

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.

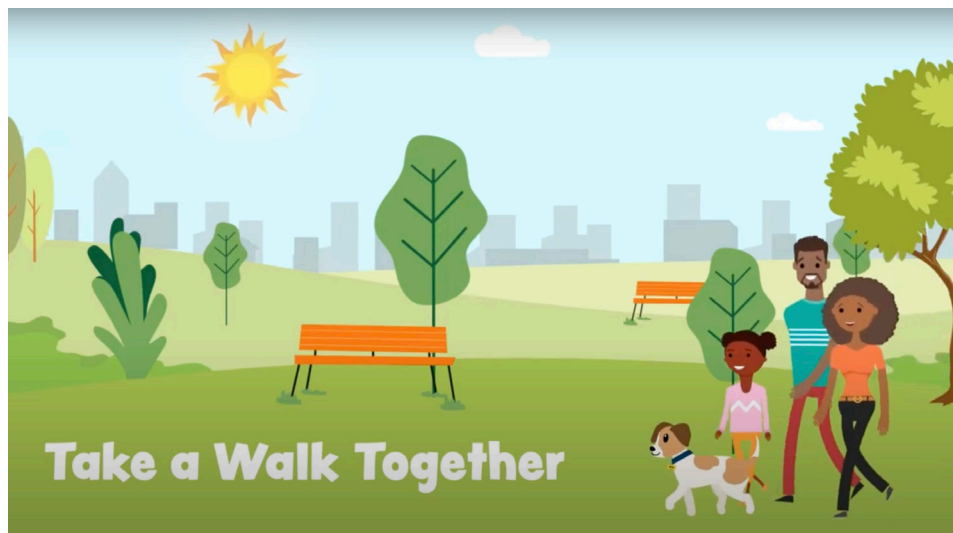
So where should you start? The next three sections of this module give you and your family tips to feel good that include moving together, thinking together, and being together!

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. |