation, attention, and self-confidence; school time can improve your child's learning and achievement.

During COVID-19, the University of Michigan and community partners created a family toolkit to help families keep children healthy and successful. We soon found that this toolkit could also be useful for children and families beyond the pandemic! It can prepare your family to build a healthy lifestyle based on a few key principles:

- **Move Together:** Being physically active as a family
- **Think Together:** Solving problems as a family
- **Be Together:** Creating a strong family team

This toolkit was inspired by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. First, there are "physical" needs for survival: we need food, water, and shelter. Once we have those, we can move up the ladder to "safety" needs like the security of our family, our property, and our health. Next, we can move up to "love and belonging" needs that we get from family, friends, and partners. When those needs are met, we can move to self-esteem needs like confidence, success, and respect. Only once all that is in place can we move up to the "top" goal: self-actualization. That's when we reach our full potential to be the "best we can be." This model shows that to be healthy and successful, needs should ideally be met in a certain order — and it's hard to skip steps!

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

The InPACT at Home Family Toolkit supports each need while moving through the levels. We've also added a foundational module on which the house sits.



Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370–396.



Making InPACT at Home Work for Your Family

The InPACT at Home Family Toolkit was created with “**equality**” in mind. In other words, it provides everyone with the same information and resources. Of course, a single program can’t meet everybody’s needs; each family or community is different and has unique needs. So now, instead of focusing on equality, we are making changes to guarantee “**equity**.” Equity means offering what each person, family, or community member needs – and these needs aren’t the same for everybody. A 15-year-old who loves to play baseball has different needs than a 10-year-old who enjoys video games and piano. Families living in places without sidewalks, parks, or bike paths have different needs than families who have access to these things. Look at the picture of the bicycles below; they show why equality isn’t enough to support all families. Basically, one size does not fit all.



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To make InPACT at Home work for your family, you'll need to look at the things that affect your opportunities to move together, think together, and be together. Many factors can influence your family's chances to be physically active: your own values around being active, resources in your community, or your family and friends. Figuring out what you have and what you need to succeed is a step towards equity! To effectively use the InPACT at Home Family Toolkit, consider the questions below to help you plan. Grab a piece of paper and write down the answers as a family.

List each member of your family and what physical activities they like best.

- Ask each person why physical activity is important to them. Write that next to their favorite activities.
- Talk about it. Are there big differences in what everyone likes? Are there differences in why each person thinks physical activity is important?
 - If your family is just starting to become more physically active, you might want to start with the **Healthy Choices** module.
 - Anyone in the family who wants to maintain their physically active lifestyle might find the **Personal Best** module helpful to start.

How does your family schedule time to be physically active? Is it part of your family's routine?

- Is it on a calendar?
- Is the routine posted for the family to see?
 - If physical activity is not part of your family's schedule or routine, you might want to start with the **Schedules and Routines** module.

Brainstorm as a family and list all the people (family, friends, community groups) who encourage you to be physically active together.

- In what ways do they offer support?
 - If you notice you don't have a lot of outside support, you can focus on building support within your family unit. You might want to start with the **Family Team Building** module.

Brainstorm as a family and list all opportunities to be physically active at school or at work.

- Do you have chances to be physically active at work? How?
- Does your child have chances to be physically active at school? Do they have physical education class, recess, and classroom activity breaks every day?
 - If your list doesn't include many ways to be physically active at work or at school, then this InPACT at Home Family toolkit will be a great resource for your family! You can either:
 - ✱ Follow the modules as laid out in the *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs* house illustration,
 - ✱ Or, start with the module that meets the needs of your family most, or is of most interest to you.

Consider your community environment.

- Do you have sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, streetlights, or other things that encourage physical activity?
- Is it safe for you and your child to be active where you live?
- Are there opportunities for outdoor activity? Are there parks or recreation centers to use?

If there aren't many places to be physically active in your community, try some [InPACT at Home videos](#), along with the Family Toolkit.

Having these discussions *before* you begin using the InPACT at Home Family Toolkit will help your family. Your answers will guide you to parts of the toolkit that make the most sense for you and your family. The program has been designed to be equitable in this way.

InPACT at Home Program Components

The InPACT at Home Family Toolkit is just one component of the InPACT at Home program. InPACT at Home is a home-based physical activity program designed to motivate students and their families to get moving for 60 minutes a day. Below are the other program components of InPACT at Home which are included in this Family Toolkit.



Website (inpactathome.umich.edu)

Consider creating a free account on our website to access all of our program resources, including those listed below. InPACT at Home emphasizes the importance of physical activity along with health-related concepts such as social emotional learning, family cohesion, physical health, and more!



Videos

Once you log in, you can locate videos in the "Topics" section of the website. The InPACT at Home program offers 172 videos covering topics such as cardio, strength, mindfulness, sports skills, and nutrition. Instructors from across Michigan will coach your children about proper form on a wide-range of movement activities, all while encouraging the whole family to participate.



Activity Cards

Activity Cards are in the "Resources" section of the InPACT at Home website and can be used to make physical activity more enjoyable and fun. There are 250 Activity Cards to browse covering topics such as lifelong skills, flexibility, cardio, strength, with a buddy, and mindfulness. Many include physical activities, and some contain pictures that model the activity for better understanding.

Public Television Broadcasting

The InPACT at Home program has partnered with the Michigan Learning Channel to broadcast our exercise videos to children across the state of Michigan. The Michigan Learning Channel provides educators and families with free PBS videos and printable resources designed to ensure all kids succeed. Learn more at www.michiganlearning.org/show/inpact-at-home/



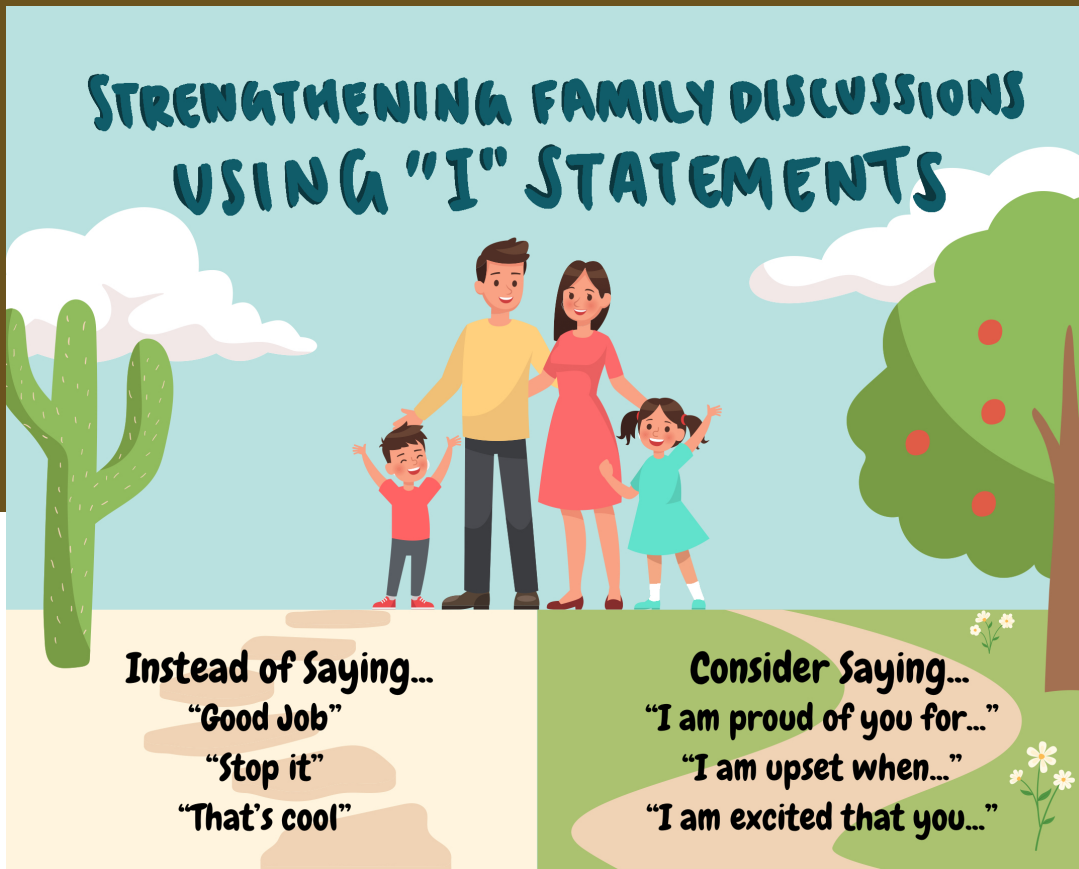
Building A Foundation



BUILDING A FOUNDATION

Family Discussions

Real Talk for Strong Families



Artwork by Hailey Choi

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Nathan Maynard is a renowned youth advocate and educational leader, co-authoring the award-winning book "Hacking School Discipline." He co-founded BehaviorFlip, a pioneering restorative behavior management software. A Purdue University behavioral neuroscience graduate, Nathan has over a decade of experience in restorative practices. Recognized as "Youth Worker of the Year," he's devoted to aiding underserved youth in Indiana's juvenile justice system. Nathan played a pivotal role in launching Purdue Polytechnic High School in 2017, serving inner-city Indianapolis students. Passionate about tackling the school-to-prison pipeline, he champions trauma-informed behavioral strategies, enhancing positive school environments.

What's Nathan's favorite physical activity?

My favorite physical activity is dancing.

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Please note:
The InPACT at Home **Family Discussions** module doesn't adhere to the "Move, Think, Be" format. Instead, it offers guidance that helps you start important talks with your family!

Why are meaningful discussions important?

Engaging in meaningful discussions with our children can be tough! Think about when your child is anxious, overtired, stressed, or hungry – it might seem almost impossible to get more than one word out of them.

But what about when something big happens, like the loss of a loved one, a move, or divorce?

Being able to have hard conversations is important. The more meaningful discussions we have, the easier it is to build a healthy, happy, resilient family.

Collective commitments

To feel comfortable with discussions, everyone must feel safe. [Click here](#) to watch a video to help you create 3–5 collective commitments together as a family. This activity will help give your kids an even playing field so they feel open to talking to you. These commitments can help you set expectations that guide later conversations.

Rules or expectations?

Rules are a list of things we should not do. They can be discouraging, negative, and unhelpful in bringing families together. Children, as well as adults, will try to get as close as possible to a rule without breaking it. This can cause frustration.

Expectations refer to the things we hope to get from a behavior. We can use a positive structure to set expectations, which encourage responsibility! Let's look at the example on the next page .



Let's say one of your family rules is: **No Cell Phones at the Dinner Table.** So, what happens if your child has an iPad? A Kindle? An iPod? A notepad to write a letter? What about anything that isn't a cell phone? It could be distracting, even if your child isn't technically breaking the rule. But what was the intention of setting that rule in the first place? It was to keep distractions to a minimum so your family has a chance to talk, bond, and enjoy each other's company – instead of using a device that saps this precious time.

Now let's try an expectation: **Be Respectful.**

If someone at the dinner table is using their cell phone, iPad, gaming system, or a similar item, they are not showing respect to others at the table. Here's an opportunity to have a conversation about what respect means and what disrespectful behavior looks like. Ensure there's no room for excuses such as, "Well, technically, this isn't a cell phone." Your objective is clear: to see your family engaging with each other without distractions.

“The Talk”

We've all had to talk to our kids about uncomfortable topics. These conversations can be hard. They might have even created a dynamic where everyone tries to avoid similar discussions in the future.

[Click here](#) to watch a brief video that describes how to have tough conversations while keeping them as smooth as possible.

It may be helpful to do a physical activity before and after "The Talk." Movement can actually help you regulate; physical activity has been shown to reduce stress-related chemicals in the body. At the same time, it increases "feel-good" chemicals. Here are some ideas for physical activities your family could do before and after tough conversations:

- Go for a 30-minute walk.
- Take a short family bike ride.
- Have a dance party in your living room.
- Try kids' yoga together ([Cosmic Kids Yoga](#) has some fun videos).
- Climb on monkey bars, rocks, and other fun obstacles that may be nearby.
- Have a relay race walking forwards, sideways, and backwards or hopping and skipping.
- Do some [InPACT at Home videos](#).

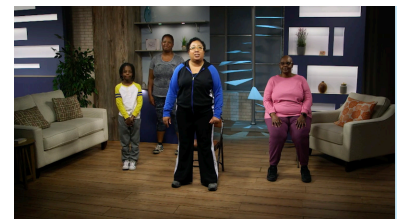
QUICK DEFINITION GUIDE

Regulate

Controlling our body, mind, and thoughts by being intentionally aware of how we are feeling.

Co-Regulate

Helping someone else regulate themselves by showing how you regulate yourself. As a process, co-regulation means sharing our calm and giving clear, supportive directions.





Three guidelines for a successful “Talk”

1. Address the topic directly

Being indirect or “beating around the bush” can cause confusion – and confusion creates frustration. It’s important to be respectfully direct. For example, if you need to tell your child about a divorce and you start by saying, “I have some good news and bad news...” or “Mommy and Daddy are taking a little time apart,” your child will experience several unnecessary emotions. Children’s ages and processing abilities need to be considered in this case, but it’s still essential to be direct. For example, you could explain to your child that “Mommy and Daddy have talked for a long time and have made a decision that is the best for us all. We are going to be getting a divorce, which means...” Your child will then experience emotions that are appropriate for this situation. Plus, you’ll get to better support them during this process! These kinds of circumstances are hard on parents, too, and you’ll want to stay regulated throughout.

2. Don’t be an expert and embrace feelings

Ask questions about what your child is thinking and feeling now. Accept where they are emotionally. You want to create a sense of collaboration by respecting each person’s feelings. You can do this by asking questions and using positive talk during the conversation.

When you hear about your child’s feelings, acknowledge these emotions as okay. Many children, especially those in middle school, are still discovering whether their reactions are normal. You want your child to be able to feel whatever they feel as you have “The Talk” with them so you can co-regulate.

3. Get moving

As mentioned, try to engage in physical activity before “The Talk.” People involved in the conversation might be anxious. If so, you can do simple movements during the discussion, too. You could even try taking a short walk while having “The Talk” so you can focus on the topic at hand.



More tips for talks

Things to avoid during the “Talk”

- Minimizing feelings
 - “Most people feel... during this.”
 - “Don’t feel like that – it will be okay!”
 - “This isn’t sad – it’s exciting! Think about...”
- Not asking questions
- Not hearing everyone out
- Talking too much and not allowing for pauses
- Being an expert on what’s being talked about, even if you are an expert on the topic

Try to do these things during the “Talk”

- Add pauses to give people time to process
- Speak slowly and directly
- Be present in the moment (in your mind and body)
- Plan check-ins after the “Talk” to allow for deeper processing
- Offer support

Building a family community

Sometimes kids can seem distant even if everyone lives in the same house. Here are five conversation starters to help with family time!

1. What kind of animal do you relate to most?
2. What meme do you relate to most?
3. What are you looking forward to the most today?
4. What is a win from today?
5. Use an emoji to describe your mood.

Check out the list at the end of this module for more conversation starters.

“I” statements

Occasionally, you might upset someone despite having the best intentions. But it’s possible to speak in ways that move discussions towards success. “I” statements help us develop empathy, and they can help us avoid conflict.

What are “I feel” statements?

These statements are centered on how you feel about something when communicating a message.

They help you avoid situations involving blame or conflict. And, "I feel" statements create healthier conversations! You can use these kinds of statements to explain how you're feeling and why you feel that way. They should help you express emotions more clearly as well. Here are some examples of "I feel" statements.

EXAMPLE 1:

Old Way – "I've told you three times to stop talking. Please stop."

New Way – "I feel overwhelmed and confused when you keep talking while I'm talking. Do you need help from me right now?"

EXAMPLE 2:

Old Way – "Good job!"

New Way – "I am so proud of you for working hard in class this week. I know you've been giving it your all even when it seems overwhelming!"

EXAMPLE 3:

Old Way – "Stop teasing your brother."

New Way – "I was disappointed and sad when I heard you tease your brother over not doing well on an assignment. What's going on with you two?"

Your turn

Come up with two positive "I feel" statements and one redirection "I feel" statement!

Positive starter examples:

- I am proud to see/hear...
- I am excited that you...
- I am appreciative of you/your...
- I feel grateful for...

Redirection starter examples:

- I feel upset by...
- I am frustrated that...
- I am so sorry that...
- I am having a hard time understanding why...

When, what, and where?

So you've had a tough conversation – now what? This video will help you think about some things you might not have considered. The tips should move you from an awkward conversation to one that can strengthen relationships. [Click here](#) to watch!

Now it's time to practice the skills that you've learned in this module. To get started, take the 20-day InPACT Family Discussions Activity Challenge.



Welcome to the Family Discussions Challenge!

Each day there is a workout for your family to complete. This helps with regulation.

During or after being active, use the daily prompt to start a family discussion.

The 20-day challenge aims to enhance your family's conversational skills. Studies suggest that it takes 21 days to form a habit and over 90 days to establish a lasting lifestyle change. Our hope is that by completing the 20-day Family Discussions challenge, your family will continue practicing the most effective activities until they become a lasting and positive habit.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Week 1	FRIENDSHIP Start strong with this Family HIIT video and encourage each other as friends! Prompt: How would a friend describe you?	STRENGTHS Embrace your inner superhero with this Power Punching video! Prompt: If you could have any superpower, what would it be?	TRAVEL Travel around your space with this Gymnastics Floor Skills video. Prompt: If you could go anywhere, where would you go?	FRIENDSHIP Support each other through this Total Body Exercise routine. Prompt: What are 3 traits you look for in a friend?	FEELINGS Get active and have fun with this Fitness Drumming video. Prompt: What color describes how you are feeling?
Week 2	FEELINGS Have fun with this Basketball Skills video. Prompt: Share something that makes you happy!	STRENGTHS Focus on your strengths with this Positive Self Messages workout. Prompt: What is something that you are good at?	FEELINGS Work hard through this Family HIIT workout! Prompt: Describe how you feel about a topic of your choice using weather terms (ex: sunny with clear skies).	THE FUTURE Relax today with this Yoga and Stretching routine. Prompt: What is something that you are looking forward to?	FEELINGS Challenge yourself with this Volleyball Skills video. Prompt: What is something that scares you?
Week 3	FRIENDSHIP Get stronger together with this Lower Body and Abs HIIT routine. Prompt: Talk about a time when a friend hurt you and how you handled it.	THE FUTURE Try something new and complete this Water Bottle Fitness workout. Prompt: What do you want to be when you grow up?	FEELINGS Complete this Stretches and Exercises video. Prompt: What makes you feel loved?	FAVORITES Work on your balance skills with this Gymnastics Beam Skills video. Prompt: What is your favorite candy? (tell a special memory while eating it!)	FAVORITES Complete this basketball Ball Handling workout. Prompt: What's your favorite season?
Week 4	MEMORIES Have fun with this Gymnastics Strength and Conditioning video. Prompt: What was the best part of your day today?	FAVORITES Complete this Just Move workout! Prompt: Describe your favorite character from a book.	STRENGTHS Work on your physical strength with 100 Push-Ups . Prompt: What's your star power?	FAVORITES Keep it simple with this Total Body Cardio and Strength workout. Prompt: What would be the best pet and why?	THE FUTURE Test out your sports skills with this Sports Theme workout. Prompt: What sport that you have never tried would you like to try?

Conversation Starters

The authors of [Hacking School Discipline](#) have compiled a list of conversation prompts generated from their journeys to numerous schools throughout the United States. These prompts are great conversation starters that teachers have used with their students and can be easily used to initiate family discussions!

1. What kind of animal do you relate to the most?
2. What meme do you relate to most?
3. What are you looking forward to the most today?
4. What is a win from today?
5. Use an emoji to describe your mood.
6. How would a friend describe you?
7. If you could have any superpower, what would it be?
8. If you could go anywhere, where would you go?
9. What are 3 traits you look for in a friend?
10. What color describes how you are feeling?
11. Share something that makes you happy.
12. What is something that you are good at?
13. Describe how you are feeling about...using weather terms (ex: sunny with clear skies).
14. What is something you are looking forward to?
15. What is something that scares you?
16. Talk about a time when a friend hurt you and how you handled it.
17. What do you want to be when you grow up?
18. What makes you feel loved?
19. What is your favorite candy?
20. What's your favorite season?
21. Talk about your best day.
22. Describe your favorite character from a book.
23. What's your star power?
24. What would be the best pet and why?
25. What is your favorite sport?
26. What sport that you have never tried would you like to try?
27. What is your favorite tradition?
28. Would you rather... (infinite possibilities).
Ex: Would you rather be able to fly or be invisible? Ex: Would you rather play on the beach or in the snow?
29. What other language would you speak if you could?
30. What are your favorite pizza toppings?
31. What is your favorite ice cream?
32. If you were a zookeeper, which type of animal would you like to take care of?
33. What is your favorite part of the school day?
34. What Disney character are you most like?
35. If you were a teacher, what would you do the same or differently than what you've experienced as a student so far?
36. If you could change one thing about your school, what would it be?
37. What law would you make or change if you could?
38. I am an expert at...
39. What is something you want to be better at?
40. Favorite TV or movie character?
41. If a traffic light is yellow, should you slow down or speed up? Why?
42. If you had to eat one type of food for a week, what would it be?
43. Who do you admire?
44. What is your favorite thing to do at recess?
45. I work best when....
46. I sometimes feel jealous when...
47. I feel happy when...
48. I feel angry when...
49. Sharing is good because...
50. When do you feel lonely?
51. When have you been congratulated and how did it make you feel?
52. What song makes you happy?

53. What's your favorite word?
54. What's your favorite dessert?
55. What chores do you have?
56. What was the last thing you ate?
57. Talk about a time when you had fun at school.
58. What do you want to "be" today?
Ex: A friend, leader, listener, etc.
59. Who was the funniest character that you've read about or seen in a show or movie?
60. Describe how you feel using a food item.
61. Talk about a time when you felt proud of yourself.
62. What makes you smile?
63. What type of animal best describes your mood today?
64. If you had a million dollars, what would you buy first?
65. Talk about a time when you gave up.
66. Talk about a time when you persevered.
67. What is the best advice you've ever received?
68. When I get stuck on a math problem, my next step is to...
69. How do you remember information best for tests?
70. What is your favorite subject?
71. What is your favorite store to visit in-person and/or visit online?
72. How do you deal with stress?
73. Favorite app?
74. What have you never tried that might surprise others?
75. What is your pet peeve?
76. What strategies do you use to manage your emotions?
77. Do you agree with the phrase "money can't buy happiness?" Explain.
78. Is a glass half empty or half full?
79. Would you rather have \$100 right now, or get \$10 a week for 15 weeks?
80. What are your strategies for survival if zombies take over the world?
81. Would you rather be able to run fast or jump high?
82. What is one of the biggest issues facing kids/teenagers today?
83. What does it look like and feel like to be supported?
84. Where do you feel safest?
85. What is an activity, sport, or person that you feel is underrated?
86. What is something (appropriate) that no one knows about you?
87. What is the best fast-food place?
88. What do you fear?
89. What jobs do you think will not be around when you enter the workforce?
90. What jobs do you think will exist in the future?
91. What skills do you think technology can't replace?
92. What makes you feel pressured?
How do you deal with it?
93. What frustrates you?
94. Should the toilet paper be placed to pull from the top or bottom?
95. What does freedom mean to you?
96. How do you make a decision?
97. What was a tough decision you had to make?
98. Are you a night or morning person?
99. What makes you sad?
100. What is mental toughness?
101. What is your opinion about social media?

