



CANADA



HEALTHY
LIVING
INITIATIVE

Physical Health

Resources for 4-H leaders
to support the physical health
of members

Introduction to the Healthy Living Initiative



What is the Healthy Living Initiative?

4-H Canada's Healthy Living Initiative has been developed to support the health and well-being of rural youth across Canada. Resources are designed to equip volunteers and families with the knowledge to help recognize youth in distress and provide the access to support they need.

This initiative includes:

- Resources and activities for 4-H youth members, 4-H volunteer leaders, and families and youth new to 4-H.
- Webinars and workshops for volunteer leaders, who are critical mentors and role models in adult-youth partnerships.



What is healthy living?

Healthy living at its core focuses on taking care of the 'whole you'. It means making positive choices in your mental health, physical health, nutritional health, and overall well-being.

Why is healthy living important?

Healthy living awareness is important for everyone because it is a holistic approach to taking care of yourself. All aspects of yourself are interconnected and making a change in one area of your health will affect other areas of your health. For example, changes in our mental health can lead to changes in our body reactions.

Why is 4-H Canada developing this initiative?

4-H Canada's Healthy Living Initiative is in response to the critical needs of youth in communities across Canada. Young people living in rural and remote communities are at a greater risk of experiencing issues related to their mental and physical well-being. They also lack the resources and services that might be available to those in more urban areas.

What will I find in this initiative?

The Healthy Living Initiative is presented in three programs, called focus areas, each centered on a different aspect of healthy living. These areas are:



What's included in the focus areas?

Mental health and physical health focus areas

- Tip sheets with important and useable information.
- Activity guides to assist leaders in using the resources.
- Webinars and workshops to assist leaders.

My Plate and the Planet

- Activity book with background information about the food we eat, with instructions for exciting hands-on activities that build upon learning.

How are these resources developed?

4-H Canada has teamed up with knowledgeable and youth-focused organizations to develop the resources and materials for each focus area of this initiative. All organizations have expertise in their area of focus to ensure the accuracy, relevancy and rigour of the information provided through this initiative.

Thank you to the strategic partners who have assisted in developing these resources.

How is this initiative made possible?

4-H Canada's Healthy Living Initiative is made possible thanks to the generous support of these partners:



Each of these partners believes in the importance of healthy living in Canadian youth and adults, and has partnered with 4-H Canada to ensure they are receiving the support they need through the development of this initiative.

For more information on the Healthy Living Initiative, visit 4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving

Introduction to Physical Health



Physical health and physical activity

Physical health means having good cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, body composition, [and] eating healthy foods.¹

When we think about physical health, we generally think about physical activity. **Physical activity is defined as any movement of your body that results in an increased use of energy.**²

Factors that may impact our physical health include:

- sleep
- personal hygiene
- regular medical check-ups
- avoiding harmful habits including smoking and consuming alcohol



Why is physical activity important?

Physical activity is a crucial aspect of being physically healthy, as it helps us build strength throughout our body, increases our endurance, helps us remain active for longer, and improves our flexibility.

Physical activity can also be good for:

- **your brain** - it helps with concentration and being focused on the task at hand.
- **your mental and emotional wellbeing** - it releases endorphins that can help decrease anxiety, can be a new fun way to make new friends, become part of a team, or meet people who share your interests.
- **your body** - it helps your digestion, blood flow, heart health, and even helps you to recover from injuries more quickly.

The 24-Hour Movement Guidelines

Research tells us that kids in Canada are spending the majority of their time in front of screens, and therefore, do not get enough physical activity.³

The 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth – developed by The Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology – recommend for ages 5 to 17:⁴

- 60 mins of moderate to vigorous physical activity a day
- no more than two hours of recreational screen-time per day

- 8 to 11 hours of uninterrupted sleep per night depending on the child's age
- several hours of light physical activity per day.

For more information or to check out the other Canadian 24-Hour Movement and Canadian Physical Activity guidelines, go to csepguidelines.ca.

4-H Canada's physical health resource

In this resource, you will find tip sheets for both yourself as a 4-H leader, and for your 4-H members. You will find that these tip sheets complement each other and share important information that connect to all aspects of healthy living!

Tip sheets for youth:

- Healthy Body, Healthy Mind
- Get Active, Be Productive
- Taking Control of your Physical Literacy
- The Importance of Sleep
- Leading Through Physical Activity

Tip sheets for leaders:

- Healthy Body, Healthy Mind
- Physical Activity and Productivity
- Physical Literacy 101
- The Importance of Sleep
- Leading through Physical Activity

As a companion to the tip sheets for 4-H leaders, you will also find an Activity Guide that outlines ways to incorporate physical health into your 4-H meetings.

4-H Canada's accompanying webinar presentation will introduce you to the Healthy Living Initiative by walking you through the activities, to further assist you in using this resource and help you feel confident putting them into action!

This webinar and all the above resources are available at 4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving.

4-H Canada's Healthy Living Initiative is made possible thanks to the generous support of these partners:



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Updated June 2021



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Healthy Body, Healthy Mind

FOR LEADERS



Being physically active can help support overall wellbeing and the development of healthy emotions. If you read the Taking Care of Yourself tip sheet in 4-H Canada's Mental Health Resource, you may remember that by participating in physical activity and encouraging your 4-H members to do the same, you are promoting healthy bodies and minds!

Why is physical activity so good for our mental health?

When you're active, your brain releases "feel-good" chemicals like dopamine, serotonin, and endorphins. Physical activity also helps lower levels of cortisol in the body – also known as the "stress hormone".¹ Check out the Handy Definitions to Know section in the Activity Guide for definitions of these chemicals.

Getting active really goes a long way in reducing stress and improving overall happiness. It can help us all unwind more easily, and breathe better.

Happy Better

These "happy hormones" play an important role in how we feel.² When we're active, our body releases these chemicals, and this boosts our mood. As a general rule of thumb, the higher the intensity, the better the outcome. Regular physical activity produces the best results, but even single bouts of physical activity can result in better stress management and improved moods.

As a 4-H leader, you can teach your members that being active can help when they're feeling down. If you have 4-H members who seem to be experiencing mental health struggles, initiating an activity that gets everyone moving might be a great way to start off a club meeting. Physical activity can also serve as a healthy distraction from anxiety and stress.



DID YOU KNOW?

ParticipACTION's Everything Gets Better campaign highlights 23 areas to work on to get closer to our health and fitness goals, including Happy Better, Unwind Better and Breathe Better. In their own words, "Being physically active is about more than weight loss. It's about living Better!"³

Unwind Better

It's important to unwind after a tough day at work, or a busy week. Getting into heart-pumping physical activities like biking or running can decrease our body's stress hormones and stimulate those feel-good chemicals.⁴

Breathe Better

Breathing is one of our body's most important functions. When we are stressed, we hold tension that can cause us to breathe rapidly, shallowly, or erratically.⁵ By being active, we can work to increase the strength of our respiratory muscles, and do more with less breath. Teaching your 4-H members to breathe deeply can be a great tool to help them in many ways, from public speaking to resolving conflicts and problem-solving, to remaining calm in the show-ring.

Try this deep-breathing exercise (i.e., diaphragmic breathing) at your next 4-H meeting:⁶

- 1. Breathe in slowly and deeply, pushing your stomach out so that your diaphragm is put to maximum use.**
- 2. Hold your breath briefly (approximately 5 seconds).**
- 3. Exhale slowly, while relaxing every muscle in your body.**
- 4. Repeat the entire sequence five to 10 times, focusing only on your breath.**

Ask yourself: What activities help you unwind or feel less stressed?

Brainstorm a list of physical activities with members that you can incorporate into your 4-H meetings. From this list, consider incorporating one activity into each meeting.

If you're not sure where to start, here are some activity ideas that you can use to promote physical and mental health at your club meetings:

- ✓ **Walking** – regardless of fitness ability and in almost any location.
- ✓ **Yoga** – stretches muscles to help feel calm and relaxed.
- ✓ **Running** – a great way to incorporate a little cardio into your meeting.
- ✓ **Pilates** – simple movements help build strength and improve breathing.
- ✓ **Tai chi** – helps us feel calm and in control.
- ✓ **Weight-lifting** – lifting light weights can help build muscle, feel strong and blow-off steam!

The **Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines** recommend that individuals between the ages of 18 and 64 years get at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per week.⁷ 4-H members between the ages of 6 and 17 years are encouraged to aim for a minimum of 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day.⁸

**For more information, check out the Happy Better, Unwind Better
and Breathe Better pages at
participACTION.com**



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4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving

Physical Activity and Productivity

FOR LEADERS



Do you sometimes feel unable to focus at work or feel unmotivated to finish a task? Do you notice this with your 4-H club members too?

There may be lots of reasons for this, one of which is often a lack of physical exercise. Regular physical activity can improve your brain function, and help you and your 4-H'ers be more productive!