[Join educators](#) from all around the world to find more tips and discuss important topics related to:

- Social-emotional learning
- Restorative practices
- Trauma-informed practices
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Mindfulness

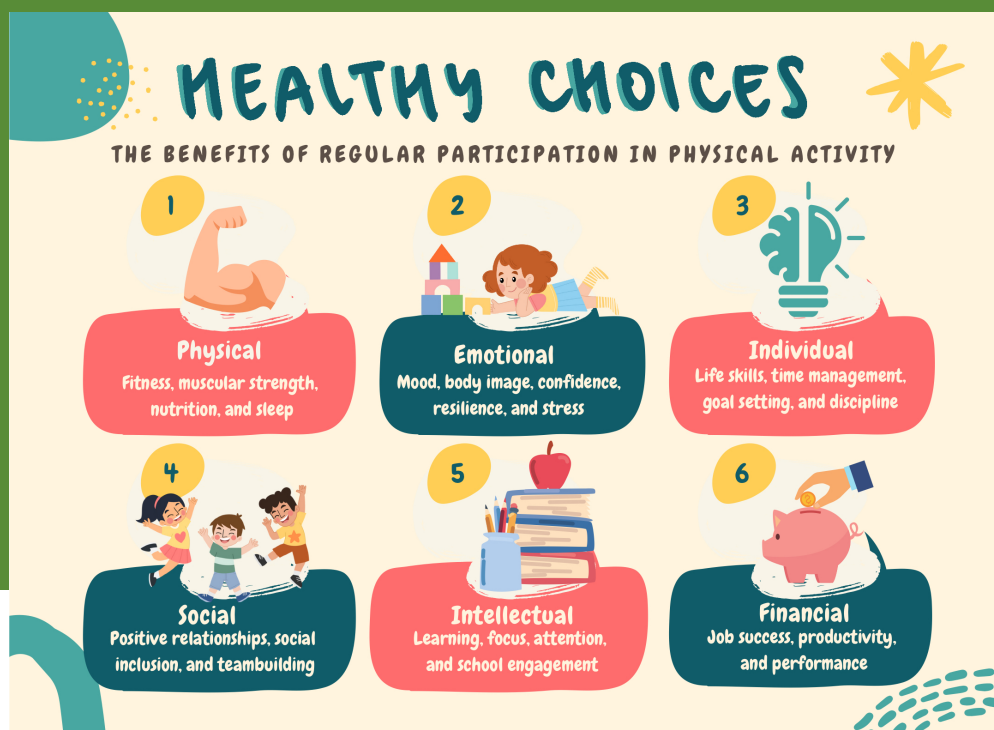
Physiological Needs



PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS

Healthy Choices

Taking Back Control of Your Health and Life



Artwork by Hailey Choi

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Evilia Jankowski, a nurse with over 40 years of experience, served as a school nurse for 29 years in Arizona and Michigan before becoming Michigan's State School Nurse Consultant. A former President of the Michigan Association of School Nurses, she collaborated with national health stakeholders like the CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics. Her projects include the School Asthma Management Program and School Emergency Triage Training. Evilia emphasizes the importance of standardized training and resources for school nurses in meeting students' needs. She believes this approach ensures children are healthy, safe, and ready to learn, making it an exciting time for school nurses.

What's Evilia's favorite physical activity?

My favorite physical activities include aqua zumba, officiating women's college basketball, swimming, and I have been Jazzercising since 1990!

Dr. Rebecca Hasson is an Associate Professor of Movement Science in the University of Michigan School of Kinesiology. As Director of the University of Michigan Childhood Disparities Research Laboratory, Rebecca uses her expertise in exercise physiology, implementation science, and health equity research to improve the health and well-being of children and their families across the state. She has formed statewide partnerships to change classroom physical activity practices and policies and empower families to practice health behaviors through the common thread of physical activity. Rebecca has made it her mission to get children, teachers, families, and communities across the state of Michigan moving again.

What's Rebecca's favorite physical activity?

My favorite physical activities include running, yoga and zumba classes!

Taking back control

There are times in life when things can feel a bit out of control. Although it's true that many things are outside of our control, there are several things that we can control. What are they? Choices! A choice is "the act of selecting or making a decision when faced with two or more possibilities." We make choices from moment to moment that determine who we become, what we do, and what we experience. Our choices can give us hope for the future or produce regret and despair. They also play an important role in our health. Everyone makes decisions that can either positively or negatively affect their well-being. Take a minute to reflect on some of the choices your family has made over the past year to protect your physical and mental health.

Choosing movement

Being physically active most days of the week is a great choice! Moving in ways that raise your heart rate is one of the healthiest choices you can make. Research shows that regular physical activity prevents disease and strengthens the immune system. So, by choosing to move more, you're improving your health and well-being.

The next three sections of this module give you and your family tips for making healthy choices that include moving together, thinking together, and being together!



MOVE

What motivates people to move more? Researchers have identified three drivers. People are usually motivated to make healthy choices under the following circumstances:

- When they feel they have the knowledge and skills needed to improve their health
- When they can take direct action that will result in real change
- When they have a sense of belonging and attachment to other people

We'll learn more about how to use these motivators in this module. They can help you and your family continue making healthy choices!

Motivator #1: People are motivated to act when they feel they have the knowledge and skills to improve their health.

Did you know that there are many benefits to moving more and playing sports? These benefits are not just limited to physical health. Check out the figure below:

Physical health

- Muscular strength
- Lower blood pressure
- Lower blood glucose
- Motivation for better nutrition
- Better sleep

Emotional health

- Improved mood
- Greater resilience
- A sense of feeling good
- Effective stress management
- Individual health
- Life skills
- Better time management
- Schedules and routines



Individual Health

- Life skills
- Better time management
- Schedules and routines

Social health

- Improved team building and relationship skills
- Better self-regulation

Intellectual health

- Increased focus, attention, and learning

Financial health

- Lower health care costs later in life
- Greater productivity

List of benefits adapted from Bailey R, Hillman C, Arent S, Petitpas A. Physical activity: an underestimated investment in human capital? J Phys Act Health. 2013 Mar;10(3):289-308.

Encouraging physical activity: empowering children to move more inside and outside of school

Schools help your child to be physically active. Kids can be active before, during, and after school. Programs like physical education help kids learn how to be active for a lifetime.

You can support your child's movement at home, too. Try establishing your own family physical activity routine. You can be physically active in the evening, on weekends, and over breaks. When families move more, they gain health benefits together!



THINK

Motivator #2: People feel motivated to make healthy choices, like moving more, when they can take direct action that will result in real change.

So, think about ways to move more as a family every day. The first step in creating a family action plan is knowing your story!

Knowing your story: Lessons from the past

Think for a moment about your family. How far back can you track family members? For how long did you have relationships with members who have since left you? Are you able to track all living family members – grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings? What comes to mind when you think about these people? Do you have pleasant memories of them and times you spent together, such as playing, dancing, cooking, or working together?

Are there also some sad memories, such as when family members became ill or couldn't play, dance, or do fun things with you anymore? Did anyone have heart conditions, diabetes, or kidney problems? In the past, we tended to see our parents' health challenges as our inheritance: if our parents had type 2 diabetes, then we were more than likely to have it, too. We simply accepted that. But did you know there are choices you can make to help prevent that outcome?

If you can, take a minute to complete this [Family Health History Tree](#). It can help you consider the choices you'd like to make to help avoid the same illnesses in your family.

Whether you know your family history or not, here is an area where you have some control. By focusing

on being physically active, you can change the story under your name on the family tree! Making movement a family goal will also help your family change their health outcomes; you can better avoid chronic health conditions that might have kept other family members from doing the things they loved.

Sometimes we get an illness that we can't prevent. Physical activity can improve the symptoms of many chronic conditions. Plus, physical activity will better prepare you to fight off sicknesses like the flu or common cold. Take charge of your health today by incorporating movement into your daily life!



Writing your story: Changing the future

So how can you know if you and your family are ready to make the change to move more? Take this three-question quiz to see. You also have the option to retake and modify the quiz to evaluate your readiness to increase physical activity.

1. In a typical week, how many days do your kids engage in physical activity for 60 minutes or more? Circle your answer.

ZERO ONE TWO THREE FOUR FIVE SIX OR MORE

If you answered between ZERO and FOUR, go to Question 3.

If you answered FIVE or SIX OR MORE, go to Question 2.

2. For how many months have your kids been getting 60 minutes of physical activity five or more days per week?

- Fewer than six months ("They have started to change")
- Six months or more ("They've changed")

If your children have been active for fewer than six months, congratulations on starting a change! What is your plan to keep them motivated?

If your children have been active for six months or more, congratulations – keep going! You can skip Question 3.

3. Do you think your kids will start doing 60 minutes of physical activity five or more days a week in the next six months?

- No, and they don't intend to in the next six months. ("They don't need to change")
- Yes, they intend to in the next six months. ("They might change")
- Yes, they intend to in the next 30 days. ("They will change. Really!")

Your answers to these questions can help you figure out if your family is ready to start moving more. Use the tips in the following table to help your family move more.

Willingness to Change	Tips for Making the Change
"We don't need to change"	Need more proof that movement is medicine? Check out this 9-minute video by Dr. Mike Evans .
"We might change"	Make a list of the pros and cons of moving more. Identify any obstacles that are making it difficult for your family to change.
"We will change. Really!"	Goal setting is a great first step towards making a change. Start small and then increase over time. And don't forget to write down your goals!
"We have started to change"	Reward your successes; revisit your goals and update them as needed.
"We've changed"	Keep adding more movement into your family's life.

Source: Prochaska JO, Velicer WF. The transtheoretical model of health behavior change. Am J Health Promot. 1997 Sep-Oct;12(1):38-48.

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Knowing yourself: What are your family's favorite physical activities?

Is your family in the “We might change” or “We will change. Really!” stage? If so, then it's time to create a family physical activity action plan. First, ask your family what their favorite physical activities are. This is an important step in making your action plan. Start putting together a list; maybe you'd all enjoy a family walk after dinner, where you talk about your day. Or perhaps everyone could make a friendly competition out of an active video game. You might play basketball together at the park. Everyone in the family can have a chance to pick their favorite activities from the [InPACT at Home](#) Healthy Choices Activity Challenge Calendar. Assembling a list will let everyone have input into the plan. Once you've finished the list, you can decide as a family what your plan will include.

It will then become part of your routine as a family.

Some family members may have tried a new activity in the past that didn't go well. Maybe they felt discouraged or even embarrassed, whether because of low fitness levels, poor body image, or being teased. Maybe they didn't have a plan. Or the activity simply might not have been fun. Make sure that moving together is based on having a plan and having fun! One of the best predictors of staying active is enjoying it.





Motivator #3: People are motivated to make healthy choices when they have a sense of belonging and attachment to other people

Knowing your community: What are the available options?

It's important to be aware of safe opportunities for physical activity in your community. That information can help you create a family action plan to move more. Not all communities are the same, and not all neighborhoods have safe spaces where you can be active. So, to start, think about where you live. Do you frequently see children playing outside? Are there sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, and streetlights? If so, then you live in a “walkable” neighborhood. If you aren't in a walkable neighborhood, are there other safe spaces to be active? Have you ever explored your community resources? Many places have community centers that offer use of facilities such as community pools, tracks, parks, gyms, or fitness centers. Local school districts often have open gym nights or access to school playgrounds or ball fields. Some fitness businesses hold free introductory events where families can join at discounted rates. City and county parks have playgrounds and frequently conduct special events to attract families. Did you know that [Michigan](#) is home to 74 state parks, 12 state forests, and 5 national parks? You can find a nearby city park at the [Michigan Recreation and Park Association](#) website. Also, in Michigan, we have access to the Great Lakes as well as many recreational inland lakes. Make sure your family is [safe when around or swimming in water](#).

If moving more in your neighborhood is not an option and you don't have a park or recreation center close by, then the [InPACT at Home exercise videos](#) may be the perfect solution to get your family moving. These workout videos provide fun, easy ways to do short workouts with little to no equipment in the comfort of your own home. You'll be surprised what these moments of movement can do for you and the rest of your family.



As a parent or caregiver, there are many ways you can support your child with physical activity. Check out the options below:

1. **Emotional support:** Encourage your child to be physically active. Talk to them about the activities they enjoy, and watch them do physical activities. Praise them when they complete an activity.
2. **Logistical support:** Help your child get to activities, and make sure your child has the equipment needed to participate.
3. **Informational support:** Give your child positive and helpful feedback. When you can, provide instructions on how to do a physical activity, such as playing baseball.
4. **Co-participation:** Be physically active with your child. Sign up for activities with your child when you can.

Involvement is crucial to your child's success. By being involved, you'll help build your child's motivation and confidence. Moving more together will improve your relationship with your child and you'll be supporting their learning, development, and health.





Getting started: Moving together at home and in your community

Here are some realistic, safe options for moving more in your home and community:

- If your family has a safe trail or route, go for a walk! Walking is the most common one across every age group.
- [InPACT at Home](#) exercise videos can help you move more indoors. Start by watching one video before dinner. To view these videos on television, find your local public broadcasting station.
- Create a chore chart with rotating tasks. Chores like sweeping and mopping count towards your activity minutes.
- If you live in an apartment building, put on your headphones and climb some stairs.
- Whether your child is younger or older, there are many indoor activities that you can do together to move more. Make family game time active. Activities like “Head and Shoulders, Knees, and Toes,” “Simon Says,” and others will help young children learn as they MOVE.
- Movement games like “Twister,” “Red Light, Green Light,” “Red Rover,” and others can keep everyone laughing, which is also a healthy behavior.
- Hold a family dance night where you dance to each family member’s favorite song or learn a new dance together, like line dancing, the Cupid shuffle, the cha-cha slide, or even square dancing! The more your child sees you move, the more they will MOVE.

What if my family encounters a setback? We started exercising and then stopped!

What happens when you or your child skip a day of movement and then that day turns into a week, a month, or multiple months? Don't worry; we've all been there. Missing one day of movement isn't the end of the world. But if you and your family continue to find reasons not to exercise, or if someone experiences an injury that prevents them from being active, then you all could be at risk of reverting back to an inactive lifestyle. Check out the suggestions below to help prevent activity relapse.

1. Retake the "willingness to change" quiz on page 25.
 - If you're in the "We don't need to change" stage, remind yourself of the benefits of exercise. Your family started exercising for a reason. Reconnect with your "why"!
 - If you're in the "We might change" stage, take another look at the issues that are preventing your family from moving more. Develop a plan to overcome those obstacles.
 - If you're in the "We will change. Really!" stage, set goals based on your family's current activity levels.
2. Find a new hobby that involves movement; it's another great way to get back on the activity wagon. Figure out how to make your family activity routine more fun.
3. Finally, find small windows of time to increase your movement. Research shows that moving for as little as one minute at a time can have numerous mental and physical health benefits.





Live in a way today that will help you thrive tomorrow!

Take a moment to watch this [one-minute video](#) and ask yourself what the last 10 years of your life will (or might) look like. The video goes on to ask you a series of questions: “Will you be quick enough for a game of tag with your grandchild? Strong enough to embrace every moment? Will you grow old with vitality or get old with disease?” It’s time to decide. By choosing to move more, you and your family can take a big step towards improving your health and well-being. You can even change your future!

Now it’s time to practice the skills that you’ve learned in this module. To get started, take the 20-day InPACT Healthy Choices Activity Challenge.

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20-day InPACT Healthy Choices Activity Challenge

The 20-day challenge is designed to improve your family's ability to make healthy choices. Research indicates that it takes 21 days to develop a habit and more than 90 days to create a lasting lifestyle change. Our goal is that after finishing the 20-day Healthy Choices challenge, your family will persist with the most beneficial activities until they become enduring and positive habits.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Week 1 Welcome to the Health Choices Challenge! Each day this week, try out a new type of movement by completing the video or activity listed!	Prepare for the month of activity ahead by completing this Range of Motion Workout as a family.	Practice your balance and strength skills with this video focused on Yoga and Stretching .	Enjoy some relaxing activity with your family by completing this Pilates/Yoga Strength and Conditioning Workout .	Complete this Family HIIT Workout . Afterwards discuss what the hardest move was for each of you!	Get ready to perform and complete this <i>Frozen</i> -themed Dancing and Karaoke video.
Week 2 Continue working out and bonding as a family this week with the listed videos and activities!	Start the week off strong with this Family Workout .	Work on your flexibility today with a workout focused on Stretches and Exercises .	Work on your lower body strength by completing this Leg Day Workout as a family.	Do some fun stretching as a family with this Gymnastics Warm-up and Stretching video.	Get your family together for a family game night and play Fitness Monopoly .
Week 3 This week, you get to choose which activity you do each day! Try to agree on one as a family or try out both options.	Choose one of the following: Kickboxing video Or Arm Circuit video	Choose one of the following: Power Punching Or Fitness Drumming	Choose of the following: Soccer Skills Or Ball Handling	Choose one of the following: Movement Flow Or Coach Says	Choose one of the following: Full Body Workout Or Cha Cha Slide
Week 4 For the final week, you get to pick the activities! Choose a family activity for each day within the category specified and have fun!	Choose an upper body activity to complete as a family.	Choose your own family yoga poses. Pick some favorites you've previously done or try out some new poses together!	Choose your own family leg or lower body focused activity to complete.	Choose your own family cardio activity. Try out a long walk, playing a game outside, or even having a competition!	Choose your playlist for a family dance. Then have some fun by having a dance party to the songs you choose!

PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS

Nutrition

Eat the Rainbow

FOOD IS FUEL

FOOD IS PACKED WITH NUTRIENTS
(MACRONUTRIENTS & MICRONUTRIENTS)

EAT FROM THE CENTER OF THE FOOD TARGET

WELL-BALANCED FOOD DECISIONS -->
MORE ENERGY & BRAIN FUNCTION

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FEEDS OFF OF
NUTRITION



Artwork by Hailey Choi

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Natalie Queen has been teaching for more than 20 years. She has a master's degree in school guidance counseling. She also has undergraduate degrees in emotional impairment, family and consumer sciences, and physical education. One of Natalie's passions is teaching fitness classes. Her top priority is her family (Lance, Jade, and Jude). Officiating women's college basketball is another of her favorite activities. If Natalie could give one piece of advice, it would be "Just keep moving!"

What's Natalie's favorite physical activity?

My favorite physical activities include aqua zumba, officiating women's college basketball, and swimming.

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Healthy eating

Nutrition plays a crucial part in our lives; it's what gives us energy. We want to fuel our bodies with nutrient-rich foods so we can go the extra mile. Youth need to understand the importance of nutrition, as it directly impacts our ability to be active. Consuming nutritious foods enhances our energy levels, supporting better physical activity both during workouts and throughout the day. [Click here](#) to watch an introductory video about the importance of healthy eating.

The next three sections of this module give you and your family tips for developing healthy eating habits that include moving together, thinking together, and being together!

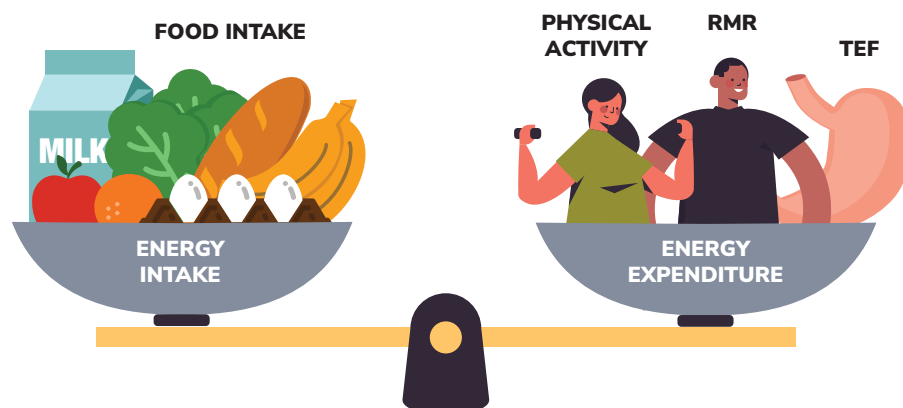
MOVE

Every family should have a balance. But what does "Energy Balance" mean? Well, energy is just another word for "calories" or the food you eat. Energy balance is like keeping track of the calories you take in from eating and drinking and comparing it to the calories your body uses during activities, when resting (resting energy expenditure), and during digestion (thermic effect of food).

So, what you eat and drink is called "Energy Intake," and what you burn through physical activities is part of "Energy Expenditure." Everyone's balance is different, and it varies for each person in a family. It's important to work with your doctor to figure out a healthy balance for you and your child.

There are many benefits to maintaining a healthy "Energy Balance":

- Stronger muscles and bones
- Lower chance of getting type 2 diabetes
- Lower blood pressure
- Lower blood cholesterol levels
- Better mood



Physical activity recommendations for kids

Children need 60 minutes of play or moderate-to-vigorous activity every day, but it doesn't have to occur at once. Every little bit adds up! It also doesn't have to happen in a fitness/gym setting. We can freely move our bodies in any manner that gets our heart rate up, feels comfortable and enjoyable! [Click here](#) to learn more about feeling good through physical activity!

When we are physically active together, we create great memories. We also establish healthy habits. What is your family's favorite activity to do together? [Click here](#) to find a few activities and steps that will help you and your family start down a path towards a healthier lifestyle!



THINK

Let's take a moment to think together about nutrients. Nutrients are the foundation of nutrition. Every food we eat has nutrients, which can be separated into two types: macronutrients and micronutrients. Both macronutrients and micronutrients encompass "Energy Intake".

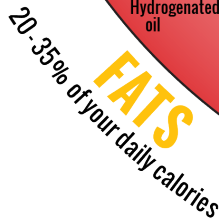
Think of **macronutrients** as the main nutrients that make up food. These types of nutrients can be further divided into three subgroups: carbohydrates, protein, and fat.

Micronutrients represent a major group of nutrients that our bodies need. These nutrients include vitamins and minerals. Vitamins help with things like energy, the immune system, and blood clotting. Meanwhile, minerals help with things like growth, bone health, and fluid balance. [Click here](#) to learn more about the difference between macronutrients and micronutrients.

Food targets and you

What do you think of when you see the On Target Living Food Target picture on the next page? What foods do you eat most? This target is filled with many options. Ideally, try to eat from the center outwards whenever you can. For instance, instead of drinking apple juice, eat an apple. The whole fruit can help your digestive system stay healthy. Remember, it doesn't hurt to try something new. [Click here](#) to learn about A-to-Z fruits and see if there's a new fruit you'd like to try. If a fresh fruit or vegetable is not in season or is outside your food budget one week, try frozen, canned, or dried options.

Trying different foods can be fun. Some foods can lead to greater energy, more brain function, and a happier mood. Food choices can also help prevent chronic diseases. Eating a variety of foods and balancing our energy improves our health by giving our bodies the nutrients they need."



We're always using the brain: it controls our thoughts and movements, breathing, heartbeat, and senses. We even use it while we sleep! This hard work requires "fuel," which comes from the foods we eat – and it's what's in the fuel that is most important. Put simply, what we eat directly affects the structure and function of the brain and, ultimately, our moods.

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[Serotonin](#) also promotes healthy digestion, sleep, bone health, and blood clotting.

[Click here](#) to learn more about how the food you eat affects your brain.

Eating the right foods is critical when we're being active. Eating well-balanced meals and/or snacks can help us get the calories and nutrients we need to fuel our daily activities – including regular exercise. Below are some nutrition tips for mealtimes.

Breakfast

The first meal of the day is the most important! According to an article published in [Harvard Health Letter](#), eating breakfast regularly has been linked to a lower risk of [diabetes](#) and [heart disease](#). Starting your day with a healthy meal can help replenish your blood sugar, which your body needs to power your muscles and brain.

Suggestions for breakfast:

- Try oatmeal, oat bran, or other whole-grain cereals that are high in fiber.
- Throw in some protein, such as milk, yogurt, or chopped nuts.
- If you prefer toast, choose whole-grain bread. Then pair it with an egg, peanut butter, or another protein source.

Lunch/Dinner

Not one menu suits everyone. When possible, try to go for whole grains, veggies, and fruits. Keep in mind, people have different dietary needs based on things like how active they are, their gender, and their age.



**Suggestions for lunch and dinner:**

- Half of your plate should be made up of non-starchy vegetables.
- Try adding leafy greens and raw salads.
- Each meal should include a source of lean protein.
- Try using fats such as avocados, olive oil, nuts, and seeds.

Snacks

Snacks are smaller meals that help us keep our energy up during the day. Snacks should be eaten a couple hours each after breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Snacking is a great way to satisfy hunger and get all the vitamins and nutrients our bodies need. As with everything, moderation is the key to smart snacking. Check out our [InPACT at Home videos](#) with healthy snack recipe demonstrations.

Suggestions for smart snacking:

- Prepare healthy snacks in advance.
- Keep healthy snacks on hand.
- Make your snacks interesting.
- Satisfy cravings with healthier approaches.
- Read serving size information.



Quick tips: Help your family eat healthier

Any food hack that works for you is a win! Life gets busy. Planning and prep-ping meals/snacks in advance will save time and set your family up for success. Involving your whole family in the cooking process is important. Even though that might take more focus, the memories are worth it! Your kids will also gain a sense of accomplishment from helping out. The [InPACT at Home website](#) has many kid-friendly recipe demonstration videos you could try. You can also test out some of these healthy recipes that your child is sure to enjoy:

- [30 Easy Recipes Kids Will Love](#)
- [3 Easy Snacks Kids Can Make](#)
- [3 Breakfasts Your Kids Can Cook Themselves](#)
- [Lunch Ideas for Kids](#)
- [Healthy Tuna Salad](#)
- [Sweet Potato Fries](#)
- [Oatmeal on the Run](#)

Now it's time to practice the skills that you've learned in this module. To get started, take the 20-day InPACT Nutrition and Fitness Challenge.



20-day InPACT Nutrition Challenge

This 20-day challenge aims to enhance your family's nutrition skills. Studies suggest that it takes 21 days to form a habit and over 90 days to establish a lasting lifestyle change. Our hope is that by completing the 20-day Nutrition Challenge, your family will continue practicing the most effective activities until they become a lasting and positive habit.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	BONUS!
Week 1 Welcome to the Nutrition Challenge! Each day of the week, there will be a new fun activity to try out with your family, including planning for the week ahead!	Nutrition Browse the InPACT at Home nutrition videos.	Where are you on the food target?	Pick 2 items to try in the center of the food target. Work on a 500-piece puzzle together.	Family Scavenger Hunt	Make a family dinner together.	Play a family game together. Plan dinner menus for the following week. Grocery shop for the week.
Week 2 Finalize dinner menus for the week. Grocery shop for the week.	Electronic free night Work on a 500-piece puzzle together.	Make family dinner TOGETHER!	Have you made any changes in your eating habits in regards to the food target?	Play Family Fitness Monopoly Family game night!	Watch a family movie together. What part of the movie did you like best?	Try a new family activity together. Plan dinner menus for the following week.
Week 3 Finalize dinner menus for the week. Grocery shop for the week.	Research a new recipe as a family to make next week.	Have you made any changes to your eating habits in regards to the food target?	Random Acts of Kindness Day to friends and family members	Karaoke night	Work on a 500-piece puzzle together.	Plan dinner menus for the following week.
Week 4 Finalize dinner menus for the week. Grocery shop for the week.	Play Family Fitness Monopoly Family game night!	Work on a 500-piece puzzle together.	Family coloring contest	Have you made any changes to your eating habits in regards to the food target?	Watch a family movie together. What part of the movie did you like best?	Plan dinner menus for the following week.

PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS

Sleep

The Bookends of a Healthy Day



Artwork by Hailey Choi

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Nancy Jaskiw, MA, S.Psy.S., is a school psychologist at Reeths-Puffer Schools. She completed her studies at Central Michigan University, where she and her husband, Nicholas Jaskiw, conducted research on infant sleep disorders. Nancy is a mom to five grown children, and she uses strategies from the Sleep Challenge in her own life. She also works with her local school community by providing psychological services to prevent problems, offer early interventions, and provide extra support when needed.

In her broader community, Nancy provides coaching in early literacy, holds workshops to engage families, and offers training on preventing suicide. At the state level, she's been part of groups like the School-Based Mental Health Providers Coalition, the Special Education Advisory Committee, the Youth Suicide Prevention Coalition, and the Michigan Reading Association Board of Directors. Nancy believes that learning is something we should enjoy throughout our lives, that it's best to stop problems before they start, and that helping others is a privilege.

What's Nancy's favorite physical activity?

Nancy's favorite physical activity is taking long walks on the beach.

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The importance of sleep

Think about sleep – it's something we all do every day. But do you realize how critical it is for our activities, our health, and how we feel overall? Sleep is the foundation for everything: it affects, and is affected by, all that we do in our daily lives. And did you know that getting good, [restful sleep is important for both the body and the mind](#)? If you don't get enough sleep, you might feel tired, your brain may not work as well, and you could have trouble remembering things. Insufficient sleep can also lead to serious health problems like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and even stroke.

Here's how much sleep is [recommended](#): adults should strive for 7–9 hours per night; teenagers should try to get 8–10 hours; and kids between ages 6 and 13 should aim for 9–11 hours. Preschoolers, toddlers, and babies need even more sleep – sometimes up to 15 hours per day!

Dr. Suresh Kotagal, a doctor who knows a lot about kids' brains, gives some helpful tips in this [short one-minute video](#). He talks about how much sleep kids need and how to get into a good routine of waking up at the same time every morning.

It's possible to improve sleep

We all want a good night's sleep, but sometimes it can feel tough to get. The way we live each day can affect how well we sleep – like how quickly we nod off; how long we stay asleep; and whether we get that deep, restful sleep we need. But here's the good part: we can make choices that result in better sleep.

The next three sections of this module give you and your family tips for developing healthy sleep habits that include moving together, thinking together, and being together!



MOVE

Sleep and exercise go hand in hand – when one gets better, the other does too. Moving your body affects how quickly you fall asleep, how long you stay asleep, and how much deep and restorative sleep you get. Moving throughout the day can even reduce how often you wake up throughout the night. Exercising is awesome, but be sure to do it during the day. Then pick calm activities that help you relax in the hours before bed.

Active play during the day

Your day should include fun exercise and other activities. Try to do things each day that get your big muscles moving! Exercising as a family is even more enjoyable. Plus, it helps your family bond! You can do games like tag, dance together, or play tug-of-war. Try checking out the [InPACT at Home](#) videos if you want to take it up a notch at home.

If you need more ideas, here's a list of [50 activities that involve moving your big muscles](#). Just make sure to finish your active play about one to two hours before bedtime. That way you and your child can wind down and fall asleep more easily.

Calm play near evening

The hours before bedtime are a perfect time for calm, pleasant family activities. Instead of doing intense workouts, consider taking a walk in nature (maybe through the woods or along the beach), building sandcastles, or trying other things you find relaxing. These kinds of activities let you have fun together as a family in a peaceful way. If you don't live near the woods or a beach, that's okay. You can recreate a similar environment inside your home by playing soft music and hanging scenic posters in your hallways and bedroom.

Whether indoors or outdoors, these quiet moments also give you a chance to practice mindfulness, which means paying close attention to the world around you. For instance, you can listen to the sound of leaves rustling or the birds singing. You can even turn this time into a game by trying to remember all the sounds you heard on your walk. That can make for a fun conversation before bed.





THINK

You probably have chances during the day to talk as a family about things that affect sleep. When you have family conversations, you can talk about sleep. Teaching kids about what's important for good sleep, like turning off electronics an hour before bedtime, can help them understand why it's good for them instead of just being a rule to follow. You can also involve them in setting up their sleeping area and planning bedtime routines.

Planning bedtime routines

It's a good idea to create a regular way of preparing to sleep as the day winds down. Establishing a routine helps kids and adults relax before bedtime. A cozy, predictable pattern will make everyone feel comfortable as they get ready to sleep.

A bedtime routine doesn't have to be complicated. Maybe you give your kids a bath, read a story or poem of their choice, and sing a lullaby to the little ones. You can even guide them through some [muscle relaxation exercises](#) to help them relax. If your kids are older, try involving them in creating their bedtime routine so it becomes special for them. You can decide together how many books to read, pick a calming activity, and play soothing music/sounds. Try sounds such as [waves at the beach](#), [forest noises](#), or [classical music](#).

If you'd like to have a clearly organized routine, you and your child can put together a poster or a chart. Washington University in St. Louis has a simple [six-step plan](#) that guides you in developing a bedtime routine for your family. Then, once the kids are settled, you can start your own end-of-day routine to help you unwind. Remember, routines are for you, too!



BE

Time together as a family is limited. Helping your kids get ready for bed gives everyone a chance to slow down and be deliberate about each step of the routine. Preparing starts early in the day. For example, it's best for your kids to wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends. This consistency helps them be ready for bedtime, get up feeling refreshed, and adjust to a morning routine. It also makes it easier for them to stick to a regular schedule. Even if their sleep pattern gets disrupted during school breaks or trips, it's better for your kids to wake up at their usual time instead of sleeping in, which can make it harder for them to settle down at night.

Setting out their clothes for the next day and putting their backpack near the door (if they're in school) can save time in the morning and start the day more smoothly. Brushing their teeth, taking a warm bath, and getting into pajamas will help make dental care a regular part of their night as they get ready to relax. Remember to be safe in the bath – check the water temperature, don't leave

your kids alone in the tub, and drain the water when they're done. Keep bath time fun but calm by talking, singing, or drawing with bath crayons.

Turning off electronics and, if possible, taking them out of the bedroom is important. Light, especially blue light from screens, can mess up sleep. It disturbs our natural sleep patterns and prevents our bodies from making [melatonin](#), the hormone that causes us to feel tired at night. Things like smartphones, tablets, computers, TVs, and even certain types of lights all give off blue light.

Telling stories and singing lullabies can help your child disconnect from the day. Make this time peaceful; you can hold your child in a chair, sit beside them on their bed, or cuddle up next to them while you read. The goal is to help them calm down and get ready for sleep.

To create a relaxing atmosphere, you can play something soothing like gentle music or white noise. These sounds can help cover up noise outside their room, such as conversations or opening and closing doors, that might otherwise keep them awake.

Here are links to recordings of soft music options for you:

For Babies and Young Children

- [Disney Deep Sleep Piano](#)
- [Mozart for Babies](#)
- [Mozart for Babies - Piano](#)
- [Orchestral Music Box Lullabies](#)
- [Piano Lullabies](#)
- [Relaxing Sleeping Music - Mindful Kids](#)
- [You Are My Sunshine](#)
- [Disney Deep Sleep Piano](#)

Classical Selections

- [Beethoven](#)
- [Chopin - Nocturne Op.9 No. 2](#)

Instrumental

- [Guitar](#)
- [Piano Music](#)
- [String Music - "Autumn Color"](#)
- [A Thousand Years - Piano and Cello](#)

Vocals

- [Louis Armstrong - What A Wonderful World](#)

Books

- [The Very Hungry Caterpillar](#)
- [Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me](#)
- [Read Aloud Books - Pre-K \(20 minutes\)](#)
- [How Do You Sleep?](#)
- [Readaroo Kids](#)

Soothing Sounds

- [Beach Sounds](#)
- [Ocean Sounds](#)
- [Relaxing Wind Sounds](#)
- [Rain Sounds For Sleeping](#)
- [White Noise](#)
- [Woodlands](#)



You can help your child relax further by using progressive muscle relaxation or a [gentle massage](#). Progressive muscle relaxation is easy to pick up, and it's a wonderful way to help your child unwind and drift into sleep faster. Guiding your child through tightening and then releasing different muscle groups can help them feel lighter and less tense. This technique is particularly useful at bedtime. You can walk your child through it with or without background noise.

Progressive muscle relaxation resources:

Progressive muscle relaxation- written instructions on page 47

[Progressive muscle relaxation- recorded instructions](#)

[Progressive muscle relaxation- male voice](#)

[Progressive muscle relaxation- female voice](#)

And finally, a quick note on napping: a [short 10- to 20-minute nap](#) during the day can help your child feel refreshed and focused. But keep an eye on the time; longer naps can leave them feeling groggy.

Now it's time to practice the skills that you've learned in this module. To get started, take the 20-day InPACT Sleep Challenge.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation Script: Sleep

Sometimes, when it's time for children to go to bed, they have a difficult time relaxing. Their muscles are tense, or tight, which makes it harder for them to fall asleep. One effective method to help them relax is called, "Progressive Muscle Relaxation". This process of tensing, holding, and then releasing muscles creates that feeling of heaviness in our muscles that we feel when we are relaxed. Leading your child calmly and quietly through this sequence can help them to settle in for the night.

Introduction

I'll read this script for you, so that you can hear my tone, and the relaxing quality of my voice. Feel free to play this narration, as you model the movements for your child. When you feel comfortable to simply lead them through the steps yourself, without using the narration. This is also a good tool to use for yourself, as you wind down for sleep.

Some Tips:

- If you have a fan that you can turn away from your child's bed, to create noise without a breeze, this can help them to relax, and keep noises from outside their room from waking them during the night.
- Turn off the lights, leaving only a night light, if they sleep with one. You want the room to look and sound the same as it will when they wake up during the night. This will help them to more quickly fall back asleep.



Narration

We're going to practice some ways to relax your muscles tonight. When you tighten your muscles real tight, and then relax them, it makes them feel heavy. When your muscles feel heavy, it's easier to relax at bedtime, and to fall asleep. Let's try this together. We'll start with the feet, and move up, then the hands, and move in, then our heads, and move down. Ok, I'll say what to do, and we'll both practice. Ready?

First, let's start by taking a deep breath in through your nose, and hold it to the count of 3... 1 – 2 – 3. Now, exhale through your mouth, emptying your lungs completely. Once more, deep breath in and hold... 1 – 2 – 3, and blow it out. Now, just breathe normally for a few seconds, listening to the sounds. *(Just silence for about 5 seconds.)*

Let's begin with your feet. Keeping your legs straight, point your toes way down, toward the foot of the bed. Now hold it to the count of five... *(Say the numbers rather slowly - about 1 second apart.)* 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5. Now, relax, letting your feet go.

Next, still keeping your legs straight, point your toes up toward the ceiling, and then pull them back further, while you point your heels down toward the foot of the bed. Hold to the count of five... 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5. Now, relax your feet. Notice how your legs feel heavy. That's because your muscles are relaxed. *(Silence for about 5 seconds.)*

Focusing on your knees to your lower back, tense your upper legs (your thigh muscles), and your bottom muscles; hold them tight... 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5... now relax. *(Silence for about 5 seconds.)*

Let's move to your hands. Make a fist with both hands, keeping your thumbs on the outside. Tighten them up, like you're squeezing a lemon, and hold... 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5... now relax. *(Silence for about 5 seconds.)*

Next, focus on your upper arms, from your elbow to your shoulders. You can hold your arms straight, or you can bring your hands up towards your shoulders. Tighten your upper arms, holding them tight... 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5... now relax. *(Silence for about 5 seconds.)*

OK – now, make a big frown with your forehead, and scrunch up your mouth – tighten up your whole face, and hold... 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5... now relax. *(Silence for about 5 seconds.)*

Paying attention to your shoulders, across the top of your chest, and across your upper back, tighten those muscles and hold... 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5... now relax. *(Silence for about 5 seconds.)*

Last, focus on your lower back and abdomen. Sometimes, it helps to imagine you're trying to make your belly button touch your backbone. Tighten your muscles, and hold... 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5... now relax. *(Silence for about 5 seconds.)*

Now, just relax, keeping your eyes closed, and feel the heaviness of your muscles; listen to the sounds you can hear. *(Silence for a few seconds, as the child listens to sounds in the room or quiet sounds being played.)*

Welcome to the 20-Day InPACT Sleep Challenge!

Each day of the week, there will be new activity to help you improve your sleep. The 20-day challenge aims to enhance your family's sleeping behaviors. Studies suggest that it takes 21 days to form a habit and over 90 days to establish a lasting lifestyle change. Our hope is that by completing the 20-day sleep challenge, your family will continue practicing the most effective activities until they become a lasting and positive habit.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Bonus Day!
Week 1	*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Seal Jacks . *Bedtime* Listen to some relaxing sounds. Listen to Progressive Muscle Relaxation Instructions and Narration . Set your alarm.	*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Zottman Curls Movement . *Bedtime* Read a book or story. Relaxing sound Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.	*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Crab Tricep Dips . *Bedtime* Turn on sound. Complete routine: Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.	*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Sit-ups with Lorenzo . *Bedtime* Practice routine: Muscle Relaxation . Set your alarm.	*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Jumping Jacks . *Bedtime* Practice routine: Muscle Relaxation . Set your alarm.	*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Simple Total Body Cardio and Strength . *Bedtime* Practice routine: Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.
Week 2	*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Chair Tabata . *Bedtime* Bedtime routine: Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.	*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Cardio Drumming . *Bedtime* Bedtime routine: Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.	*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Jumping Sticks . *Bedtime* Bedtime routine: Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.	*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Power Punching . *Bedtime* Bedtime routine: Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.	*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Deck o' Fun . *Bedtime* Bedtime routine: Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.	*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Yoga and Stretching . *Bedtime* Bedtime routine: Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.

PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS: SLEEP

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Bonus Day!
Week 3	<p>*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Movement Flow.</p> <p>*Bedtime* Bedtime routine Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.</p>	<p>*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Circuits.</p> <p>*Bedtime* Bedtime routine Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.</p>	<p>*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Hurdle Tabata.</p> <p>*Bedtime* Bedtime routine Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.</p>	<p>*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Cardio Kickboxing.</p> <p>*Bedtime* Bedtime routine Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.</p>	<p>*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Get Stronger.</p> <p>*Bedtime* Bedtime routine Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.</p>	<p>*Morning* Wake up on time! Try Screen Time.</p> <p>*Bedtime* Bedtime routine Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.</p>
Week 4	<p>*Morning* Wake up on time! Family breakfast Try Lower Body Cardio Circuit.</p> <p>*Bedtime* Bedtime routine Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.</p>	<p>*Morning* Wake up on time! Family breakfast Try Hip and Glute Mobility.</p> <p>*Bedtime* Bedtime routine Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.</p>	<p>*Morning* Wake up on time! Family breakfast Try Chair Tabata.</p> <p>*Bedtime* Bedtime routine Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.</p>	<p>*Morning* Wake up on time! Family breakfast Try Leg Day.</p> <p>*Bedtime* Bedtime routine Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.</p>	<p>*Morning* Wake up on time! Family breakfast Try Total Body Cardio and Strength.</p> <p>*Bedtime* Bedtime routine Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.</p>	<p>*Morning* Wake up on time! Family breakfast Try Ball Handling.</p> <p>*Bedtime* Bedtime routine Muscle Relaxation Set your alarm.</p>

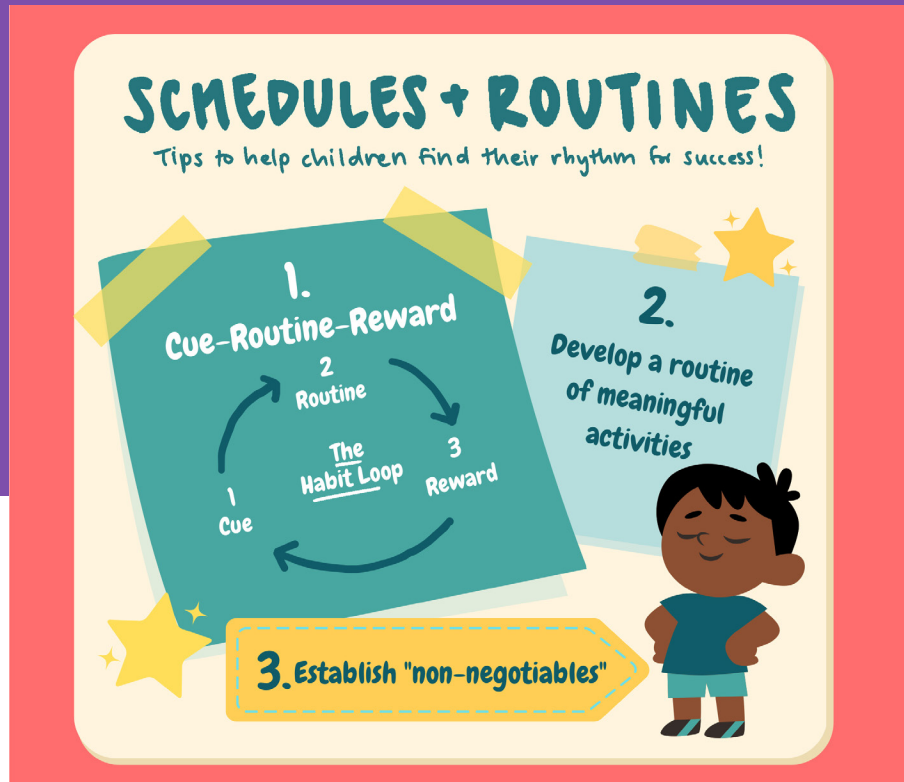
Safety Needs



SAFETY NEEDS

Schedules and Routines

Helping Children Find Their Rhythm for Success



Artwork by Hailey Choi

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Scott Martin, M.Ed., has a passion for helping high-risk students and their families by partnering with other educators to empower families. He has excelled as a teacher, principal in four school districts, basketball coach, and in his current position at the Michigan Department of Education. He has advocated for support to meet the needs of students across the state, including his son, who receives special education services for mental health needs. Resources exist, but many children and their families cannot access them. Scott is committed to connecting children with available supports to help them thrive academically, emotionally, and socially. As an advocate for children and families, the successes that he has witnessed when they receive the help they need motivates him to be a champion for children in any way he can.

What's Scott's favorite physical activity?

My favorite physical activity is weight training.

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The importance of schedules and routines for children

Remember *Home Alone*, that classic holiday movie about a boy named Kevin who ends up with a lot of free time on his hands when he's left behind at home? School is out and there's no adult supervision. So what does he do? He stays up late, he eats unhealthy foods, and he binge watches old movies and TV shows. At first, he has the time of his life exploring his newfound freedom. But over time, he recognizes the importance of scheduling and routines.