As we become physically active, the hippocampus – the part of our brain responsible for learning and memory – gets fitter with us.¹ When this happens, it improves the ability to:



Think

the more you sweat, the easier it will be to think clearly, focus and even problem-solve!²



Create

it's proven that physical activity is one way to fire-up the right side of our brain, which is responsible for enhanced creativity.³



Focus

the brain works harder to resist distractions when we are physically active, by releasing a protein which acts as a booster to our concentration and memory.



Learn

physical activity can help to improve our long-term memory.⁴ It also enhances our potential to be the best learner we can be.



Other benefits of physical activity include:

- ✓ more energy⁵
- ✓ better organization⁷
- ✓ less stress⁶
- ✓ better retention and recall of information

Ideas for adding more physical activity into your routine:

- ✓ Walk or bike to and from work or your 4-H meeting.
- ✓ Carry a ball or a yoga mat around and use it in your free time.
- ✓ Join a team sport.
- ✓ Join your 4-H members in a pick-up game.
- ✓ Go on a run with a friend.
- ✓ Plan a dance party.
- ✓ Help out with household chores.
- ✓ Get outdoors – we move more (and at higher intensities) and engage in less sedentary behaviours when we're outside.
- ✓ Walk the family pet (or a neighbour's!).

GROUP ACTIVITY

Have each 4-H member brainstorm a list of ways they already are getting active, and rank these activities from most to least favourite. Have them share their top three activities, and if one or two ideas pop out, consider doing that activity as a group.

The **Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines** for Adults recommend that adults 18 to 64 years get at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity a week.⁸ That's less than 30 minutes a day!

Children and youth (5 to 17 years) are recommended to get at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day.⁹ Physical activity doesn't need to occur all at once – it can be broken down into two 30-minute sessions or even six 10-minute sessions.

150
minutes per week



30
minutes per day

For more information, check out the
Think Better, Create Better, Focus Better and Learn Better pages at
participACTION.com



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Physical Literacy 101

FOR LEADERS



Why is physical literacy something you should know about?

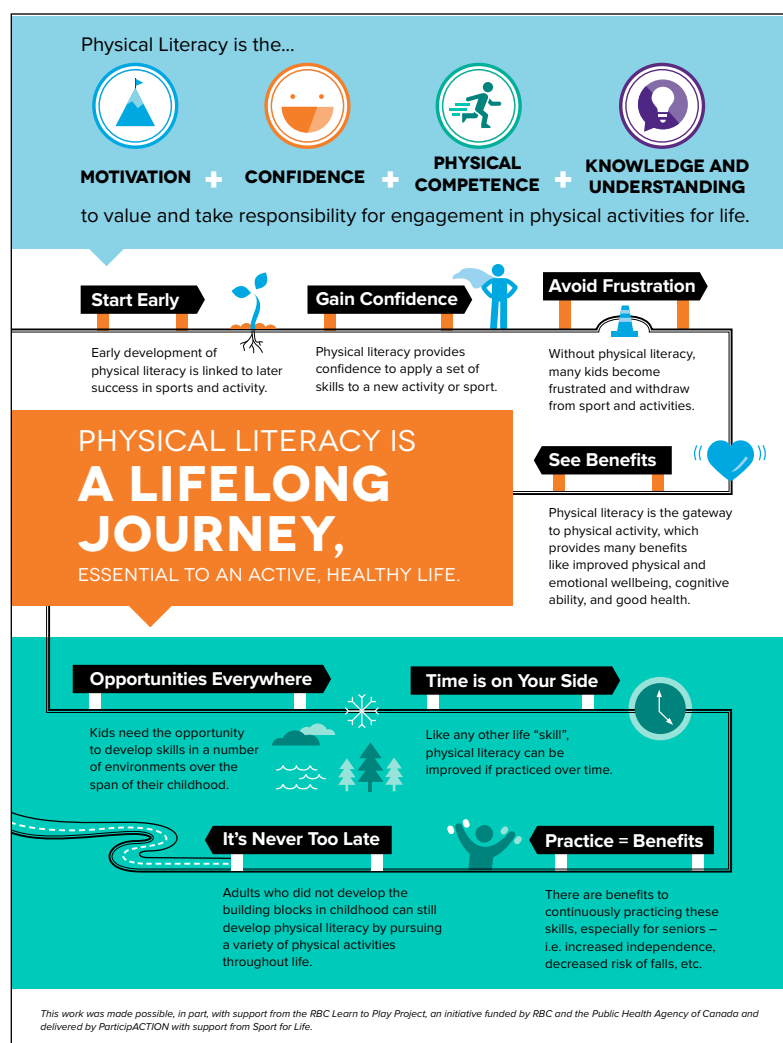
Physical literacy is the motivation, confidence, knowledge, understanding, and physical competence to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.¹

Understanding physical literacy can help us become more healthy and active now, while preparing us for a healthy and active future!

Physical literacy is very similar to learning how to read and write. It's all about developing a 'movement vocabulary'. It is also:²

- ✓ the gateway to physical activity, which benefits many other areas of our life, such as improved physical and emotional wellbeing, cognitive ability and good health;
- ✓ a door to opportunities in physical activity, sport and daily life;
- ✓ a way to provide people with the confidence to apply their skills to a new activity or sport.

Just like most things, understanding physical literacy takes time and practice.



This work was made possible, in part, with support from the RBC Learn to Play Project, an initiative funded by RBC and the Public Health Agency of Canada and delivered by ParticipACTION with support from Sport for Life.

Source: ParticipACTION

Physical literacy has four main elements:³

Motivation and confidence – It is possible to enjoy being physically active; the more we do it, the more it is likely to play a key role in our life.

Ask your members: What do you enjoy about getting physically active?

Physical competence – This is achieved when we develop different movement skills and patterns, including the ability to complete movements in a range of intensities and for different durations.

Ask your members: What is your favourite movement?

Knowledge and understanding – Understanding the benefits of having an active lifestyle and knowing the importance of safety equipment is important.

Ask your members: What is one thing you cannot leave the house without when getting physically active?

Engagement in physical activities for life – That's when we choose to be active on a regular basis.

Ask your members: How do you get physically active every day?

Physical literacy starts with fundamental movement skills such as running, jumping, kicking, catching or throwing a ball⁴, and these skills are further developed through the ABCs of physical literacy⁵:

A Agility: the ability to change the body's position quickly and efficiently.

B Balance: the ability to maintain body equilibrium

C Coordination: the ability to build up more and more complicated movements and perform them in a smooth way.

For example:

If you can → **RUN**, you can take part in → Soccer, basketball, volleyball, track and field, squash, badminton, rugby and tennis

If you can → **THROW**, you can take part in → baseball, soccer, football and bowling

Ways to incorporate physical literacy in your 4-H meetings:

- ✓ Expose your members to a variety of different activities.
- ✓ Break down the movements required for these activities.
- ✓ Go over any safety equipment and instructions.
- ✓ Take a movement break. Have different 4-H members run a team-building activity or energizer.
- ✓ Bring simple equipment like soccer balls or frisbees, so your 4-H members can use them before and after the meeting.

Have your 4-H members mentioned a physical activity they love or want to try? Check in with your provincial 4-H office to see if someone has started a club in your area for that activity or see if you can start one yourself!



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The Importance of Sleep

FOR LEADERS



Do you have a hard time falling asleep at night or staying awake during the day? Do you toss and turn during the night?

You might also notice your 4-H members are having a hard time staying awake during meetings. This could be due to stress, a late bedtime, or a lack of physical activity during the day.¹

We all have an internal body clock known as our circadian rhythm that works closely with the hormones in our body, like cortisol.² When we are stressed, cortisol is released and makes it harder to fall asleep. We can help balance our stress hormones by incorporating physical activity into our routine and even into 4-H meetings.



Why does physical activity help you sleep better?³

- ✓ It helps use up more energy during the day so that you get a better-quality sleep.
- ✓ It improves mood and reduces chances of experiencing symptoms of anxiety.
- ✓ It reduces stress levels and allows you to relax at bedtime.
- ✓ It helps break the cycle of being too tired to be active, but too alert to sleep.



Are you getting good quality sleep?

✓ Check out the factors below to assess if you are:⁴

<input type="radio"/>	Sleeping most of the time you're in bed (at least 85 percent of the total time).
<input type="radio"/>	Falling asleep in 30 minutes or less.
<input type="radio"/>	Waking up no more than once per night.
<input type="radio"/>	Being awake for 20 minutes or less after initially falling asleep.

Improve your sleep hygiene – do's and don'ts on how you can sleep better:⁵

Do:

- Take a screen break before bed.⁶ Try reading a book or having a conversation with a family member or friend instead.
- Exercise for at least 30 minutes during the day.
- Switch it up and try to relax with yoga or tai chi before bed.
- Start a relaxing bedtime routine that includes taking a bath or having a warm drink (without caffeine) or keeping the room dark before bed. By establishing a routine, it will let your body and brain know that it's time to go to sleep.
- Take a walk outside before bed to clear your mind.
- Stick to a sleep schedule, even on the weekend.