Scheduling refers to when you do something, like arriving at school by 7:30 am or eating dinner at 6:00 pm. Routines are the order in which you do things. The focus here isn't on time but on consistency. An example might be preparing your child for bedtime each night; maybe they take a bath, put on comfy jammies, brush their teeth, and read a story.

Family schedules and routines are important. Regular schedules help children feel secure and comfortable. Schedules and routines also help kids understand what is expected of them, which can reduce behavior such as tantrums. Routines can help children stay physically active, too.

The next three sections of this module give you and your family tips for developing schedules and routines that include moving together, thinking together, and being together!



MOVE

Scheduling activity into your family routine

Creating a physical activity schedule for your family is a great way to spend quality time together. This type of schedule promotes a healthy lifestyle. Schedules that give children options tend to be more engaging. Ideally, this schedule will include both chosen and planned activities. [Research](#) has shown that the length of play can affect a child's social and cognitive development (the term "cognitive" refers to thinking, reasoning, and remembering); playing for more than 30 minutes leads to richer social and cognitive play.

Physical activities should be included in your schedule every day. You can start with simple activities and add more challenging ones as time goes on; doing so will help your family stick to an activity routine. Check out the physical activity schedule below for example.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 minute brisk walk	30 minute brisk walk	30 minute brisk walk	Weight Training	30 minute brisk walk	30 minute brisk walk	Weight Training
						

Adapted from: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Question: How might you add some choice and variety to this schedule?

Answer: You could include different types of activities (e.g., biking, skateboarding) to make sure your kids enjoy themselves. Keep in mind that the more children can help select activities, the more engaged they will be. For more ideas of different types of physical activity, visit the CDC's [Active People, Healthy NationSM website](#).



THINK

Developing a routine of meaningful activities

Schedules and routines are crucial for regular physical activity. They are also important for things like homework, household chores, and family time.

When planning family schedules and routines, consider the following:

- The balance among types of activities
- The pace of activities
- The amount of time your child can focus on an activity
- The times of day your child is most alert
- The number of adults available to help

A daily schedule will help you and your family prioritize activities and provide some structure to support your goals. A daily schedule has lots of benefits:

- Setting aside time to meet daily goals
- Helping your family be more productive
- Limiting procrastination
- Establishing healthy habits
- Enjoying a good work-life balance

Here's a sample daily schedule for a week when children are in school:

Check the Family Calendar for events!

DAILY SCHEDULE

<p>GOOD MORNING!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wake up on time Wash-up and dress Breakfast Take Out Trash Go to School 	<p>BODY FLEX CHOICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bike or Scooter Playground or Park Shoot hoops Dance Party InPACT at Home Videos
<p>GOOD AFTERNOON!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk Dog Empty Dishwasher Homework Dinner BODY FLEX (30 MIN.) MIND FLEX (30 MIN.) 	<p>MIND FLEX CHOICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Write a story Draw, color, paint Do a Puzzle Listen to music
<p>GOOD EVENING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAMILY FLEX (60 MIN.) Wash-Up Brush teeth Put on pajamas Go to bed on time 	<p>FAMILY FLEX CHOICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk or bike ride InPACT at Home Videos Family Movie Cards/Board Game

The boxes on the left represent non-negotiables or routines, broken down by times of day. Things that are non-negotiable must be done; they are not choices. To the right, you'll see options that children can plug into your family's routine. What would work best for your family when setting a daily schedule for the school week? How might your family's days look different? Which non-negotiables could you put in the left-hand boxes? What kinds of chosen activities (for mind, body, and family time) might you put in the right-hand boxes?

Notice the "Check the Family Calendar for events" reminder at the top: this is one way you can help your family keep track of when the daily schedule may change, such as for doctor's appointments, sports practices, birthday parties, and other activities that come up.

How might you develop your daily family schedule with routines? It doesn't have to look exactly like the above example. Once completed, how will you post it? For instance, you could share the schedule electronically, print it out, write it on paper or poster board, or use a dry erase board or chalkboard.

At the end of each day, review the activities you did from the daily schedule. Talk about how the schedule went. A daily check-in will help your child transfer information from short-term memory to long-term memory. It will also help with future planning; you can decide what did and did not work well for your family. Look at the next section for additional tips.

Tips for creating your own family schedule

- Have a detailed schedule that each family member can follow.
- Consider posting the schedule. Review it at the beginning of the week and at the end of each day to help eliminate confusion for your family.
- Create a routine with your child's help, which will ensure the activities are ones they want to participate in.
- As a family, discuss all non-negotiables so your child can understand the importance of these activities.
- When creating a schedule, consider chosen activities that are fun and promote health. But keep in mind that everyone needs downtime during the day, too.
- For times in the schedule that have choice, flexibility can be fun, depending on how the day is going. Maybe you opt to extend an activity the family is really enjoying. Or you might change an activity if it's not entertaining.



Turn schedules and routines into habits

When your family consistently follows a schedule and routine, this structure can more easily turn into a habit. A habit is a regular practice that can be hard to give up once formed.

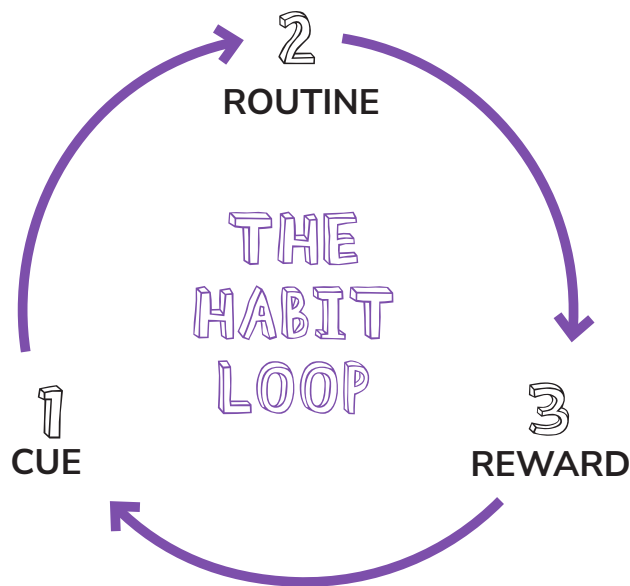
Habits develop through a cue–routine–reward loop, such as when you set out a toothbrush (cue), your child puts toothpaste on it and brushes their teeth (routine), and then you read a bedtime story together (reward). Teeth brushing will become a habit if done consistently. This habit formation loop applies to nearly any behavior. Maybe you make lunch and put it on the table while playing the same song each day (cue); your child comes to the table, eats their meal, and cleans up after (routine). Then, your family plays outside for 20 minutes (reward). Rewards can also be small gifts or points that your child can earn and later redeem for a prize.

Remember, your child may try to push boundaries when asked to complete activities. Testing limits can lead to conflict between you and your child during routines. This tension can be verbal, physical, or silent (e.g., your child ignores you when you speak to them). These kinds of challenges can take the joy out of the day and make it difficult to follow the schedule you've created. Try the following strategies to ease tension as needed:

- Direct your child calmly using as few words as possible.
- Help them start to put away the materials for an activity. Then, get ready for the next item on the schedule.
- Kneel to their eye level and quietly use your voice.
- Use sentences such as “When you do ____, then we can do ____” or “If you ____, then we’ll ____.”

- Walk away for a few minutes, then return and remind them about the schedule.
- If they cooperate, praise them!
- Reinforce good behavior with a reward, such as a sticker or other incentive.

Children may be motivated by different strategies when introducing a routine or schedule. Consider changing your techniques (cues and rewards) to meet their needs. Children's motivations also change with age: cues and rewards for a 5-year-old will vary from those for a 15-year-old.



Helping to create positive family experiences!

Engaging in meaningful activities during the day is a great way to strengthen your family and enjoy time together. Scheduling family time can be difficult because of the many demands in our lives. Even when we schedule family time, it can be hard to be fully present. Mindfulness is helpful in this regard. When we're mindful, we're completely engaged in the present. For you, mindfulness might mean fully paying attention to your child's voice and giving them options. Being present during family activities is essential for creating a more positive relationship between you and your child. Everyone needs to be mindful to get the most out of family time; being truly present allows for meaningful discussion and sharing. Family schedules and routines are an excellent way to help children find their rhythm for success!

Now it's time to practice the skills that you've learned in this module. To get started, take the 20-day InPACT Schedules and Routines Challenge.

20-day InPACT Schedules and Routines Challenge

The 20-day challenge aims to enhance your family's skills in developing schedules and routines. Studies suggest that it takes 21 days to form a habit and over 90 days to establish a lasting lifestyle change. Our hope is that by completing the 20-day Schedule and Routine challenge, your family will continue practicing the most effective activities until they become a lasting and positive habit.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Teamwork
Week 1 Welcome to the Schedules and Routines Challenge! Each week will help you build skills to maintain schedules and routines. This week: Use family teamwork to find a calendar + establish routines.	Research to find a calendar that works best for your family—have everyone find options! Tip: Use the InPACT videos and make them a part of your daily routine! Step-Up Challenge	Choose 2-3 calendars you like, talk about them, and choose the final one you will use as a family for scheduling. Gymnastics Floor Skills Family Workout	Decide where in your home you will post your calendar and place it there. Family Activities Workout	Make a list of routines that must be done daily for the family (your non-negotiables!). Family Pilates and Yoga Strength and Conditioning	Talk and decide as a family how to do each routine. Kickboxing Workout	Write 3 key take-aways about using family teamwork to find a calendar and establish routines 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____
Week 2 This week: Practice routine + work on flexibility in the routine for events Keep being active as a family!	Practice each of the agreed-upon routines. Family High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT)	Write the routines on your weekly calendar as a family. Family Push-Up Challenge	Make a list of weekly events that happen every week. Total Body Cardio and Strength Family Workout	Decide transportation and who is best suited for driving and carpooling. Gymnastics Beam Skills Family Workout	Write weekly events into your calendar as a family. Positive Self-Images Family Workout	Write 3 key take-aways about being flexible for scheduled events: 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____
Week 3 This week: Practice routine + work on making adjustments Keep being active as a family!	Create the weekly calendar with all routines and family events. Gymnastics Strength and Conditioning Family Workout	Talk as a family and review how the routines were done last week and if improvement needs to happen. FITT Family Workout	Update calendar with new or revised events as needed— who is responsible for this? Family Basketball Workout	Assess how transportation is going and if adjustments need to happen. Family Step-Up Challenge	Make a calendar for the following week, indicating your routine, flexible events, and potential adjustments! Family Arm Circuit	Write 3 key take-aways about making adjustments to your routine: 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____
Week 4 This week: Practice routine + work on incorporating flex activities (see the module for more!) Keep being active as a family!	Body Flex: Sports Theme Workout Mind Flex: Read Family Flex: Go for a walk	Body Flex: Volleyball Skills Mind Flex: Puzzles Family Flex: Family movie	Body Flex: Total Body HIIT Mind Flex: Listen to music. Family Flex: Board or card game	Body Flex: Water Bottle Fitness Mind Flex: Write a story. Family Flex: Crafting	Body Flex: Core Workout Mind Flex: Color, paint, draw Family Flex: Bike ride	Write one activity from each category you will keep doing: Body _____ Mind _____ Family _____

Love and Belonging Needs



LOVE AND BELONGING NEEDS

Family Team Building

Building Success and Conquering Obstacles



Artwork by Hailey Choi

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Nick Jaskiw, a school psychologist at the Newaygo County Regional Educational Service Agency, has over 30 years of experience in Michigan's education system. Formerly at Montague Area Public Schools, he played a key role in establishing the Intensive Student Support Network. Nick, active in state and regional initiatives, contributed to the Governor's School Safety Taskforce in 2018 and led the West Michigan Regional Suicide Prevention Alliance. A former educator at Saginaw Valley State University and Central Michigan University, he is deeply involved in community service and serves on various boards, including the Michigan Association of School Psychologists. Nick and his wife Nancy, both alumni of Central Michigan University, reside in Manistee and contribute significantly to local education.

What's Nick's favorite physical activity?

Nick's favorite physical activity is taking long walks on the beach.

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The importance of being part of a family team

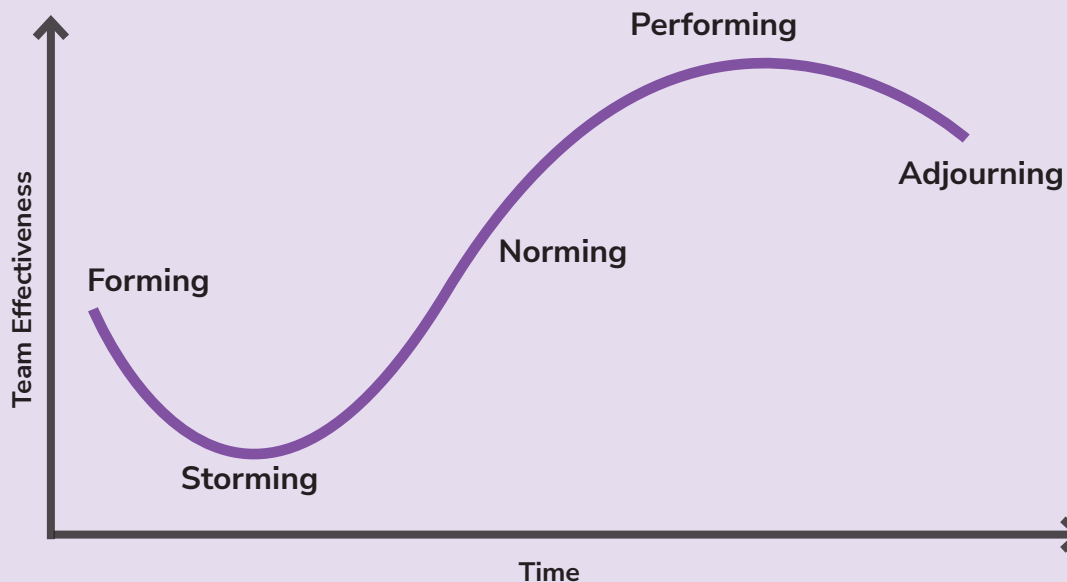
Families come in many forms. No matter what kind of family you have, it's like a team: each member has a special job and helps the family work well. Just like a sports team, everyone has a role to play. Being a family team is super important! It sets the stage for how you relate to others; gives you people you can rely on when things get tough; provides love, guidance, and support; makes you feel like you belong; helps you stay mentally healthy; and can even help you excel at work or school. Plus, being in a family teaches you important values and life lessons.

Family team building and teamwork helps in times of difficulty

Families offer stability, a shared history, and unconditional love – all of which are powerful when times get hard. A psychologist, Bruce Tuckman, came up with a [model to explain how groups become a team](#). The model includes five stages: starting out (forming), arguing (storming), getting used to each other (norming), working well (performing), and finishing strong (adjourning). This process can also describe how a family acts when confronting a problem. Families may need to deal with a variety of issues from time to time: fighting, making important decisions, juggling work and home life, getting organized, miscommunicating, feeling stressed, assigning chores, or being away from each other. Building a family team, working together, and feeling close to one another are great resources when things are tough.

The next three sections of this module give you and your family tips for developing a strong family team that include moving together, thinking together, and being together!

How Groups Become A Team (Bruce Tuckman)



MOVE

Playing together strengthens the team that achieves the dream

Family time can be fun! Have you heard of games like "[Human Knot](#)," "[Protect the Castle](#)," or "[Trust Walk](#)"? Kids learn lots of valuable life skills at home. Playing games like the ones in the 20-day Family Team Building Challenge Calendar can help your family grow stronger: they make you think, talk, work together, and move around, which promotes family bonding. Playing and exercising with your kids can help teach them good habits while bringing the family closer. These activities also give you a chance to cheer your kids on as you develop teamwork and trust. Playing together makes everyone feel good inside.

THINK

Building a strong family team through planning, communication, dedication, and unity

Take a moment to think: could your family use some help with team building? The first step is to figure out what your family is good at, what you could you work on, and what you all need. Are family disagreements creating stress? Do you need to get to know each other better? Do some members only think about themselves? Is there miscommunication in the family? Do some members have a hard time working with others and instead prefer to do things alone? Are some members stopping the family from growing and trying new things because they don't like change? Does your family need a boost?

If you think your family could use some help, don't be afraid to talk about it, plan, and work on it together as a team! Just like a sports team, family teamwork requires communication, trust, planning, and a willingness to work together. Some key components of building a strong family team include the following:

- Having a shared vision (called a "[mission statement](#)")
- Trusting each other as a family
- Setting clear rules and expectations
- Talking openly with each other
- Learning how to solve problems
- Figuring out how to handle conflict
- Valuing and respecting differences
- Helping each other become leaders
- Celebrating when family members do well
- Learning from tough times
- Supporting, guiding, and modeling the right behavior

All these aspects help make your family a strong team.



The importance of bonding and spending family time together

Getting close and spending time as a family benefits your [physical and emotional health](#). Sharing quality time with family can help you feel more self-assured and improve your mental state, such as by decreasing stress. Family time also makes children less likely to have behavioral problems. They can do better in school, problem solve, and stay strong in the face of challenges. And guess what? Having good family relationships can even help you live up to 50% longer!

You can strengthen family bonds by working as a team and spending time together. Here are several options:

- Have regular family meetings.
- Plan your day together.
- Eat meals together.
- Go on day trips.
- Have a staycation.
- Take walks or hikes in nature.
- Enjoy quiet time.
- Read books together.
- Paint, color, or draw together.
- Get messy playing in the mud or sand.
- Set up obstacle courses in your driveway.
- Play board games.
- Exercise together.
- Join in family retreats and daily team activities.
- Do outdoor activities and sports as a family.
- Work on family chores, building projects, gardening, or landscaping.
- Volunteer for school, neighborhood, or community service projects.
- Visit relatives, friends, neighbors, or seniors together as a family.



Family team building helps children develop skills for the future.

[Studies](#) have shown that bosses appreciate when people can think critically and work well with others – like being a team player, staying in control, adapting to changes, thinking hard about problems, and remembering things. These skills are important for all kids to learn. You can help your child get better at them by reminding your child that being on a team is important. You can also help them feel more self-assured, such as by practicing teamwork at home, playing fair, creating a safe and trusting environment, and giving them attention. Above all, always make them feel special, important, and loved.

Now it's time to practice the skills that you've learned in this module. To get started, take the 20-day InPACT Family Team Building Activity Challenge.

20-day InPACT Family Team Building Activity Challenge

The 20-day challenge aims to enhance your family's team building skills. Studies suggest that it takes 21 days to form a habit and over 90 days to establish a lasting lifestyle change. Our hope is that by completing the 20-day Team Building challenge, your family will continue practicing the most effective activities until they become a lasting and positive habit.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	BONUS
Week 1 Welcome to the Family Team Building Challenge! Each day there is a workout for your family to complete together and a team building activity.	Start with this Family Activities video. Plan a staycation as a family!	Complete this Total Body HIIT video. Do meal prep as a family and play board games.	Do this Pool Noodle Fitness video. Work on family chores and home projects.	Join the Detroit Lions for this Football Drill video. In the morning, have family exercise time at home. In the evening, have quiet time.	Complete this Family HIIT Workout . Work on family chores and home projects and do an outdoor team building activity.	Do this Gymnastics Floor Skills video. Have family breakfast that the kids prepare and a movie night at home!
Week 2	Join the Detroit Lions for an Agility Bags/ Pillow Drill video. Have a family backyard picnic and meet and review the week as a family!	Do this Kickboxing video. Use an obstacle course to do driveway Olympics.	Complete this Family Workout video focused on sleep. Work on family chores and home projects.	Join the Detroit Lions for this Agility Drills video. In the morning, have family exercise time in the park.	Complete this Core Workout video. Work on family chores and home projects and do a family team building activity.	Do this Upper Body Chair HIIT video. Have a restaurant at home night with kids preparing the meal and a family game night!
Week 3	Relax with this Yoga and Stretching video. Staycation Day 1- enjoy!	Do with this Gymnastics Warm-up and Stretch video. Staycation Day 2 - enjoy!	Perform this Glute and Cardio video. Work on family chores and home projects.	Do this Dynamic Warm-Up video from the Detroit Lions. Do an evening family hike and picnic.	Complete this Family "FITT" video. Work on family chores and complete a family team building activity!	Do this Gymnastics Strength and Conditioning video. Invite a neighbor over as a family.
Week 4	Complete this Power Punching Workout . Have a family meeting to build your family mission statement.	Enjoy this Fitness Drumming video. Plan or go on a day trip as a family!	Join the Detroit Lions for this Lower Body Workout video. Work on a landscape project or garage cleaning as a family.	Do this Family Workout . In the morning, go on a family walk. In the afternoon, do a problem-solving activity.	Complete this Total Body Exercise video. Work on family chores and projects.	Join the Detroit Lions for this Ladder, Cone, and Pillow Agility video. Make homemade pizzas and share stories.

LOVE AND BELONGING NEEDS

Lifelong Skills

Managing Emotions and Stress



Artwork by Hailey Choi

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Penelope Friday, MPH, CHES, is a PhD student at the University of Michigan's School of Kinesiology. She earned her undergraduate degree in kinesiology from Michigan State University and her Master of Public Health from Indiana University–Bloomington. She worked for three years as the Childhood Obesity Prevention Coordinator for the Indiana Department of Health, focusing on school and early childhood education wellness initiatives. Her long-term goal is to improve the quality and quantity of physical activity among school-aged children through policy, system, and environmental approaches.

What's Penelope's favorite physical activity?

I love to walk the dog and lift weights.

Heather Lewis holds an MA in psychology in education from Teachers College, Columbia University along with an MA in child development from Michigan State University. She is the District Health Resource Advocate/Mental Wellness Specialist for Williamston Community Schools. She specializes in social-emotional learning, mindfulness, and student athlete mental health.

What's Heather's favorite physical activity?

I love walking outside, lifting free weights, and yoga.

What are lifelong skills?

Lifelong skills are meant for success! Family members play key roles in helping their children develop the skills needed to be successful in life.

These important skills include:

- Managing emotions
- Setting goals
- Working well with others
- Creating good relationships
- Making good decisions

Children do not wake up one day and decide “Today is the day I won’t scream at my little brother for taking my crayons away.” We all know that it takes time for them to learn to manage their emotions. Families can help children process their feelings and make the best choices possible. We can help children understand and manage all emotions in the zones below.

"Low" Energy Zone	"Good-to-Go" Energy Zone	"On-the-Edge" Energy Zone	"Extreme" Energy Zone
Sad Bored Tired Sick	Happy Focus Calm Proud	Worried Frustrated Silly Excited	Overjoyed/Elated Panicked Angry Terrified

**Adapted from Zones of Regulation, Think Social Publishing, Inc.

**Adapted from the RULER program, Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence



Learning these lifelong skills will help your child be successful at school, at home, and in the community. You're probably already working on these types of skills in your family without even realizing it! Here are some examples of what you might be doing now:

- Do you ask your child how they feel about school?
- Have you talked with your child about working together while playing a sport?
- Have you helped your child figure out how and when to say "sorry"?
- Do you comfort your child when they are upset?
- As a family, have you taken turns while playing a game or activity?