Don'ts

- Avoid working out or doing other strenuous activity a few hours before going to bed.
- Avoid spicy food or caffeine before bed.

The Sleep Foundation recommends the following sleep guidelines (number of hours sleep each night⁷)



Children
(6 to 13 years)
9 to 11 hours



Teenagers
(14 to 17 years)
8 to 10 hours



Young adults
(18 to 25 years)
7 to 9 hours



Adults
(26 to 64 years)
7 to 9 hours

For more information, check out the Sleep Better page at
participACTION.com



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Leading Through Physical Activity

FOR LEADERS



As a 4-H leader, being a role model for your members is a huge part of your job.

During 4-H meetings, shows, fairs and everything in between, you're constantly leading by example and modelling behaviours for your members. It's also important to take some time for self-care which, in turn, will help boost your strength and energy as a leader!

Physical activity can play a huge role in helping you be a positive role model and leader.

When we are feeling tired or stressed, our ability to lead can be negatively impacted, and our friends and family can pick up on it. Being active on a regular basis can help:

- ✓ sleep better (check out the Importance of Sleep tip sheet)
- ✓ have more energy
- ✓ handle stress and conflict and problem solve
- ✓ experience more positive mental health (check out the Healthy Body, Healthy Mind tip sheet)

Studies show that being physically active can also help us:

- ✓ boost self-esteem¹
- ✓ increase confidence (also check out the Taking Care of Yourself tip sheet from the Mental Health Resource)
- ✓ be more creative²
- ✓ be more productive³ – check out the Physical Activity and Productivity tip sheet

These factors all impact our ability to serve as a strong leader and role model for 4-H members.





Sometimes the trickiest part is getting into a routine. Try establishing a routine with your 4-H members and challenge each other to stick to it until the next 4-H meeting.

Tips to share with your 4-H members for getting into a new routine:

- ✓ Start off small and work your way up – longer, faster, or on an incline.
- ✓ Set realistic goals.
- ✓ Be consistent with the day, time and place that you choose to get physically active.⁴ This will make it easier to focus on the task at hand and build it into your daily or weekly schedule.
- ✓ Do some research on developing habits and how they work.
- ✓ The more the merrier! Getting physically active with a friend or as a club can help us feel motivated to keep it up.

Always remember that some physical activity is better than none at all.

For more information, check out the Lead Better and How Long Does it Take to Form a Habit pages at participACTION.com



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Healthy Body, Healthy Mind

FOR MEMBERS



Physical activity helps support healthy living and is a great form of self-care. But what makes physical activity so great for our mental health?

Getting active can help our body release all the feel-good chemicals – including dopamine, serotonin and endorphins – thus decreasing levels of the stress hormone cortisol circulating in our body. It can also help us all unwind, breathe better and happy better!

Happy Better

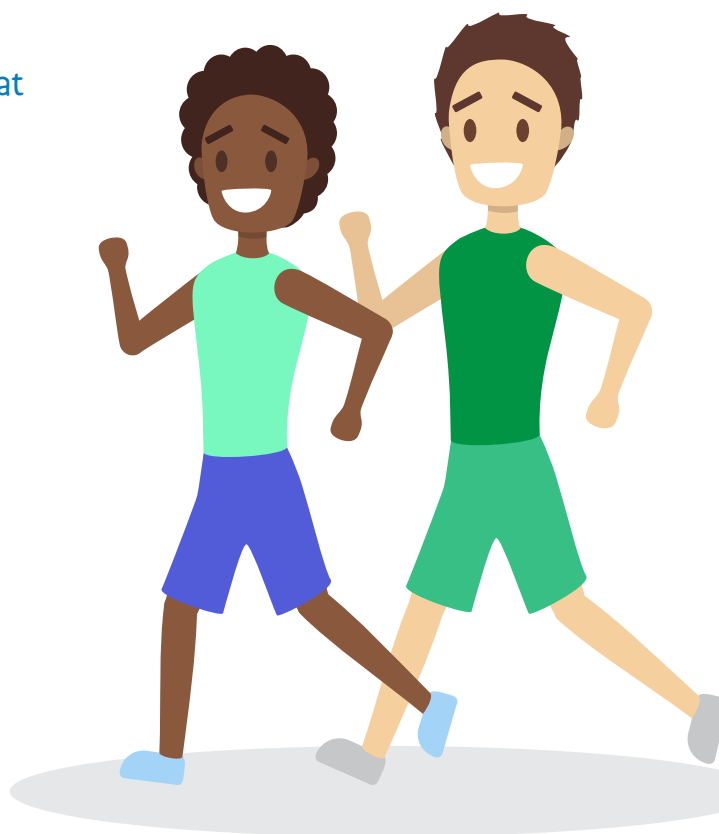
The feel-good chemicals play an important role in how we feel.¹ When we're active, our body releases these chemicals, thus impacting our mood.

Unwind Better

Finding some time to unwind after a tough day at school or a busy 4-H activity can be helpful. Getting into heart-pumping activities like biking or running may work by releasing your body's stress hormones and stimulating those feel-good chemicals.²

Breathe Better

Breathing is one of our body's most important functions. When we are stressed, we hold tension that can cause us to breathe rapidly, shallowly or erratically.³ By being active, we can work to increase the strength of our respiratory muscles, and do more with less breath. You can choose to use breathing techniques for everything; from public speaking, to remaining calm in the show-ring.



DID YOU KNOW?

ParticipACTION's Everything Gets Better campaign highlights 23 areas to work on to get closer to our health and fitness goals, including Happy Better, Unwind Better and Breathe Better. In their own words, "Being physically active is about more than weight loss. It's about living Better!"⁴

Here is a deep-breathing exercise you may want to try at your next 4-H meeting:⁵

- 1. Breathe in slowly and deeply, pushing your stomach out so that your diaphragm is put to maximum use.**
- 2. Hold your breath briefly (approximately 5 seconds).**
- 3. Exhale slowly, while relaxing every muscle in your body.**
- 4. Repeat the entire sequence five to 10 times, focusing only on your breath.**

Consider trying some of these activities:

Not sure where to start? Here are some activities to help you get active and release those feel-good chemicals:

- ✓ **Walking** – regardless of fitness ability and in almost any location.
- ✓ **Yoga** – it stretches muscles to help feel calm and relaxed.
- ✓ **Running** – a great way to incorporate a little cardio into your meeting.
- ✓ **Pilates** – simple movements help build strength and improve breathing.
- ✓ **Tai chi** – helps us feel calm and in control.
- ✓ **Swimming** – calm and relaxing as you splash around and move through the water.
- ✓ **Weight-lifting** – lifting light weights can help build muscle, feel strong and blow-off steam!

If you prefer getting physically active with a group, these activities can all be done in a team setting. Getting outside and enjoying nature can improve mental health.

Did you know physical activity is linked to happiness and having a positive mood? Those who are physically active are more satisfied with their lives as well.⁶ **What activities do you like to do that help you unwind or feel less stressed?**

It is recommended that young people between the ages of 6 and 17 get at least 60 minutes of heart-pumping physical activity per day.⁷

**For more information, check out the Happy Better, Unwind Better
and Breathe Better pages at
participACTION.com**



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Get Active, Be Productive

FOR MEMBERS



Do you sometimes have a hard time concentrating at school or during your 4-H meetings? Or struggle to retain and recall new content? Regular physical activity can improve brain function and help be more productive, in and out of the classroom!

One important part of our brain is the hippocampus, which is the core of our brain's learning and memory systems. By regularly participating in physical activity, our hippocampus can actually grow in size and make new connections.¹ This then improves our ability to:



Think

the more we sweat, the easier it will be to think clearly when we need to make a big decision.²



Create

physical activity can help fire up the right side of our brain, which is responsible for creativity.³



Focus

the brain works harder to resist distractions when we are physically active, by releasing a protein called brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), which acts as a booster to our concentration and memory.⁴ Having trouble focusing? Grab a friend and consider going for a walk at lunch time.



Learn

physical activity can help improve long-term memory.⁵ It can also help you be a better learner, and benefit you when taking your 4-H club quiz at the end of the year.

Other benefits of physical activity include:

✓ more energy⁶

✓ less stress⁷

✓ better organization⁸

Ideas for adding more physical activity into your routine:

- ✓ Walk or bike to and from school or your 4-H meeting.
- ✓ Carry a ball, skipping rope or yoga mat around and use it in your free time.
- ✓ Join a team sport.
- ✓ Help your parents shovel the driveway or rake the leaves after school.
- ✓ Work with your 4-H animal – it can get you walking and running.
- ✓ Try biking! It helps you build your cardio and gets you outside to enjoy the fresh air.
- ✓ Grab a friend and go for a run!

The 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth recommend that young people between the ages of 5 and 17 get a minimum of 60 minutes of heart-pumping physical activity each day.⁹ Does 60 minutes a day sound like a lot? Try breaking it up into two 30-minute sessions!

Need some help getting physically active? Start by brainstorming a list of ways to get active and rank them from most to least favourite. Then ask yourself: are your top three activities something you can do often, or every day?