If you've done any of these things, then you have helped your child learn important skills. That kind of learning is a huge part of your child's development – and you play a critical role!

How does physical activity help with managing emotions?

Children learn many lifelong skills as people teach them how to share, practice good manners, and treat others with respect. Did you know that physical activity can also help children manage their emotions? It helps children discover information about themselves and their place in the world. It gives them a chance to learn to make good choices and to care about others, too. Physical activity even gives children opportunities to challenge their feelings, release them, and move forward. Finally, physical activity can give children practice dealing with difficult emotions.

There are lots of ways to make sure your child gets physical activity – and not all options involve sports. You can offer quick bursts of activity at home and as a family.

The next three sections of this module give you and your family tips for developing lifelong skills that include moving together, thinking together, and being together!

MOVE

Making time for family physical activity

Good things happen when children feel safe and supported by their family. For example, their health and well-being improve. You have the power to make that happen as a family, and physical activity is a great tool.

You can work on being physically and emotionally healthy by being active together. It can help with many goals. You'll all be more physically healthy. You'll also strengthen family connections. This bonding time will help you see what your child needs. Sometimes, physical activity will energize your child; other times, they might need a way to calm down, like doing a [breathing activity](#). You know your child best!



Managing emotions through physical activity

Certain types of movement help children tune into their emotions, notice their breath, and be present. Trying these [InPACT at Home Activity Play Cards](#) may feel silly at times, but they can help your child understand and manage their thoughts and feelings while being physically active. Helping your child address their feelings in this way will build resilience. In other words, they'll have the skills they need when times get tough – they will know how to bounce back!

Here are some physical activities that can help your child manage their emotions.

"Low" Energy Zone	"Good-to-Go" Energy Zone	"On-the-Edge" Energy Zone	"Extreme" Energy Zone
Emotion: Sad Activity: Self-Hug (Mindfulness)	Emotion: Happy Activity: Disco Party (Buddy)	Emotion: Worried Activity: Polar Bear Stretch (Flexibility)	Emotion: Overjoyed/ Elated Activity: Tornado Squat (Strength)
Emotion: Bored Activity: Texture Trek (Mindfulness)	Emotion: Focused Activity: Bubblegum Flow (Flexibility)	Emotion: Frustrated Activity: Split Squat (Cardio)	Emotion: Panicked Activity: Butt Kickers (Strength)
Emotion: Tired Activity: Clap Jack (Cardio)	Emotion: Calm Activity: Hacky Sack (Cardio)	Emotion: Silly Activity: Mario Jumps (Strength)	Emotion: Angry Activity: Body Scan (Mindfulness)
Emotion: Sick Activity: Child's Pose (Flexibility)	Emotion: Proud Activity: Seat Belt Crunch (Strength)	Emotion: Excited Activity: Finder's Keeper (Buddy)	Emotion: Terrified Activity: Punching Bag (Cardio)





THINK

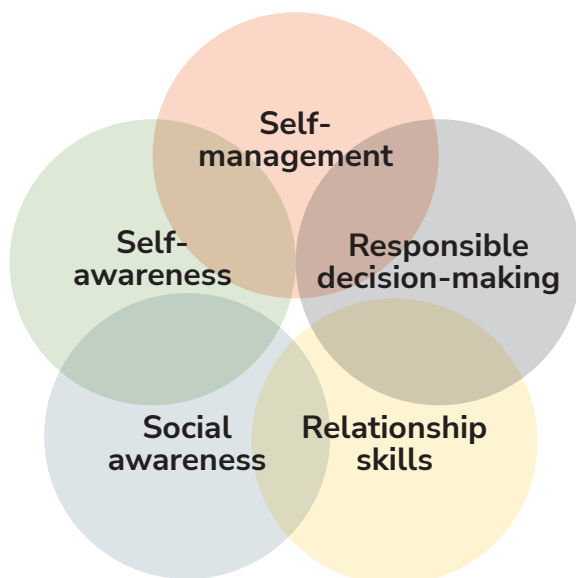
What does lifelong skill building look like at home?

One important lifelong skill is the ability to tell people how we're feeling. Talking about feelings can be a challenge for children of all ages; kids are still learning to understand and manage their emotions. Physical activity can "prime" you and your child for a conversation as you enjoy a quick burst of energy together. Think of physical activity as the primer you put on your walls before you start to paint. Playing games and moving with your child are wonderful ways to have quality time while developing lifelong skills.

No matter what your child might be feeling, physical activity can help! They don't have to wait a day, a week, or a month to feel better; exercise is an immediate mood lifter. The play card exercises are meant to help your child when they are feeling a negative emotion. As you do these activities over and over, your child will learn to cope with any reaction that comes along. Physical activity can help your child overcome challenging emotions, and it can help reinforce positive feelings!

"Understanding these energy zones will help your child manage their emotions. I am a teacher and a parent, and I use these myself every day to have a quiet moment where I can tune into how I am feeling. I have my students do the same. This teaches children about their feelings and gives them practice at managing them!" – Heather Lewis (parent and former kindergarten teacher at Discovery Elementary in Williamston Community Schools)

As you do these activities together and explore emotions, your child will build essential skills. These lifelong skills will help your child recognize, name, and respond well to various feelings. Physical activity also contributes to other important abilities, such as getting along with peers and making good decisions. The next page describes five lifelong skills and ways to nurture them in your child.



LOVE AND BELONGING NEEDS: LIFELONG SKILLS

Lifelong Skill	Ways to Practice
Self-awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about your child's unique qualities and strengths • Name feelings as they come up • Discuss how thoughts and feelings affect behavior
Self-management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice staying calm when angry and thinking before you speak • Set goals for the week, month, and year • Talk about being a leader and a self-starter to complete tasks
Responsible decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage being curious and open-minded • Talk about solutions to problems • Discuss the consequences of choices (both good and bad) • Talk about how to be well as a person, as a family, and as a community
Relationship skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly communicate what you mean • Work on relationships with people who support you • Practice teamwork and problem solving as a family • Ask for, or offer, support when needed
Social awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider others' perspectives and feelings • Notice others' strengths • Practice empathy and kindness • Practice being thankful for the good things

**Adapted from the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (2021)



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Putting physical activity to work for your family

Being together is important, especially when it comes to your child's health and well-being. Families who spend time together create strong bonds that are protective. Moving together as a family, thinking together about lifelong skills, and simply being together is a recipe for success for all members. Try adding one of the powerful practices below to your routine!

- Set aside time once a week to go for a 20-minute family walk. It's a great way to get some physical activity, to unplug, and to be together as a family.
- [Try some breathing exercises](#) (movement and stillness are each important)
- Spend some quiet time listening to music or journaling your feelings.
- Use the [InPACT at Home Activity Play Cards](#) once a week to try a new physical activity.
- Talk about what teamwork looks like in your family and show it through buddy activities.
- Make physical activity a tool to manage stress in your family. If you're feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or trying to solve a problem, do some physical activity by following along with a 5- or 10-minute fitness video.
- In the hustle and bustle of daily life, make movement a priority! Every minute counts, and it all adds up.

Physical activity is a strategy that can help children stay or move into the "good-to-go" energy zone. Over time, and with practice, your child will learn to cope with tough feelings in positive ways. But teaching lifelong skills isn't always easy, and you might need some support. To learn more, you can reach out to your school social worker or doctor.

Here are some additional resources especially for parents:

[Social Emotional Learning \(SEL\) Parent Resources from Edutopia](#)

[SEL with Families and Caregivers from Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning](#)

[SEL at Home: Top Resources to Share with Families from Panorama Education](#)

Now it's time to practice the skills that you've learned in this module. To get started, take the 20-day InPACT Lifelong Skills Activity Challenge.

20-day InPACT Lifelong Skills Activity Challenge

The 20-day challenge aims to enhance your child's social-emotional skills. Studies suggest that it takes 21 days to form a habit and over 90 days to establish a lasting lifestyle change. Our hope is that by completing the 20-day Lifelong Skills challenge, your family will continue practicing the most effective activities until they become a lasting and positive habit.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Week 1 Welcome to the Lifelong Skills Challenge! Each week will have activities focused on a specific topic to help you build lifelong skills. Topic: Self-Regulation	Powerful Practice: Practice what different emotions look like in the mirror with your child.	Playcard Practice: Flamingos (Lifelong Skills Playcards)	Powerful Practice: Put a weekly family chart of values on the fridge. Pick a value each week to talk about with your children.	Playcard Practice: London Bridges (Lifelong Skills Playcards)	Powerful Practice: Apologize to your child when you are wrong.
Week 2 Topic: Self-Management	Powerful Practice: Have a list of activities on the fridge that your child can turn to when feeling stressed. Practice morning gratitude with your child.	Playcard Practice: Monster Walks (Lifelong Skills Playcards)	Powerful Practice: Call out stress management strategies you see in pictures, books, or in real life. For example: deep breathing, journaling, or meditation.	Playcard Practice: Good Morning (Lifelong Skills Playcards)	Powerful Practice: Talk about self-discipline, patience, and what it should and shouldn't look like.
Week 3 Topic: Responsible Decision-Making	Powerful Practice: Find one time a day to ask about your child's day.	Playcard Practice: Inch Worm (Lifelong Skills Playcards)	Powerful Practice: Ask your child how they would solve an issue and write down a game plan together.	Playcard Practice: Hershey Kiss Push-up (Lifelong Skills Playcards)	Powerful Practice: Set family guidelines for consequences and communicate what each means.
Week 4 Topic: Relationship Skills/Social Awareness	Powerful Practice: Volunteer as a family and have your child pick what kind of service they want to be a part of. Talk about everything and anything!	Playcard Practice: High Five Plans (Lifelong Skills Playcards)	Powerful Practice: Communicate "I-messages" with your child and model responding over reacting.	Playcard Practice: Fast Feet (Lifelong Skills Playcards)	Powerful Practice: When offering support, ask what kind of support your child is wanting. "Do you want me to listen or problem solve with you?"

Self-Esteem Needs



SELF-ESTEEM NEEDS

Feeling Good

Satisfaction and Well-Being



Artwork by Hailey Choi

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Evilia Jankowski, a nurse with over 40 years of experience, served as a school nurse for 29 years in Arizona and Michigan before becoming Michigan's State School Nurse Consultant. A former President of the Michigan Association of School Nurses, she collaborated with national health stakeholders like the CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics. Her projects include the School Asthma Management Program and School Emergency Triage Training. Evilia emphasizes the importance of standardized training and resources for school nurses in meeting students' needs. She believes this approach ensures children are healthy, safe, and ready to learn, making it an exciting time for school nurses.

What's Evilia's favorite physical activity?

My favorite physical activities include aqua zumba, officiating women's college basketball, swimming, and I have been Jazzercising since 1990!

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Feeling good

“Feeling good” can mean different things for different people. For someone who runs, a two-mile jog will make them feel good; the same distance might make you feel tense or nervous if you don’t like to run. Think for a second about what makes you feel good: a hug from someone you love? Making the winning basket in a basketball game? When we talk about feeling good in general, we’re referring to overall well-being. Well-being represents positive physical, social, and mental states. Because we can’t see well-being, we describe it as something we feel or “sense.” If your sense of well-being is good, then you’re feeling good about yourself – you can probably function well and do what you need to do every day. Family members can help each other feel good and support one another’s well-being.

[Watch this introductory video to the Feeling Good module.](#)

Well-being

When you don’t feel good or have a poor sense of well-being, you’ll find it hard to function normally. Improved well-being enables you to enjoy the simple things in life, face challenges, and feel good. Even the [CDC](#) emphasizes the importance of feeling good and having positive well-being. [Research](#) shows that when people feel good and have a sense of well-being, they are healthier, live longer, and have fewer social problems.

Improving well-being

[Trying new things](#) can increase well-being. Doing so becomes easier if you try things as a family or team. It’s normal to feel anxious when trying something new; you might not be good at it right away simply because you haven’t done it before. When you try something new as a family, you can encourage each other even if no one is good at the activity right away.



Screenshot from the Feeling Good video.

Try thinking of a new activity as an adventure! Having a family adventure and mastering a new activity will bring your team together through a shared experience.

Here are some tips to help you succeed:

- Start with trying what feels comfortable: Keep an open mind, and soon your comfort zone will expand!
- Go at your own pace: Take small steps to give everybody a chance to learn together.
- Pick one or two things; more than that will be overwhelming.

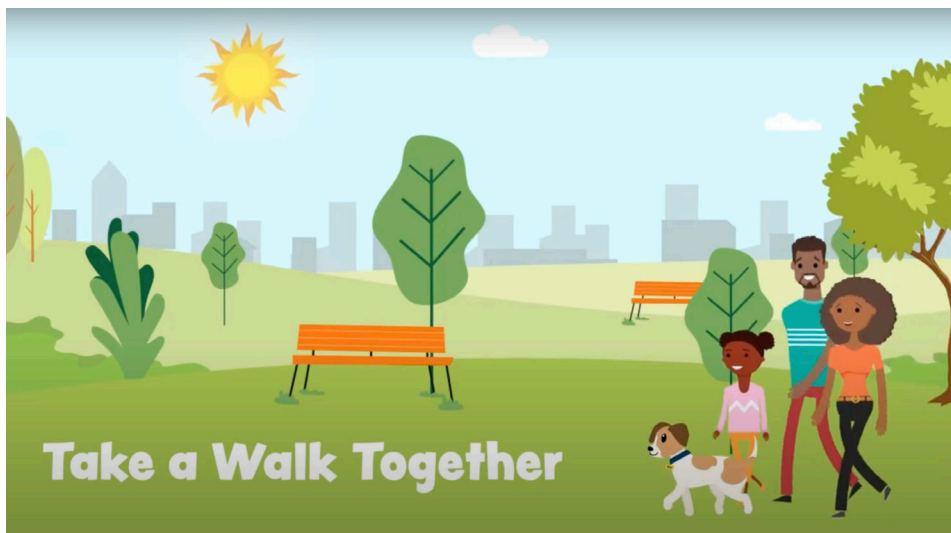
So where should you start? The next three sections of this module give you and your family tips to feel good that include moving together, thinking together, and being together!

MOVE

The CDC states that [physical activity](#) is one of the best things we can do to improve our health. It is vital for healthy development and aging, and can reduce the burden of chronic diseases in addition to preventing early death.

Moving together doesn't mean that you need to join a gym and do intense workouts all the time. That might be doable for some families, but many activities don't require a financial commitment and are easier to achieve.

For instance, try taking a walk. [Research](#) shows that walking can boost your mental health. Adding a family walk into your daily routine will give you time for physical activity while you catch up on what everyone is up to. Check out this [video](#) describing the benefits of walking.



Screenshot from the Feeling Good video.



Consider doing daily chores more energetically, too. The [whole family can participate](#) in these tasks. Being responsible for a chore helps children feel important and builds their confidence. The physical activity associated with chores can also burn calories. Take a look at this [video](#) showing how many calories you burn washing dishes while standing.

[Dance](#) whenever you can. A family dance session can help you blow off steam and leave everyone laughing, which will also make you feel good!

[Here's a one-minute video that outlines five ways to start moving and improve how you feel.](#)

Make small adjustments to your daily routine to incorporate more physical activity, which will make you feel better:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Park farther away from the front door.
- Stand instead of sitting (standing burns more calories).
- Take a walk on your lunch break.
- Walk or bike to your destination instead of driving.
- Wash your car by hand instead of using a drive-through car wash.
- Take an extra walk through the grocery store aisles before checking out.
- Get off the bus one stop early and walk to your destination.
- Shovel instead of using a snowblower.
- Rake leaves instead of using a leaf blower.
- Take time to play.

THINK

Building brain power is simpler than you think. Children love to learn from family.

Help your child build skills while having fun. We want our kids to think critically. Making sense of information and interpreting it will help them make decisions, draw conclusions, and use their thinking skills to the fullest.

Executive function refers to key skills that help children learn. There are three main areas of executive function:

1. Working memory includes being able to keep information in mind and use it when needed.
2. Flexible thinking means being able to see problems from many sides so you can find solutions.

One way to help children develop these executive function skills is to use games, whether card games, board games, physical games and activities, or movement and song games. These games provide healthy challenges. Popular games like checkers, Connect 4, and Jenga are great practice for executive function skills.

3. Self-control means being able to stop and consider before you respond rashly.

Games like Simon Says can teach children about self-control. It shows them how to focus on important information and filter out distractions; they need to listen carefully for “Simon Says” and ignore instructions that don’t start with that phrase.



You can learn more with this [Activities Guide](#) from Harvard University. It contains ideas for helping children build executive function skills. Here are some other simple ways to get started:

- Be creative together: [Draw](#), [play a musical instrument](#), or [bake](#).
- Work on a long-term project together: [Solve a problem](#), play a board game, assemble a puzzle together, or [listen to an audiobook](#).
- Start a [gratitude](#) journal: “Gratitude” means being thankful. It’s a strategy for noticing and expressing appreciation for the good things in life. When we acknowledge the positive, we feel good. Being grateful can improve our emotional, social, and physical health.



[Spending time together](#) makes everyone feel like they are a part of something special. The time you spend together will give your child a strong start in life.

[Family time is so important.](#) Time spent together doesn’t always need to be structured. In terms of a lifetime, the time we spend with family is fairly short. This time together helps family members get to know each other better and strengthens family bonds by building pleasant memories. It also reinforces positive personality traits.

[Family time enhances physical and mental health and promotes resilience.](#)

There are many valuable life lessons for families to learn together, such as recognizing what’s special about each member. “Family time” can also apply to people who aren’t related to you by blood. The key is to be mindful of the time you spend with those around you.

Family time is often spontaneous. Sometimes families need to work a little harder to carve out this time. You might need to get creative because of busy schedules and activities. Here are [some tips](#) for finding time to be together:

- Designate one night per week as “family night”.
- Welcome close friends.
- Let children choose the activities.
- Keep family commitments first.

It’s also a great idea to spend some time [outdoors](#). Being outside helps families unplug from smartphones and video games. Plus, fresh air and sunshine have health benefits, such as improving vitamin D levels. Vitamin D helps us fight off illness. Being in nature can reduce stress and provide mental clarity, too.

Some fun outdoor activities include the following:

- Camping
- Outdoor BBQs
- Picnics
- A day on the water at a river, lake, or pool



Adopting an outdoor hobby during each season will give your family some activities to look forward to year-round. Here are some examples:

- Collect colorful leaves in the fall.
- Go snowshoeing in the winter.
- Plant a garden in the spring.
- Hike in the summer.

Feeling good through helping others.

“[Acts of kindness](#)” refer to doing something nice for someone without getting (or expecting) anything in return. [Studies](#) show that performing just one act of kindness a day has great health benefits including feeling good. Maybe you pay the bill for the person in line after you at a coffee shop. Within your family, acts of kindness can look like clearing the table when it’s not expected of you. These acts are often simple ways to help someone else.

Another way to show kindness is to [volunteer together](#), which is a more organized activity. Families who volunteer together take part in a shared experience. Volunteering as a team can help family members understand their own and each other’s feelings. It can also bring families closer. A volunteer activity like working at a soup kitchen on Thanksgiving is an act of kindness. Family members are likely to express gratitude for the experience and for what they have that others

might not. Be sure to use a [guide](#) to help your family get the most out of a volunteer opportunity:

- Talk about what to expect.
- Read a book about the activity.
- Take pictures to have a memory of the event.
- Share your thoughts with one another after the experience.

There are volunteer opportunities in every community. You can also be the organizer; if you see a need in your community, you could be the family who makes an initial effort to help. Offer to include other families and soon you'll likely have a community project with results you can be proud of.

Now it's time to practice the skills that you've learned in this module. To get started, take the 20-day InPACT Feeling Good Activity Challenge.



20-day InPACT Feeling Good Activity Challenge

The 20-day challenge aims to enhance your family's well-being. Studies suggest that it takes 21 days to form a habit and over 90 days to establish a lasting lifestyle change. Our hope is that by completing the 20-day Feeling Good challenge, your family will continue practicing the most effective activities until they become a lasting and positive habit.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Rainy Day!
Week 1 Welcome to the Feeling Good Challenge! Each day there will be an activity to complete to help you feel good.	Get started: Browse the module.	Create your Gratitude Journal	Start on a 300-piece puzzle together.	Family Scavenger Hunt	Make a family dinner together.	Listen to an online book together.
Week 2	Continue working on a 300-piece puzzle together.	Pick a project to volunteer together .	Write in/share your Gratitude Journal .	Play Family Fitness Monopoly .	Watch a family movie together. What part of the movie did you like best?	Bake a treat together.
Week 3	Solve a problem .	Write in/ share your Gratitude Journal .	Random Acts of Kindness Day to friends and family members.	Karaoke/ Dance night.	Continue working on a 300-piece puzzle together.	Make up and tell your own stories about your life.
Week 4	Play Family Fitness Monopoly for family game night.	Finish your 300-piece puzzle together.	Family coloring contest.	Write in/share your Gratitude Journal .	Plan the next month of Friday Family Activities .	Spring-clean the house together by each taking a room.

SELF-ESTEEM NEEDS

Substance Use and Your Body

Making Healthy Choices for Your Mind and Body



Artwork by Hailey Choi

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Christina Holmes, MAT, Certified Prevention Specialist, is the regional school health coordinator for Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties. She works in the Prevention Program Services department at the Eaton Regional Education Service Agency (RESA), serving schools and families by implementing several grant programs. Christina taught middle school and high school for eight years before moving to Eaton RESA. She believes in the power of education and has a passion for ensuring young people have the knowledge and skills to lead a healthy life.

What's Christina's favorite physical activity?

My family loves walking and hiking with our Bernese Mountain Dog, Charlotte, especially at The Ledges here in our hometown, Grand Ledge.

Kelly Johnson-Sager, MAE, Certified Prevention Specialist, is the regional school health coordinator for the seven counties of the central Upper Peninsula. She works as a health education consultant for the Marquette-Alger RESA and coordinates grant programs on prevention, social-emotional learning, and mental health. Kelly has been with this organization for 10 years and is passionate about working with students and adults to promote overall health and well-being.

What's Kelly's favorite physical activity?

My family is a basketball family. We also love to hike and snowshoe.

Prevention superheroes

Did you know that you are a prevention superhero for your child? You can be the strongest protector against risky behaviors for the children you love. You can choose to live a healthy lifestyle and establish expectations that they do the same. Making healthy choices is not always easy. Adults and children can both face difficult decisions multiple times a day that might affect their health. These choices may be as simple as choosing to eat an apple instead of potato chips for your evening snack or deciding to go for a walk with your family/friends instead of using social media.

Sometimes healthy choices are more complicated, such as choosing not to misuse substances. There are factors in every person's life that can put them at higher risk of substance use. There are also factors that can protect them from making risky decisions to use substances. Regular physical activity is a protective factor against substance misuse and abuse. The protection from routine physical activity becomes even greater when we do it with the people we love.

[Substance use heavily influences our ability to exercise and play sports.](#)

The chart below lists how substances affect our ability to be physically active.

ALCOHOL	MARIJUANA	VAPING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased strength • Cramping • Pain • Dehydration • Poor balance • Slower reaction time • Lower endurance <p>Read about the impact of alcohol on athletic performance. This information comes from the California State University Prevention Department.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor reaction time • Reduced coordination • Poor concentration • Increased fatigue <p>This article from ESPN describes the potential dangers of marijuana.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased blood pressure and heart rate • Decreased lung capacity • Increased risk of lung infections • Possible physical injuries from burns and explosions • Altered mental capacity <p>Read more about the effects of vaping on athletes in Sports Medicine Reports.</p>

For help answering your child's questions about substance use, please see the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ["Talk. They Hear You."® guide](#).

Although it may feel like "Everyone is doing it," it is important to remind young people that "Most teens don't" use alcohol and drugs.



3 in 4

high school students in Michigan reported that they are not currently drinking alcohol.



4 in 5

high school students in Michigan reported that they are not currently using electronic vapor products



4 in 5

high school students in Michigan reported that they are not currently using marijuana



Substance Use on the Rise in Michigan: Vaping Products

1 in 5

high school students reported that they currently use electronic vapor products.

nearly 1/2

of Michigan's high school students, reported that they have tried an electronic vapor product.

Source: 2019 Michigan Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System

Research shows that for middle and high school students, more exercise is associated with less substance use.

Risk and protective factors

We all have things that can put us at greater or less risk of behavioral and health issues. These factors can be biological, psychological, or environmental. The good news is that it's possible to minimize many of the aspects that can contribute to youth substance use or mental health challenges by reducing risk factors and emphasizing protective factors. You can learn more about risk and protective factors [here](#).

Risk and protective factors play core roles in health outcomes. One of the most important protective factors your child has is you, an adult who they can trust and depend on. As a trusted adult, you play a key part in setting behavioral expectations for your child. These expectations can include avoiding substance use and developing a lifelong appreciation for taking care of one's body and mind by participating in physical activities. School sports and clubs can help delay or prevent substance use. The longer a person can delay first use, the more developed the brain will be and the less likely they are to become addicted.

[Wait 21](#) teaches youth how to follow a healthy lifestyle and avoid behaviors that can lead to [addiction](#). Participating in sports is a [protective factor](#) that can keep youth from engaging in substance use; it can grant children a sense of purpose and belonging. It can also promote resiliency among kids who have had [adverse childhood experiences](#). As an involved adult, you're a protective factor against substance use in your child's life.

The next three sections of this module give you and your family tips for making healthy choices for your mind and body that include moving together, thinking together, and being together!

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Preventing Substance Misuse



RISK FACTORS

Aggressive behavior in childhood
Lack of parental supervision

Poor social skills
Community poverty

Drug experimentation
Availability of drugs at school



PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Good self-control
Parental monitoring and support

Positive relationships
Neighborhood resources

Good grades
School anti-drug policies

MOVE

Choosing to be physically active with friends and family will benefit your mind, your body, and your relationships. [Studies](#) have consistently shown that “virtually any form of exercise, from aerobics to yoga, can act as a stress reliever.” Exercise increases the production of feel-good chemicals in the body, like endorphins and dopamine. Regular physical activity is also a healthy coping strategy for managing anxiety and depression.

Physical activity can release chemicals in the body that boost your mood. The positive feelings that come from exercising can cause a “natural high.” [Mental health experts](#) say that “...when people accomplish something physical, such as increasing the number of sit-ups they can do, they believe they will be able to accomplish other goals and have better control over what happens in life. This gives them a higher expectation of success and a better mental outlook.” Exercise can also produce a reduction in anxiety and tension that lasts for a couple hours. You can use this [activity toolkit](#) to get moving while learning about making good choices and avoiding substance use.





Adolescent brain development

Although the brain has reached 90–95% of its size by the time a person is six years old, a great deal of brain development and remodeling occurs as children grow. The brain actually doesn't develop completely until the mid-twenties. The prefrontal cortex is the decision-making part of the brain. It's also the last part of the brain to develop. Adolescents' decisions can be driven by emotions and impulses because the adolescent brain relies on the amygdala; you can read more [here](#).

Basically, the adolescent brain is not yet fully developed. Poor health decisions can affect brain growth. Substances influence the adolescent brain differently than the adult brain, and [using substances can harm brain development](#). Take marijuana as an example: the receptors in the adolescent brain are still growing, and using marijuana affects this growth. It can hurt cognitive and emotional development. In fact, [one study](#) found that “teens who regularly use marijuana lose an average of 5.8 IQ points by the time they reach adulthood.”

Many healthy behaviors such as sleep, family discussions, and regular physical activity support adolescent brain development. [Watch this video](#) to discover more. Positive routines, like exercising together, help youth as they make decisions to keep their mind and body healthy. Fun fact: practicing mindfulness adds gray matter to the prefrontal cortex. This means that being mindful assists in adolescent brain development. This practice can be as simple as teaching your kids to take two [deep breaths](#) before reacting to a tough situation. You could also use activities like [yoga](#) to help them learn to be present.

Substances and the brain

According to the [Cleveland Clinic](#), “dopamine is known as the ‘feel-good’ hormone. It gives you a sense of pleasure. It also gives you the motivation to do something when you’re feeling pleasure.” Dopamine is part of the body’s reward system. Our bodies release dopamine when we exercise.

Using alcohol, tobacco, or drugs also releases dopamine. For instance, using marijuana or nicotine releases large amounts – more than our bodies normally make on our best days. The body gets used to this huge release of dopamine from the drug and eventually stops making its own. When a person uses drugs regularly, their body starts to crave these substances. Drugs become part of a daily routine. The person's body depends on the drugs to produce dopamine. Physical activity is known to help with substance misuse prevention, reduction, and recovery. [Studies](#) have shown that intense physical activity can be an effective treatment for substance use disorder. Physical activity helps us create our own dopamine.



GET YOUR DAILY HAPPINESS CHEMICALS

What are the Happy Chemicals?

DOPAMINE

- Enables motivation, learning, and pleasure
- Gives you determination to accomplish goals, desires and needs

OXYTOCIN

- Feeling of trust, motivates you to build and sustain relationships
- Known as the "Cuddle or Love Hormone," plays a role in bonding

SEROTONIN

- Feeling significant or important among peers
- Calm form of accepting yourself with the people around you

ENDORPHINS

- Releases a brief euphoria to mask physical pain
- Response to pain and stress

How Deficiency Affects You

- Procrastination
- Low self-esteem
- Lack of motivation
- Low energy or fatigue
- Inability to focus
- Feeling anxious
- Feeling hopeless
- Mood swings

- Feeling lonely
- Stressed
- Lack of motivation
- Low energy or fatigue
- Disconnect of relationships
- Feeling anxious
- Insomnia

- Low self-esteem
- Overly sensitive
- Anxiety/panic attacks
- Mood swings
- Feeling hopeless
- Social phobia
- Obsession/compulsion
- Insomnia

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Mood swings
- Aches or pains
- Insomnia
- Impulsive behavior

How to Increase Happiness Levels

- Meditate
- Daily to-do list
- Long-term goals
- Food rich in L-Tyrosine
- Exercise regularly
- Create something: writing, music or art

- Physical touch
- Socializing
- Massage
- Acupuncture
- Listening to music
- Exercise
- Cold shower
- Meditate

- Exercise
- Cold shower
- Sunlight
- Massage

- Laughter/crying
- Creating music/art
- Eat dark chocolate
- Eat spicy foods
- Exercise/stretching
- Massage
- Meditate

Adapted from Mind My Feelings

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Thinking together about how substances affect the body can help prepare youth to make healthy decisions for their physical and mental well-being in the future. Children and adolescents want to know what their parents think about alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. Educate yourself on substances and how they affect the body. You can learn about drug trends at trusted websites like [GetSmartAbout Drugs.gov](https://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.gov) or [Prevention Network](https://www.preventionnetwork.org). Visit [Talksooner.org](https://www.talksooner.org) to get talking tips designed for all age groups, from early childhood to young adulthood.

Having conversations about long- and short-term goals can help children think about things they want that might be more difficult to obtain if they use substances. Help your child consider how they can work towards those goals while refusing tobacco, drugs, and alcohol if someone offers any to them. Practice these refusal skills with your child.

Think Together: Practice Refusal Skills

Refusal Skill Strategy	If someone said . . .	You could say . . .	Now you try: Work together to write one way you could refuse.
Suggesting another activity	Hey, want to go to Jamie's house tomorrow night? His parents are going out of town and I heard someone's brother is buying beer for the group.	Let's go to the Y to play basketball instead of going to Jamie's party.	
Giving a reason	Get over here! You have to try these Pot Tart edibles we swiped from my dad. They are so crazy good, but eat them slowly. They are strong!	I don't want any, thanks. I have a game tomorrow and want to feel my best.	
Stating your feelings and opinion	You want a hit of this? It's Juul's Mango pod. So good. My favorite vape flavor ever.	I don't want to vape because I don't want to put chemicals in my body, and I don't like the way it makes my head feel fuzzy.	
Simply say a direct no	Here, have one of my mom's pills. They will help your headache go away so fast!	No, that's not for me.	

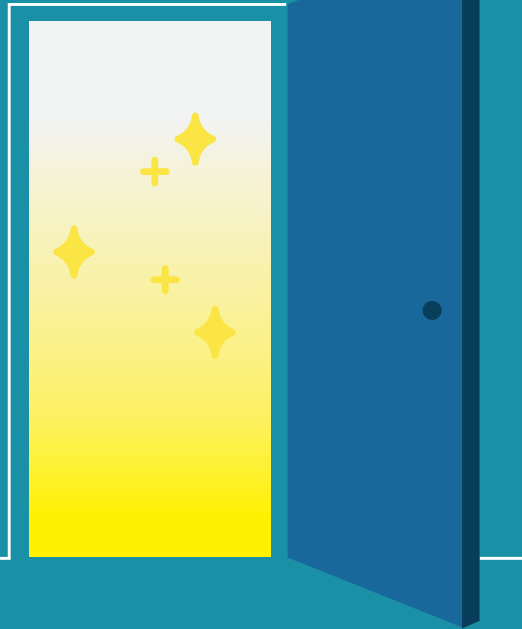
Practicing refusal skills together will give your child opportunities to think through ways to say "no". This activity will come in handy if they find themselves in a situation where someone is offering them drugs or alcohol. Practice can also enhance your child's mental and emotional health.



Just spending time together can influence children's choices. Adult caregivers are role models for children. You should know that your views on drugs and alcohol will affect how your kids feel about these substances. The same holds true for the emphasis you place on being active and leading a healthy lifestyle. Try to talk about your expectations around drugs, alcohol, and being safe apart while you're being active together. You can bring up these topics as you go for a hike in the woods or play at a park. Usually, kids are more likely to share when they're distracted by other activities and do not have to make eye contact. Just remember to be calm, keep the conversation age-appropriate, and share how drugs can damage youth's developing brains and bodies. Watch this brief video with your child to help them understand how people become addicted: [Wait21 Understanding Addiction as a Disease.](#)

Have conversations early with your child about substances and your family expectations. Consider taking advantage of every day "door openers" that you or your child may notice to start conversations:

- A billboard for a cannabis shop
- Special displays for beer at the grocery store before a big game
- Someone smoking cigarettes in a movie
- Underage characters in a movie choosing not to use substances at a party
- Characters on a TV show using substances and choosing not to drive
- An athlete talking about the healthy routines they use to prepare for competition



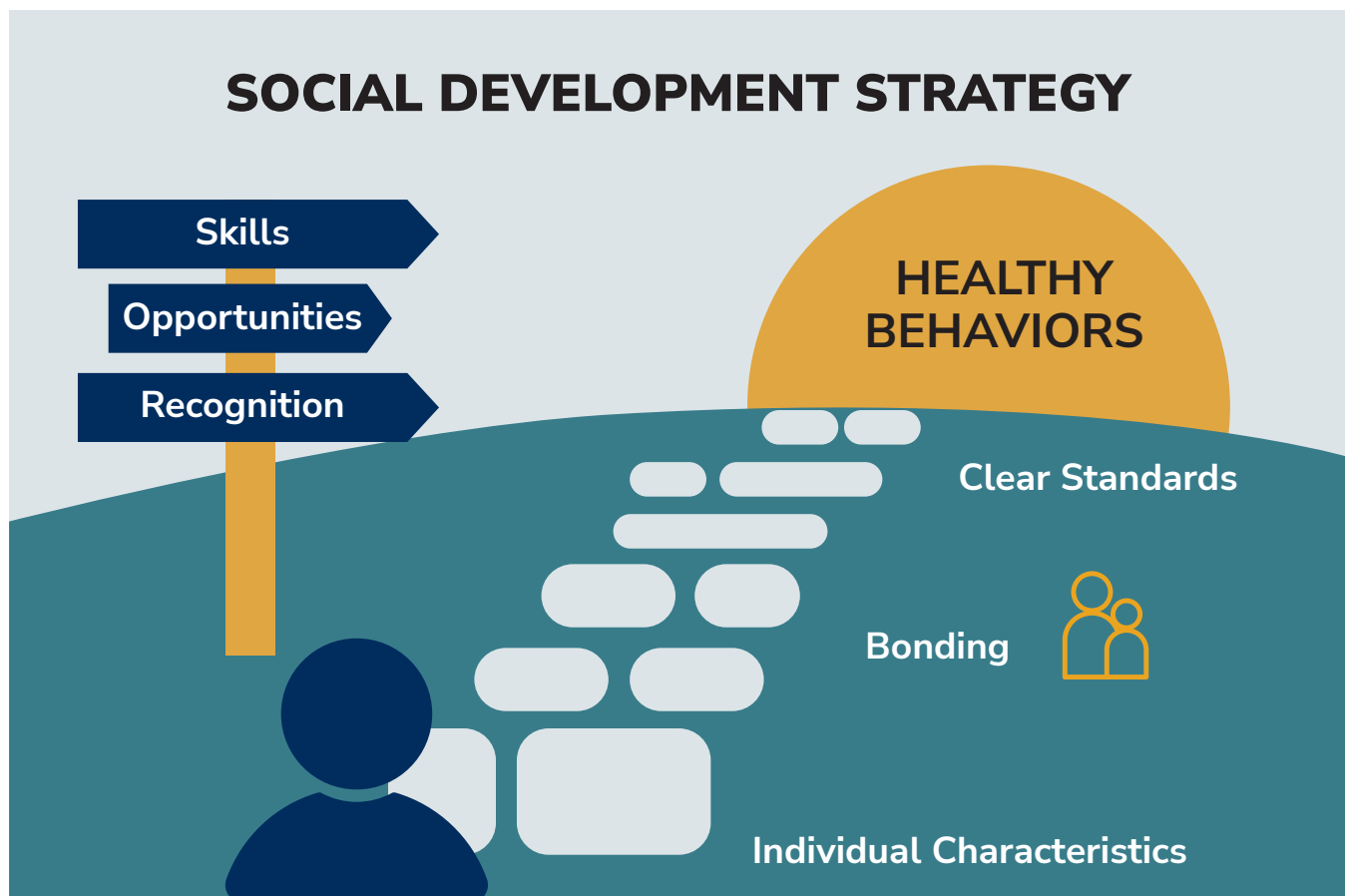
Source: wait21.org

Staying involved in your child's life is one way to help keep them safe from the dangers of substance use. Encourage your kids to take part in hobbies, sports, and clubs that interest them. These activities offer chances for positive interaction and better self-esteem. [Know who your child's friends are](#) and where they spend their time. Kids who have friends who use drugs are more likely to try drugs themselves.

Celebrate [Red Ribbon Week](#): it's the largest drug-use prevention campaign in the United States. As a family, you can help organize events such as a 5K race or other activities through your child's school. Here is a list of [Natural High Activities](#) to get this conversation started with your child.

Social Development Strategy: Building skills to avoid substance misuse

The [Social Development Strategy](#) is a framework to promote positive youth development. It organizes protective factors into a simple strategy for action. The model works by first giving a child the knowledge and skills they need to be successful, then providing the child opportunities to practice those skills, and finally recognizing and praising the child's effort and improvement when using them. This process can strengthen the bond between you and your child. It also reinforces desired healthy behaviors, including avoiding substance use.



Adapted from Utah DPC

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You can integrate physical activity when using the Social Development Strategy with your child. To begin, choose a physical activity that you would like to do or learn together. It could be something like swimming, biking, push-ups, paddle boarding, dancing, or joining a sports team. Work on teaching your child those skills. If you can't participate, then be their biggest cheerleader as they learn from someone else. Whatever the physical activity is, your child will need plenty of opportunities to participate in it. Set aside time for them to practice – or better yet, join them when they do. Help your child set achievable goals related to their chosen activity. Be sure to provide lots of encouragement as they work towards their goals.

Young people who do a sport or physical activity are less likely to use drugs. A [study](#) showed that “participation in sports reduced the risk of overall illicit drug use, but particularly during high school.” Advocating for physical activity and a healthy lifestyle makes you a protective factor for your child. You are one of the strongest shields against risky behaviors for the kids you love.

Resources for learning more about substances and substance misuse:

[Join Your Local County Coalition to Prevent Substance Misuse](#)

[Drugs: What Parents Need to Know from Kids Health](#)

[Chippewa Valley Coalition for Youth and Families](#)

[Learn how to Safely Dispose of Prescription Medications](#)

[My Life, My Quit](#)

[Parents Against Vaping E-cigarettes](#)

[Talk Sooner](#)

Now it's time to practice the skills that you've learned in this module. To get started, take the 20-day INPACT Substance Use and Your Body Activity Challenge.

20-day InPACT Substance Use and Your Body Activity Challenge

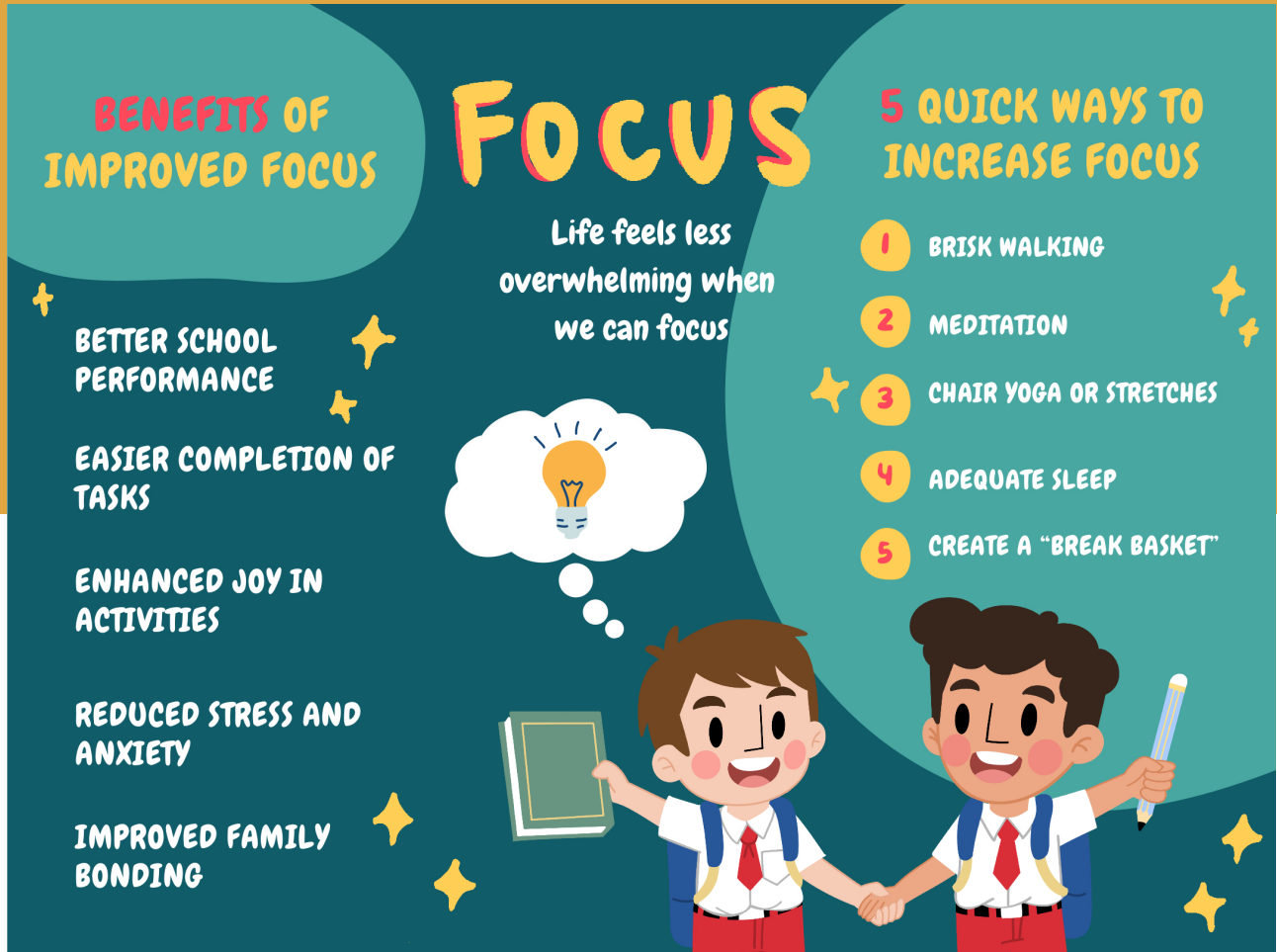
The 20-day challenge aims to enhance your family's ability to activate your happiness chemicals through physical activity. Studies suggest that it takes 21 days to form a habit and over 90 days to establish a lasting lifestyle change. Our hope is that by completing the 20-day Substance Use and Your Body challenge, your family will continue practicing the most effective activities until they become a lasting and positive habit.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Bonus!	Reflect
Week 1 Focus: Increasing Dopamine	Develop a plan to complete regular weekly exercise with your family! Check out these free templates to help make a schedule.	Meditation: find 5- 10 minutes to sit quietly and focus on your breathing. Check out more meditation activities .	Food rich in L- tyrosine helps with dopamine production! Try eating fish, almonds, bananas, yogurt or cottage cheese today.	Help an elderly neighbor or family member with some cleaning or yard work today! Staying active and helping out will feel great!	Take your dog/ pet out for a walk or ask a friend if you can borrow their dog. The happiness and excitement of animals is contagious!	Create a to-do list for your weekend, including being active! It will feel great to cross completed items off your list!	Reflect on which activity from this week made you feel the best and make it part of your regular routine!
Week 2 Focus: Increasing Oxytocin	Be intentional about giving someone in your family a hug today!	Go for a walk with a friend or a family member. Just spending time with others can improve your mood!	Listen to your favorite music while being active. Notice how the music makes you feel.	Try taking a cool shower today instead of a hot one. This can invigorate your body and give you energy!	Organize a yard game night, with games like ladder ball, cornhole, badminton, sidewalk chalk, and other DIY games .	Have a water balloon fight or run through the sprinkler. This is fun for kids and adults!	Reflect on which activity from this week made you feel the best and make it part of your regular routine!
Week 3 Focus: Increasing Serotonin	Sunlight can boost serotonin levels! Try to walk, listen to music, play cards, or meditate outside for 15 minutes today!	Massages can boost serotonin levels. Try making a family shoulder massage train and give quick 2-minute massages!	Several foods can boost serotonin: eggs, cheese, turkey, nuts, salmon, tofu, and pineapple. Try to eat some of these this week!	Exercise is a great way to boost serotonin levels. Try this fun 8-minute family fun cardio session	Pair physical activity and sunshine to boost serotonin levels! Run outside, play soccer, hit golf balls, or go for a swim today!	Thinking about happy moments can boost your mood. Share favorite family memories and pictures at dinner!	Reflect on which activity from this week made you feel the best and make it part of your regular routine!
Week 4 Focus: Increasing Endorphins	start with some stretching to increase endorphins by following this Yoga and Stretching routine .	Being creative through art or music increases endorphins. Doodle on paper while eating a meal as a family tonight!	Eating releases endorphins into the brain. Spicy foods may increase this! Try out these spicy veggie wraps .	Physical activity boosts endorphins, especially high intensity interval training (HIIT) workouts. Try out this kid-friendly HIIT Workout .	Eating dark chocolate (yum!) can boost endorphins. Try making these chocolate covered bananas .	Laughing boosts endorphin levels. Play Pictionary or Charades as a family to get the laughter started! Try using this word generator .	Reflect on which activity from this week made you feel the best and make it part of your regular routine!