300
minutes per week



60
minutes per day

For more information, check out the
Think Better, Create Better, Focus Better and Learn Better pages at
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Taking Control of Your Physical Literacy

FOR MEMBERS



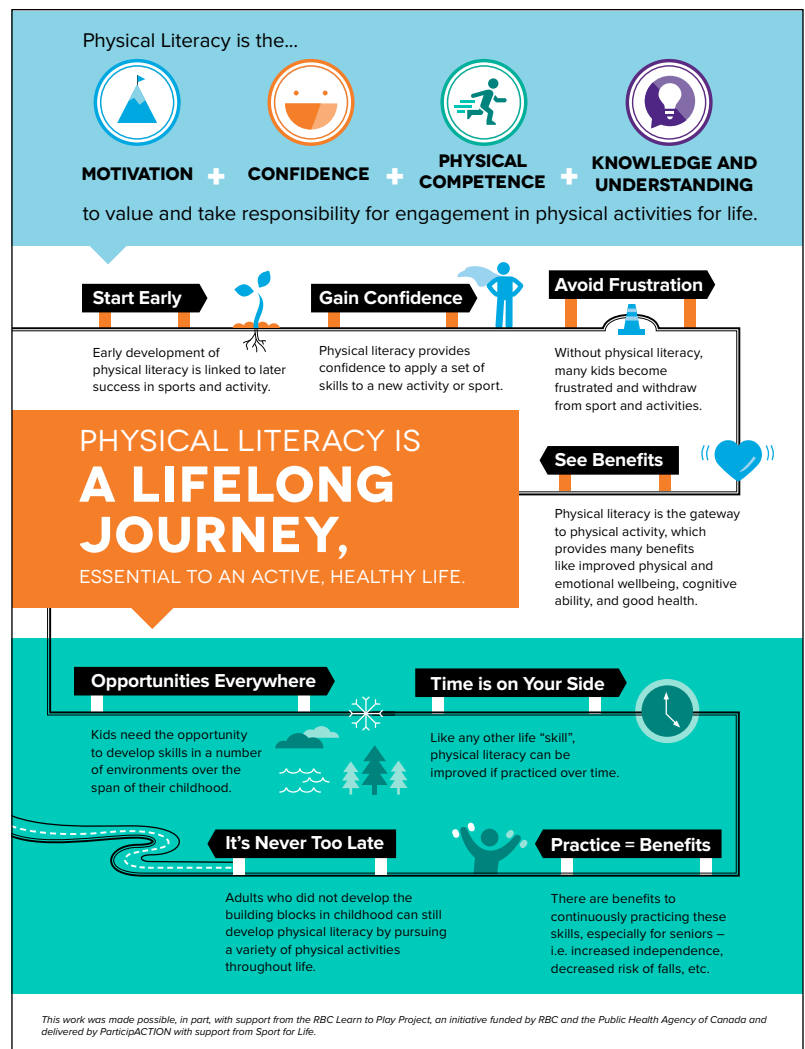
Have you ever heard of physical literacy? The term ‘physical literacy’ has only become widely popular in the past 10 years. Physical literacy is defined as the motivation, the confidence, the physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.¹

The best way to think about physical literacy is that it’s just like learning how to read and write. It’s all about developing a movement vocabulary.

Understanding physical literacy is a lifelong journey, and it can help lead an active and healthy life. Just like learning a skill, it can take time and practice.

Physical literacy is important in all aspects of our life because:²

- ✓ It is the gateway to physical activity, which benefits many other areas of our life, such as an improved physical and emotional wellbeing.
- ✓ It provides the confidence to apply our skills to a new activity or sport.
- ✓ It opens up the door to a wealth of opportunities in physical activity, sports and daily life.



Source: ParticipACTION

Physical literacy has four main elements:³

Motivation and confidence – It is possible to enjoy being physically active; the more we do it, the more it is likely to play a key role in your life.

Physical competence – This is achieved when we develop different movement skills and patterns, including the ability to complete movements in a range of intensities and for different durations.

Knowledge and understanding – Understanding the benefits of having an active lifestyle can help trigger the desire to lead one.

Engagement in physical activities for life – That's when you choose to be active on a regular basis.

Physical literacy starts with fundamental movement skills such as running, jumping, kicking, catching or throwing a ball,⁴ and these skills are further developed through the ABCs of physical literacy:⁵

A Agility: the ability to change the body's position quickly and efficiently.

B Balance: the ability to maintain body equilibrium

C Coordination: the ability to build up more and more complicated movements and perform them in a smooth way.