SELF-ESTEEM NEEDS

Focus

Focusing our Energy to Bring Positive Changes



Artwork by Hailey Choi

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Lisa Jo Gagliardi, MPA, is a child and adolescent health consultant, facilitator, and coach with 17 years of experience working with health in education. She is also a parent and loves working on family empowerment programs such as InPACT at Home. She is the founder of LJ Gagliardi, LLC, where her work revolves around children's health, social-emotional wellness, and family empowerment.

What's Lisa Jo's favorite physical activity?

In the summer, I love swimming; in the spring and fall, I like to hike in the woods; and in the winter, I like to snowshoe and go sledding.

Why focus on focus?

Life can be distracting and stressful. This pressure can take our attention away from important activities and make it hard to focus. Focus is something both children and adults can struggle with. Life feels less overwhelming when we can focus, or concentrate, more easily. That can be tough, but it's important to be deliberate about bringing focus into the family; children can better tackle school-work, chores, games, and physical activity. You can practice improving focus as a family! Moving together, thinking together, and being together will help.

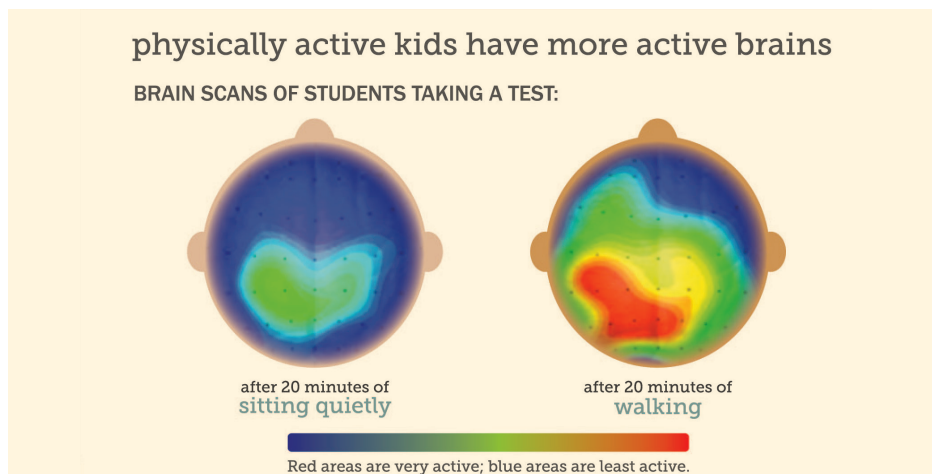
The next three sections of this module give you and your family tips to enhance your child's focus that include moving together, thinking together, and being together!

MOVE

Believe it or not, simple [breathing exercises](#) or [physical activities](#) can help the brain to focus. These tasks calm both the body and the mind and help us concentrate. They can even make us happier! When you want to improve focus, think about what movement is needed at the time; it could be a simple stretch break, a quick physical activity (like jumping jacks), or heading outside for a brisk 30-minute walk. Doing physical activities as a family can be fun for you and your child and can increase the ability to focus.

Five quick activities to increase focus

1. **Twenty minutes of brisk walking:** This picture below shows brain scans. The brain on the left was scanned after the person had been sitting quietly for 20 minutes. On the right, we see the brain after 20 minutes of walking. Cooler colors like blue and green indicate less brain activity. Notice the brain to the right; it shows a lot more brain activity and warmer colors such as red and orange. Imagine how well focused that person is.



Adapted from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation "Active kids learn better"

2. **Meditation for focus:** Mindful meditation can increase our focus and attention. As a family, try this [InPACT at Home 8-minute mindful meditation video](#).
3. **Chair yoga or chair stretches:** Try this [6-minute video](#) with guided stretches for young children. For older children and adults, [read this article](#) with a 2-minute video showing simple stretches to do in a chair or while sitting at a desk.
4. **Mindful walking:** [Read this quick article](#) with audio for a 10-minute mindful walk.
5. **Create a "break basket":** Use this [worksheet](#) from Sanford Health to help you and your child visualize what should go in your basket. It could be a basket, bucket, or bag. This tool is great when children need a break, such as while working on a large homework assignment. Here are some ideas for filling your basket: art supplies; a small jigsaw puzzle; word game puzzles; or fidgets (squish ball, silly putty, stress ball). Consider setting a block of time for your child to work and a block of time for their break.

THINK

Thinking together can help you and your child with focus and attention.

Some ways your family might think together to improve focus include:

- [Problem solving together](#) can help your child get over an academic hurdle.
- Planning meals and snacks is a great activity to do together. Keeping our bodies fueled with food can influence our ability to focus.
- Playing games together. You could try a dance contest, a board game, or the [alphabet gratitude game](#).
- Doing mindfulness exercises together, which are known to help with focus.
- Ensuring your family gets enough sleep. When our bodies do not get enough sleep it is harder for our brains to focus.

Practicing ways to focus is a useful skill for the whole family, especially in a world with so many distractions.





“Why can my kids focus when playing video games or browsing social media but not at other times?”

All visual media (screen time) gives us an escape – sometimes a needed one if we’re watching something that brings us joy. Yet moderation is key. Video games, social media, and other forms of on-screen entertainment can cause a rush of dopamine and other feel-good chemicals from the brain into the body. These substances are released when we do things like “level up” in a game, receive “likes” on a picture on social media, or binge watch a show on an app such as Netflix. Although it’s certainly OK to use screens in small doses, the longer we stay engaged on our devices, the more the brain craves these feel-good chemicals. And we gradually need more and more of them. Without that boost, we might start to struggle with mood and focus. Spending extended time on these platforms can lead to long-term problems when people need to focus on other life tasks.

We can try to give up some screen time, but realize that children and adults can experience a kind of “detox.” For a couple days, or even weeks, you or your child might feel irritable or anxious. The great news is that physical activity can create feel-good chemicals in the brain, too! Instead of relying on screen time, try replacing that with physical activity: shoot some hoops, go for a long hike, or do other forms of movement your family enjoys.

If you need guidance on screen time for children at different ages, check out [Common Sense Media](#).

An important note: violent visual media (whether in video games, on television, or in movies) can potentially negatively affect children's and adolescents' behavior. Here's an [article](#) from the American Psychological Association if you'd like to learn more. A few takeaways on violent visual media and its impacts on children's focus are summarized below:

- Children may become less sensitive to others' pain and suffering. It may be hard for kids to focus on understanding others and their own emotions.
- Children may be more fearful of the world around them. Kids cannot focus properly when they are afraid.
- Children may be more likely to behave in aggressive or harmful ways towards others. Being unable to regulate their own actions can make it extremely hard to focus.

The brain is not built to multitask, which interrupts focus

The distractions and demands we face every day can make it difficult to focus. Many of us do something we call "multitasking." Research has shown that what we're really doing is goal switching. In other words, our brain is quickly switching from one activity to another, back and forth repeatedly. That takes a huge amount of mental energy and makes it tough to focus. Goal switching might make us feel as though we're being more productive, but we're actually being less productive. We can even end up feeling like our brain is "fried."

It can be helpful to try to focus on a task or activity without distraction. We can do things like block off the amount of time needed to complete a task and take breaks to refresh our bodies and brains. You can model and guide your child on ways to avoid multitasking.



Important note: Children learn to focus on tasks longer as they get older. The average attention span by age is:

- 2 years old: 4 to 6 minutes
- 4 years old: 8 to 12 minutes
- 6 years old: 12 to 18 minutes
- 8 years old: 16 to 24 minutes
- 10 years old: 20 to 30 minutes
- 12 years old: 24 to 36 minutes
- 14 years old: 28 to 42 minutes
- 16 years old: 32 to 48 minutes

Tips to help you and your child avoid multitasking and increase focus

- **Create quiet:** When you or your child decide to work on a task, remove all noise and distractions (you might need to silence your phone and close all social media).
- **Create space:** Find an area that is less likely to be disturbed. Close the door if possible. Ask not to be interrupted for the amount of time you'd like to focus on a task.
- **Be strategic:** Prioritize tasks and check things off the list as you go.
- **Create time:** Schedule a block of time for when you'll be working on the task – and protect it. You can schedule separate time blocks to check social media, texts, and email. Be sure to block off time for physical activity and family conversations, too! When we reserve time for specific tasks, we can focus better and check them off the list.
- **Take breaks:** Take meaningful breaks that refuel you, such as taking a 10-minute mindful walk at lunch.
 - A meaningful break means getting up or even removing yourself from the space where you're working. Try stretching, doing breathing exercises, taking a walk with a friend, or getting some water and a snack. Then you can return to your task feeling recharged. As for your child, keep in mind their school's rules about when they can get up and move around and where they can go.

It is important to understand developmentally how much time to expect them to focus on a task. And obviously, tasks they are interested in will be easier to focus on. There can also be other factors that affect focus. This [article](#) has helpful information around this topic.

The adolescent brain and focus

Take a moment to [watch this video](#) on the adolescent brain created by Dan Siegal, M.D. (adolescence covers ages 10–19). This video is meant to help you better understand the adolescent brain and how youth can use mindsight with focus to improve their well-being. Mindsight is the ability to understand the link between our body and mind. Practices like meditation, which help us focus on our heartbeat and breathing, are examples of mindsight techniques.

- The video discusses how to use focus and attention to shape the brain through mindsight exercises. Practicing mindfulness is another good way to use mindsight. For a simple start, [try this “10 Minute Mindful Movement for Focus” with your child.](#)
- The video also talks about how our body produces “myelin.” Myelin helps the brain work. [Did you know exercise can help our brains create myelin?](#) The more engaging the activity, the better. Try out some [InPACT at Home videos](#) and see which ones you and your child find the most engaging. Have fun moving together and improving your brain health!



BE

As a family, you can do things together to help everyone concentrate better. Try being active, cooking meals, solving puzzles, and playing games as a team. This not only helps everyone focus more but also makes everyone feel happier and less stressed. Enjoy the time together while sharpening your concentration skills.

Come together as a family to focus on food and mealtime

Food is really important in families. It helps our bodies stay strong and our minds stay focused. We love to cook recipes that our grandparents and parents taught us. Some foods remind us of our family's background. We also cook special foods for big celebrations. The best times are when we eat together, tell stories, and laugh. It's fun when kids help pick out food at the store or help cook at home. This makes families closer and helps everyone work together.

Here are some ways to include kids and help them concentrate while shopping for groceries:

- **Young children:** At the store, ask your child to show you where something is. If you're in the produce section, try questions like, "Where are the oranges?", "Where is the lettuce?", and "What color is this?" You can also share your curiosity: "I wonder how much this weighs. Let's weigh it!" Once your

child is old enough, ask things like “Can you get four potatoes? Let’s count them and put them in this bag.” For children who can read, have them look at aisle signs and ask “What aisle do you think the cereal is in?” and similar questions. These prompts help them learn while keeping them interested and focused as you shop.

- **Ages 9–12:** At the store or in the kitchen, have your child help you choose meals. Ask what kind of meal you might make with an ingredient such as green beans or chicken. Try to focus on healthy choices. If you’re going to the store, consider making a list using this “[Grocery Store Game Plan](#).”
- **Ages 13–18:** Give your child a budget, have them make a shopping list, and put them in charge of planning one meal per week. As a challenge, ask them to create a meal that meets [MyPlate](#) recommendations. The dish should include lean protein, vegetables or fruit, and whole grains. Remember to make half of your plate fruits and vegetables whenever possible. The form doesn’t really matter – produce can be fresh, frozen, canned, 100% juice, or even dried.

Now it’s time to practice the skills that you’ve learned in this module. To get started, take the 20-day InPACT Focus Challenge.



20-day InPACT Focus Challenge

The 20-day challenge aims to enhance your family's focus skills. Studies suggest that it takes 21 days to form a habit and over 90 days to establish a lasting lifestyle change. Our hope is that by completing the 20-day Focus challenge, your family will continue practicing the most effective activities until they become a lasting and positive habit.

	Day 1 Monitor Screen Time	Day 2 Take Breaks Together	Day 2 Get Active	Day 4 Be Mindful	Day 5 Focus with Food
Week 1 Your family can use these activity ideas each week to practice Focus. Each week has 5 days of activities to try. You can do activities in any order that works for you and your family.	Think about the screen time your family uses. Discuss how much time is allowed for the week for non-school or work-related screen time.	Make a "Break Basket" to use when breaks are needed during tasks like homework. Use this worksheet shared in the module to plan what to put in it.	Get physically active! Pick a physical activity to do as a family! Maybe a dance-party , going for a walk, or shooting hoops?	Do one of the mindfulness activities shared in the module. For example, this 8-minute mindfulness video .	Create a shopping list as a family using the Grocery Store Game Plan .
Week 2 Bonus Challenge! Every day each person lists 5 things they are grateful for! Or you could play the Alphabet Gratitude Game .	Plan a screen time budget for the family this week. Decide how much, when, and for what purpose. If you need guidance, check out Common Sense Media .	Game night (or any time of day)! Pick a family board game or card game to play or make your own .	Go for a brisk 30-minute walk as a family! You could also run, or ride bikes. If weather is bad, do three InPACT at Home videos instead.	Read a book to your children. For older children, take turns reading chapters instead. Or you could download an audio book and listen together.	Plan meals and make a shopping trip, if necessary. Use some of the ideas from the "Focus on Food" section of the module.
Week 3 Bonus Challenge! Every day each person lists 5 things they are grateful for! Or you could play the Alphabet Gratitude Game .	Plan a screen time budget for the family this week. Decide how much, when, and for what purpose. If you need guidance, check out Common Sense Media .	Make a goal to take three meaningful breaks today. Here are some ideas for kids , but be sure to take meaningful breaks too	Do this Yoga and Stretching video, or this Energizing Mindful Movement video from InPACT at Home.	Try to do mindful meditation for at least 10 minutes, 3 times today. For example, try 10-Minute Mindful Meditation for Focus .	Cook a meal together, eat together, and clean-up together. This is a great chance to share your daily gratitude as part of the Bonus Challenge!
Week 4 Bonus Challenge! Every day each person lists 5 things they are grateful for! Or you could play the Alphabet Gratitude Game .	Plan a screen time budget for the family this week. Decide how much, when, and for what purpose. If you need guidance, check out Common Sense Media .	What breaks have worked best for you and your family so far? Practice your favorite breaks today!	Get 30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity as a family today! If weather is bad, have a 30-minute dance party or do three InPACT at Home videos.	Family coloring time! Grab your favorite coloring book or draw pictures. If your family prefers other art projects or crafts, do those instead.	Make half your plate at each meal fruits and/or veggies. Canned, fresh, frozen, and 100% juice all work! If you need easy recipe ideas using fruits and vegetables, InPACT at Home has many recipe videos .

Self-Actualization Needs



SELF-ACTUALIZATION

Personal Best

Changing Your Mindset About Success



Artwork by Hailey Choi

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

This module was a team effort! **Alanna Price** (Detroit Public Schools) conceptualized its theme, "best effort." **Dr. Rebecca Hasson** (University of Michigan) drafted several versions of the module. **Lisa Jo Gagliardi** (LJ Gagliardi, LLC) provided content for the "Changing your mindset" and "The power of yet" sections. **Heather Lewis** (Williamston Community Schools) provided content for the "Think together: Achieving your personal best through memorization" section. **Evilia Jankowski** (Michigan Department of Education), **Scott Martin** (Michigan Department of Education), **Nick Jaskiw** (Newaygo County Regional Educational Service Agency), and **Nancy Jaskiw** (Reeths-Puffer Schools) provided constructive feedback on different versions of this module.

What are our favorite physical activities to do as a team?

[InPACT at Home videos](#), of course!

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Achieving your personal best

“Give it your best shot!” “Go for it!” “Keep trying!” “Never give up!”

Teachers, coaches, family members, and friends often use these kinds of encouragement to help kids achieve their personal best. But what does “personal best” mean? It means performing at your highest level. To help your child achieve their personal best, you’ll need to set a goal together, make a plan, and remind them to try their hardest. Then, no matter the outcome, your child will need to be satisfied with how much effort they put into accomplishing their goal. That’s right – their personal best won’t be outcome-focused, like getting an A on a test or running their fastest time in a 5K. It’s actually process-focused: what matters most is how they prepare for the test or how well they commit to training before the race. We have opportunities to achieve our personal best in every aspect of life by promising ourselves that we’ll “give it our best shot” as we work towards our goals, both in terms of health and in general.

Changing our mindset

Focusing on the process rather than the outcome may require you to shift your mindset. But what is “mindset” exactly? It’s your outlook on life – your world-view. It basically reflects your beliefs. Changing your mindset calls for embracing a new belief. Many people tend to favor a “winning” mindset; maybe you define success as winning first place and nothing less. Lots of people see “winning” as being better than everyone else. Yet your true personal best comes from having a “growth” mindset, where you’re committed to rising above challenges and learning how to improve at something if you try. A growth mindset also means pivoting from “How did I perform?” to “What did I learn?” To put it another way: a winning mindset centers on being the best, whereas a growth mindset centers on being your best... even if that just means being better tomorrow than you were yesterday. A growth mindset also means that you match your practice with your potential.

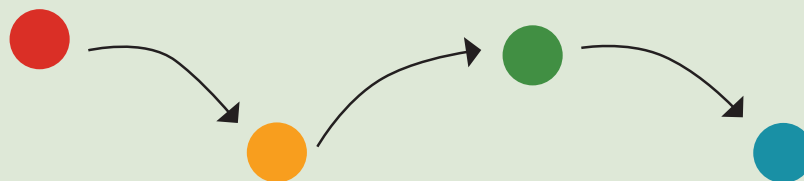
MINDSET

ATTITUDE

ACTION

BEHAVIOR

SUCCESS



A growth mindset alters everything because it changes your attitude and how you look at things. When you update your attitude, you modify your behavior as well. Changing your behavior means changing your actions, which is a success in itself! Focusing on the process rather than the outcome will help everybody in your family achieve their personal best.

The power of “yet”: Why mindset matters!

A growth mindset means that, even in the face of challenges, we can improve if we work hard. “Yet” is a tiny word that packs a punch when it comes to developing a growth mindset. We can use this word when engaging in self-talk about our goals. Many times, we focus on what we think we can’t do. But consider how just adding “yet” to the statements below can change how we feel:

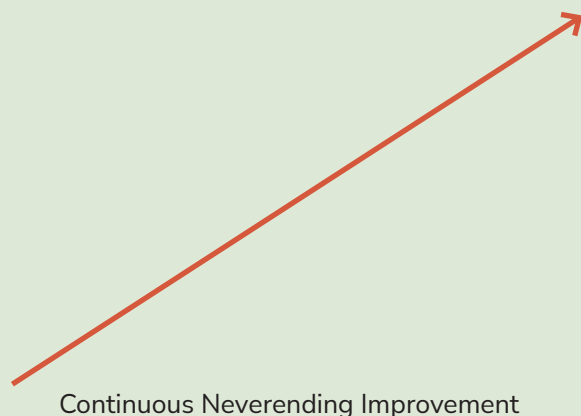
- “I can’t run a 5K... yet.”
- “I don’t understand this math problem... yet.”
- “I’m unable to get my daily servings of fruits and vegetables... yet.”
- “I can’t fit in 60 minutes of physical activity a day... yet.”
- “I can’t convince my kids to clean their room... yet.”

Can you feel the difference? Adding and believing the word “yet” tells us that we can do those things as long as we put in the effort. Think about something you’d like to do but are struggling with because you feel you can’t achieve it. Now add the word “yet.” Look at that – you’re on your way to a growth mindset and meeting your goal!

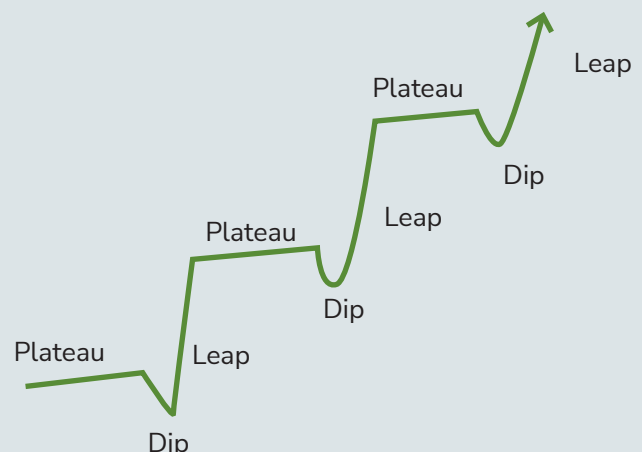
The path to success is not linear!

Having a growth mindset is crucial for achieving your personal best. It’s also important to remember that success isn’t a straight shot upward (see the graphs below). Believing that the path to success is straight can leave you frustrated or disappointed by some of the obstacles you may encounter along your journey.

How People THINK Success Looks



How Success ACTUALLY Looks



Instead, success usually comes with leaps, a few dips, and several plateaus. You'll probably have seasons of difficulty when you feel like you are doing everything right but not seeing results. The trick is to not give up! On the other side of that dip, there is a giant leap in progress waiting for you. Sure, sometimes you'll need to ease up, slow down, or take a brief rest. But just like Dory from Finding Nemo says, "just keep swimming!" If you keep moving forward, your persistence will pay off.



Just keep swimming!

The next three sections of this module give you and your family examples of how you can achieve your personal best by moving together, thinking together, and being together!

MOVE

Achieving your personal best through activity

Imagine your family has completed the InPACT at Home Healthy Choices module, you've started exercising, and you've already run a couple of 1-mile races. Now, as a family, you set a goal to complete the Girls on the Run 5k. No one in your family has run a 5K race... yet. Because you know that nothing is achieved in a day, but rather with consistency over time, you download the [Girls on the Run 10-week training plan](#) or join a [Let Me Run](#) team. Instead of setting a race time goal (e.g., finishing the race in under one hour), you map out a process that will help your family finish the race. For example, you might ask yourself the following questions when creating a plan:

- What time of day will help us be consistent in our training?
- Are we going to train by ourselves or as a family?
- What steps should we take to prevent injuries?
- Where in our house/apartment will we post our training schedule?
- How will we keep each other accountable to complete our training plan?
- How will we reward ourselves for the progress we are making?
- Are there any changes we need to make to the 10-week training plan?

After answering these questions, you can write down your training schedule, post it on your refrigerator, and start training!

...Today is race day. Over the past 12 weeks, you completed 94% of the runs on your training schedule. Congratulations! Because you put in the hard work of training, this race is no longer a race but is in fact your victory lap! You and your family can run with confidence knowing that two things will be true:

1. You can trust your training and be satisfied with the level of effort you've put into achieving your goal of finishing the race.
2. No matter how long it takes you to finish the race, it will be your personal best – because it's your first time running the race!

This running example shows us that "personal best" means setting a goal, making a plan, and doing your best. And no matter the outcome, you can be satisfied with the level of effort you devoted to accomplishing your goal.



THINK

Achieving your personal best through memorization

Imagine your child has secured a part in the school play. They're excited but not sure how to memorize all those lines. Just as runners work through a training schedule to prepare for race day, you and your child can create a "training schedule" to get ready for opening night.

First, here are a few **tips and tricks** to keep in mind when memorizing anything (e.g., vocabulary words, spelling lists, speeches):

- Writing the lines out longhand will help your child remember them.
- Working on the lines before bed will help them "stick." We process what we've learned while we sleep; that's when information is converted from short- to long-term memory.
- Repetition is key! Your child should rehearse their lines repeatedly.
- Have your child exercise or move around while they work on their lines. Research has shown that the increased blood flow to the brain from movement, as well as the connections the brain creates while moving, makes for a powerful combination for memorizing!
- Keep memorization sessions short; 20–30 minutes per day is plenty. Remind your child to take a 5-minute break every 10–20 minutes to get up and walk around.
- Once your child has memorized a scene, have them give the script to a partner who will read the other character's lines as your child runs through theirs.
- After the first four days, have your child say their lines out loud while practicing. Speaking them and hearing the lines will help make them stick.

With these tips in mind, you and your child can now create a training schedule to help memorize your lines. Here's a sample schedule:





- **Day 1:** Read the entire script (as long as it takes).
- **Day 2:** Highlight all your lines and read through as many as you can in 20 minutes. If you finish early, go back to the beginning and read the lines again until the 20 minutes are up.
- **Day 3:** Start at the beginning of your script and handwrite as many lines as you can in 20 minutes. This will be Section 1. Then read through these lines again before bed.
- **Day 4:** Walk around your house (or outside if you'd like) as you read through Section 1. Read through it over and over until 20 minutes are up, and then read it quietly again before bed.
- **Day 5:** At the end of Section 1, handwrite the next lines (as many as you can) in 20 minutes. This will be Section 2. Read through it again before bed.
- **Day 6:** As on Day 4, walk around your house (or outside if you'd like) as you read through Section 2. Read through it over and over until 20 minutes are up, and then read it quietly again before bed.
- **Day 7:** Walk around and read through Sections 1 and 2. Say the lines out loud. Repeat for 20 minutes, then read both sections again quietly before bed.
- **Day 8:** If you still have more pages to work through, repeat Days 3–7 until you've made your way through the whole script.
- **Day 9 (opening night):** Read all sections out loud as you walk around, then read through all sections quickly and quietly before bed.

Again, the important things to remember are for your child to set a goal, make a plan, do their best, and be satisfied with the level of effort they've put into achieving their goal no matter the outcome.

Now let's apply this same process to setting reading goals! As you put together a family plan for reading, keep in mind that the goals should be SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

Here are some sample SMART goals for reading:

- Simple goal: I will read every day.
- Better goal: I will read at least 10 pages per day.
- Best goal: During the summer, I will read at least 10 pages per day before going to bed.

S	SPECIFIC	Does the goal make sense? Is it clear?	
M	MEASURABLE	Is the goal measurable? Can I track my progress?	
A	ATTAINABLE	Is the goal challenging but not impossible?	
R	RELEVANT	Is the goal worth my effort? Will it benefit me and meet my needs?	
T	TIMELY	Is there a timeframe for achieving the goal?	

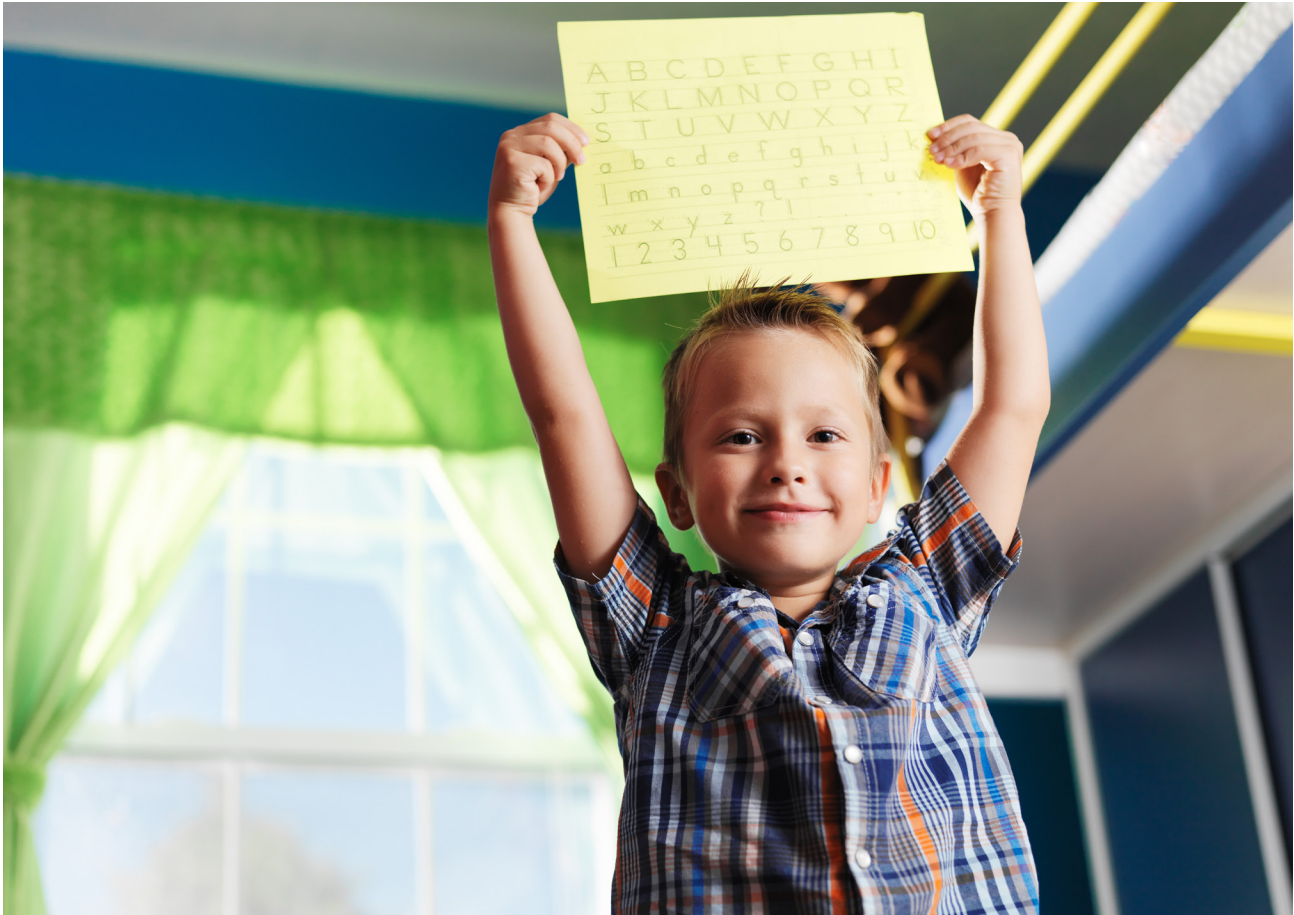


BE

Helping each other achieve their personal best

Achieving your personal best can be challenging on your own. Everyone needs support from a team to accomplish their personal best! As we learned in the Healthy Choices module, people are usually motivated to pursue goals when they have a sense of belonging and attachment to others. Consider how you can help your child achieve their personal best. We've got some suggestions to get you started!

- **Carve out time to be together:** Our fast-paced lives, including work and school responsibilities, have made it more and more difficult to spend quality time with family. So we need to put more effort into scheduling family discussions and family fun! What's a SMART goal you can set for being together?
- **Be present and mindful when together:** To truly connect as a family, everyone should unplug from their electronic devices. Being present for your family and staying mindful in those moments will show your family that they're important to you.
- **Help each other set SMART goals:** Setting goals can be hard for anyone, especially if you haven't had a lot of practice. Ask your child if they need help setting SMART goals for homework assignments, athletics, or extra-curricular activities. Remember not to impose your own goals on your child. Instead, ask SMART questions to help them choose goals and ways to achieve them. Another strategy is to model developing SMART goals to set an example. Let your child see your process as you set and accomplish goals for work, fun, and relationships.



- **Support each other's process and goals:** Think about how you can be an accountability partner for your child as they work towards their goals. Say they're going through a dip or have hit a plateau along their journey towards success. How can you come alongside them and encourage them to "just keep swimming"?
- **Celebrate effort rather than outcomes:** Anybody who's taken part in a community race such as a 5K or 10K knows that everyone gets a medal at the end. While first-place winners are recognized, the emphasis is on finishing the race. Everyone is celebrated for setting a goal to run the race, making a plan to train for it, and doing their best to finish. A medal is a celebration of the level of effort everyone put into the entire process. Take time to think about how you can celebrate your child's work towards achieving their personal best – not just in athletics and schoolwork but in life.

Now it's time to practice the skills that you've learned in this module. To get started, take the 20-day InPACT Personal Best Activity Challenge.

20-day InPACT Personal Best Activity Challenge

The 20-day challenge aims to enhance your family's ability to develop SMART goals. Studies suggest that it takes 21 days to form a habit and over 90 days to establish a lasting lifestyle change. Our hope is that by completing the 20-day Personal Best challenge, your family will continue practicing the most effective activities until they become a lasting and positive habit.

	Specific Does the goal make sense? Is it clear?	Measurable Is the goal measurable? Can I track my progress?	Attainable Is the goal challenging but not impossible?	Relevant Is the goal worth my effort? Will it benefit me and meet my needs?	Timely Is there a timeframe for achieving the goal?	SMART Goals
Week 1 Welcome to the SMART Goals Challenge! Start by reading the Personal Best handout! Then, choose a goal focused on mindset or mindfulness for this week.	Make sure your goal is specific! Watch Tense and Relax for Our Bodies and Minds and notice there is a clear purpose. Is your goal specific?	How will you measure your goal? In minutes, hours, days? Watch Energizing Mindful Movement and notice the goal is 8 minutes per day!	Review your goal- is it too simple? Too difficult? Watch Stuck in My Seat , a video about something that is difficult but possible!	Make sure your goal is something you care about. For example, watch Checking in with Myself .	Do you want to accomplish your goal in a week, a month, over the summer? Watch Balance and Strength and choose your timeframe!	SMART GOAL 1 Record your mindfulness goal: _____ _____ _____ Great job!
Week 2 This week create a physical activity goal! Maybe work towards getting the recommended 60 minutes per day.	Example: "This week I will do the calendar video each day!" Is your goal specific? Watch Cardio Kickboxing 2 to get moving!	How will you track your goal? In a notebook or on this calendar? Watch the Full Body Workout to get moving today.	Think ahead to next week. Do you think you can still do your goal? If not, you may want to adjust it! Watch Total Body Exercise with Lorenzo!	Make sure to choose a goal you enjoy doing. Goals should be fun to work on! Watch 12 Days of Fitness to get those active minutes.	When do you want to reach this goal? Watch Arm Circuit .	SMART GOAL 2 Record your physical activity goal: _____ _____ _____ Great job!
Week 3 This week make your goal about nutrition. Maybe try a new food or cook a new recipe with your family!	You're a pro at this by now but, double check... is your goal specific? Check out this new recipe to try!	How will you know you have reached your goal? Learn how to make a turkey and veggie roll-up here!	Make a plan with your parents for how many new recipes you can try each week. Try making apple cookies here .	Make a list of your dream foods and recipes to try. What is special about them? Learn all about fruits here.	Food is essential for our entire lives! Keep being curious and trying new things! Make a cucumber and chickpea salad here.	SMART GOAL 3 Record your nutrition goal: _____ _____ _____ Great job!
Week 4 Finally, choose a goal related to family. You can focus on spending more time with family, being physically active as a family, or trying new activities!	Choose your goal and share it with your family members! Do they agree it's clear? Play this family game with a specific goal for a fun activity!	Decide with your family how you want to track your goal! Should it be a friendly, family competition? In that spirit, try this Step-Up Challenge together!	Check that your goal is achievable for all family members! Do this FITT Workout and notice how modifications can make it possible for all family members!	Discuss as a group if this goal is relevant to your family! Will it help benefit your family? Then do Simple Total Body Cardio & Strength together.	When does your family think this new goal can be incorporated into your regular routine? Finish with this Kickboxing Workout .	SMART GOAL 4 Record your family goal: _____ _____ _____ Great job!

SELF-ACTUALIZATION NEEDS

Resilience

You Can Bend and Not Break



Artwork by Hailey Choi

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Heather Lewis holds an MA in psychology in education from Teachers College, Columbia University along with an MA in child development from Michigan State University. She is the District Health Resource Advocate/Mental Wellness Specialist for Williamston Community Schools. She specializes in social-emotional learning, mindfulness, and student athlete mental health.

What's Heather's favorite physical activity?

I love walking outside, lifting free weights, and yoga.

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What is resilience, anyway?

At its core, resilience is simply being “OK,” even if life challenges us. When we’re resilient, we can move forward when things are hard and bounce back when we get knocked down. Of course, we want this for our children and ourselves! The good news is that resilience is something that can be worked on – and it’s worth our time now more than ever! This module contains ideas to boost resilience so you and your family can become flexible enough to bend with the stresses of life but not break. [Click here](#) to watch an introductory video for an overview of this module.

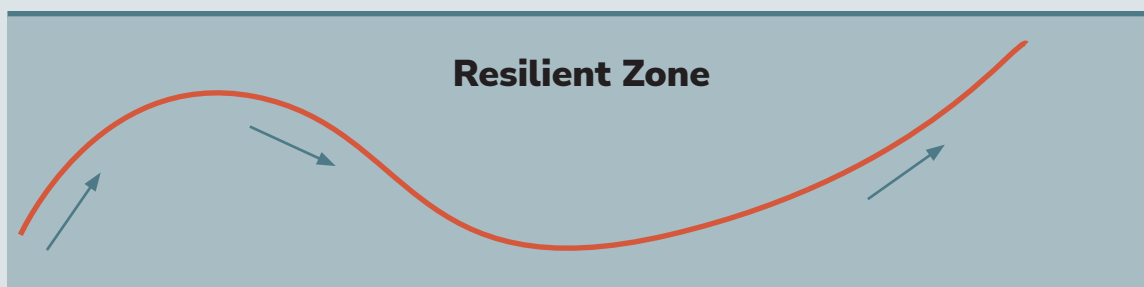
You have a “zone,” and so does your child

The resilient zone is your “OK” zone. It’s where you aren’t too high (edgy, irritable) or too low (exhausted, depressed); you’re simply OK. Occasionally, something will bump you out of your “OK” zone, and that’s when you might run into trouble. You’ve probably seen your child get bumped out of this zone. This module is meant to help you and your family develop tools to use when bumped out of the resilient or the “OK” zone. The trick is to practice these skills when you’re in that zone. That way, when the feeling of being bumped out takes over, you’ll be prepared to bring yourself back.

The next three sections of this module give you and your family tips for developing resilience that include moving together, thinking together, and being together!

What is the Resilient Zone?

- A state of well-being in mind, body, and spirit.
- When in the Resilient Zone, one is able to handle the stresses of life.
 - You can be annoyed or even angry, but do not feel like you will lose your head.
 - You can be sad but not feel like you will be washed away by the river of sorrows.



MOVE

Mindful movement to bring you to now

Exercise is always good for helping you stay in your zone, as it releases “feel-good” chemicals like endorphins! Certain mindful movements can challenge your balance and flexibility and can bring you into the “now,” where you don’t worry about the past or the future. This is good for helping you stay in your “OK” zone. Have your child try the following four videos – and better yet, join them! [Balance and Strength](#); [Flexible in Mind and Body in an Uncertain World](#); [Building Strength Through Mindful Moments](#); and [Get Stronger Through Movement and Stillness](#).

Your child may need some mindful movement after sitting for long periods. The following videos are designed to help on days when kids need a quick break to help them stay in their zone: [Stuck in My Seat](#) and [Energizing Mindful Movement](#).

Other ideas for mindful movement

Take a walk with your child; Ask your child to notice what they see, smell, and hear. Remind them to notice how their feet feel in their shoes or how their legs feel as they move. Notice everything and talk about it. Try a free children’s yoga video on YouTube.



THINK

Finding calm amidst chaos: the power of resourcing

When you get bumped out of your “OK” zone, your nervous system goes into overdrive (fight, flight, or freeze), and you need something to help you return to a calmer place. One strategy is called resourcing, which means thinking about something that makes you feel happy, safe, and/or good. It might be a grandparent, an older sibling, a pet, or even a special object. [Click here to watch a video](#) that takes your child (and you) through this process. When your child finishes the exercise in the video, ask them to share what they chose as their special thing that makes them feel safe, happy, and/or good. Then share yours. Remind your child that they can always bring this special thing to mind if they need to calm down; doing so should help them return to their “OK” zone.

Other thoughts:

- Research shows that simply having one positive, trusted adult in a child’s life builds resilience. The book “[One Trusted Adult](#)” defines a “trusted adult” as an individual “chosen by the young person as a safe figure that listens without judgment, agenda or expectation, but with the sole purpose of supporting and encouraging positivity within a young person’s life.” Who is that adult for your child? Maybe it’s a grandparent, aunt/uncle, or even a teacher or coach. Talk to your child about who that trusted adult is and encourage them to regularly keep in touch with that person. That sort of relationship is one of the most protective factors a child can have!
- Looking for the silver lining in any situation is another powerful way to help your child build resilience. As things happen in their world, talk to them about the positives (there are always some – if you look hard enough!). For example, online schooling can be quite challenging. But you can talk about the good things that have come of it, such as more family time, less time in the car, and so on. This technique is called “reframing,” and it’s a great way to enhance your child’s resilience.
- Try “Three Good Things”: Have your child write or draw a picture of three good things in their life that they are thankful for. Hang the picture/note up in your home and point it out often, especially on tough days.





Be in stillness: The power of mindfulness

There is a time for movement and there is a time for stillness. We often find ourselves on “autopilot,” powering through our day or distracting ourselves with TV, games, or other devices. We seldom take time to slow down and *pay attention*. And **that’s all mindfulness is: slowing down to pay attention to now.**

Mindfulness can mean taking notice of what’s happening right now inside your body (do you feel any sensations: pain, tightness, warmth?); your mind (what are you thinking?); and your feelings (are you anxious, overwhelmed, content?). It can also mean paying attention to what is happening outside your body; what you see, hear, smell, and/or taste in this moment. In short, mindfulness simply means slowing down and paying attention!

What’s the point of this? Well, thousands of studies have shown the benefits of practicing mindfulness for adults and children alike!

Mindfulness benefits

- Decreased stress and anxiety
- Better health
- Improved working memory
- Greater self-regulation and self-control
- Increased resilience
- Higher self-worth

The following videos can help you and your child find mindfulness in stillness:

[All About the Breath](#); [Checking in with Myself](#); and [Tense and Relax for our Bodies and Minds](#).

Other ideas to encourage mindfulness

- Encourage your child to take some time to sit in stillness. Ask your child to pay attention to what they notice inside themselves during this quiet time. Set a timer for two minutes. Once it goes off, talk with your child about how it felt to sit in stillness. What did they notice inside themselves? What did they feel? What did they think about? Did two minutes seem like a long time?
- Use a free guided meditation on YouTube or download a free meditation app such as [Stop, Breathe, and Think Kids](#).

Mindful living to help you stay in your “OK” zone

Try to complete everyday activities mindfully. For example, when eating dinner, encourage your child to notice the bite they are taking: how does the food feel in their mouth? What does it taste like? Is it warm or cold? How does it smell? While washing the dishes, ask your child how the water feels on their hands. Encourage them to notice the temperature of the water, the suds, the smell of the dish soap, and the texture of the washcloth. Basically, no matter what you’re doing, you can ask your child to slow down and pay attention. That is mindful living, and it can help your family build resilience!

“I am not afraid of storms, for I am learning how to sail my ship.”

– Louisa May Alcott

Now it’s time to practice the skills that you’ve learned in this module. To get started, take the 20-day InPACT Resilience Challenge.



20-day InPACT Resilience Challenge

The 20-day challenge aims to enhance your family's resilience skills. Studies suggest that it takes 21 days to form a habit and over 90 days to establish a lasting lifestyle change. Our hope is that by completing the 20-day Resilience challenge, your family will continue practicing the most effective activities until they become a lasting and positive habit.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Week 1 Welcome to the Resilience Challenge! Each day there will be an activity to help you explore how to build resilience.	Getting Started: What is Resilience, anyway?! *Browse the Resilience info and watch the intro video	Feeling “safe, happy, or good.” *Have your child watch the Resourcing video. What did they choose? Have them draw it! Hang it up!	Mindful Movement: *Have your child do the Balance and Strength video. Talk about how they felt doing it. What part of their body felt the strongest?	Mindful Stillness: *Have your child do the All About the Breath video. Ask how it felt doing the breathing. Talk about different situations where breathing could be helpful.	Family Fun: *Have your child write or draw a picture of 3 Good Things in their life right now. Hang it up! Have each family member tell their 3 Good Things!
Week 2	Mindful Movement: *Have your child try the Flexible in Mind and Body video. Talk about how they feel.	Mindful Stillness: *Have your child do the Tense and Relax video. Talk about what sensations they felt as they tensed and then relaxed.	Mindful Movement: *Have your child do the Energizing Mindful Movement video. Could they feel their energy moving?	Mindful Movement: *Have your child do the Stuck in My Seat video. Talk about how they could use these movements during online learning.	Family Fun: *Ask your child who their one special, trusted adult is. When is the last time they checked in with them? Have each family member name theirs!
Week 3	That One Special Person: *Make a plan for your child to check in with their trusted adult.	Mindful Movement: *Have your child do the Building Strength through Mindful Movements video. Which animal was most challenging?	Mindful Movement: *Have your child do the Check in With Myself video. What did their body need today? How are they feeling?	Mindful Movement: *Have your child do the Getting Stronger Through Movement and Stillness video. Talk about how they could use these movements when doing homework.	Family Fun: *When eating dinner tonight, pay attention to eating. Talk about how each bite tastes, feels, and smells. ENJOY!
Week 4	Resourcing: *Get a box or bag for your child to put things that make them feel “safe, happy, or good” in. We will add to it this week!	Resourcing: *Ask your child to remember a time they felt happy or excited. What were they doing? Who were they with? Have them draw a picture of it and add it to the box!	Resourcing: *Ask your child to think of something that is special about them, or that they are really good at. (Help them if they are stuck...You know them best!). Write it down for your child and add it to the box!	Mindful Movement of Stillness: *Have your child choose the video they felt was “most helpful” to do again. Talk about why they chose that video. How is it helpful?	Family Fun: *At dinner tonight, have each family tell one they appreciate about your child. Write the ideas down. Add it to the box!



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