For example:

If you can → **RUN**, you can take part in → Soccer, basketball, volleyball, track and field, squash, badminton, rugby and tennis

If you can → **THROW**, you can take part in → baseball, soccer, football and bowling

If you can → **JUMP**, you can take part in → gymnastics, volleyball, diving and triple jump



Do you have a physical activity or sport you love to do?
Talk to your 4-H leaders about starting a 4-H club
that's all about being physically active!



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The Importance of Sleep

FOR MEMBERS



Do you sometimes have a hard time falling asleep at night or staying awake during the day? Could the quality of your nightly slumbers improve? This could be due to stress, a late bedtime, or lack of physical activity during the day.¹

We all have an internal body clock that helps regulate our sleep/wake cycles, and works closely with the hormones in our body, like cortisol.² When we are stressed, cortisol is released and makes it harder for us to fall asleep. Staying physically active can help balance our hormones.

It is commonly believed that physical activity makes you more tired. However, it can help you sleep better because:³

- ✓ It helps use up more energy during the day so that you get a better-quality sleep.
- ✓ It improves the mood, and reduces chances of experiencing anxiety.
- ✓ It reduces stress levels and allows to relax at bedtime.
- ✓ It helps break the cycle of being too tired to be active, but too alert to sleep.
- ✓ It can help build a routine of being active, getting a good night's sleep, and feeling energetic.



Here are some tips on how you can sleep better:⁴

- ✓ Take a screen break before bed.⁵ Try reading a book or having a conversation with a family member or friend instead.
- ✓ Exercise for at least 30 minutes during the day.
- ✓ Avoid working-out or doing other strenuous activity directly before going to bed.
- ✓ Switch it up and try to relax with yoga or tai chi before bed.
- ✓ Avoid spicy food or caffeine before bed.
- ✓ Start a relaxing bedtime routine that includes reading or having a warm drink (without caffeine) before bed. By establishing a routine, it will let your body and brain know that it's time to go to sleep.
- ✓ Take a walk outside before bed to clear your mind.
- ✓ Stick to a sleep schedule, even on the weekend.

Are you getting good quality sleep?



✓ Check out the factors below to find out:⁶

<input type="radio"/>	Sleeping most of the time you're in bed (at least 85 percent of the total time).
<input type="radio"/>	Falling asleep in 30 minutes or less.
<input type="radio"/>	Waking up no more than once per night.
<input type="radio"/>	Being awake for 20 minutes or less after initially falling asleep.

If you struggle with the above factors, consider starting a regular physical activity.

The Sleep Foundation recommends the following number of hours you should sleep each night:⁷



Children
(6 to 13 years)
9 to 11 hours



Teenagers
(14 to 17 years)
8 to 10 hours



Young adults
(18 to 25 years)
7 to 9 hours

The 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth recommend that young people between the ages of 5 and 17 get a minimum of 60 minutes of heart-pumping physical activity every day. Can't seem to fit 60 minutes a day? Even 10 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity a day can help improve your sleep.

**For more information, check out the Sleep Better page at
participACTION.com**



4-H Canada has partnered with ParticipACTION to develop this resource
participACTION.com



4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving

Leading Through Physical Activity

FOR MEMBERS



Learning to lead is a key experience for all 4-H'ers. Leadership can come in the form of taking on an executive role in your club, becoming a provincial ambassador, or taking the lead at a 4-H event or local fair. It could also mean you are working hard behind-the-scenes.

Whatever your leadership style looks like, someone is following you and looking up to you along the way. Believe it or not, being physically active can help you become the best leader you can be!

Feeling tired or stressed can impact our leadership style, and friends, family or fellow 4-H members can pick up on it. By being active regularly, you may be able to:

- ✓ sleep better (check out The Importance of Sleep tip sheet)
- ✓ have more energy
- ✓ handle stress
- ✓ have a more positive mental health (check out the Healthy Body, Healthy Mind tip sheet)

Studies show that being physically active can also help us:

- ✓ boost self-esteem¹ and increase confidence – check out the Taking Care of Yourself tip sheet from the Mental Health Resource
- ✓ be more creative²
- ✓ be more productive³ – check out the Healthy Body, Healthy Mind tip sheet

The key to being a better leader through physical activity is consistency through routine. Getting a routine to become a habit takes time and hard work, but it eventually pays off!

The 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth recommend that young people between the ages of 5 and 17 get a minimum of 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity per day.⁴ And don't forget to aim for strength-bearing activities, ideally two times a week!



Here's an example of how to fit 60 minutes of physical activity into your day, every day:

Monday – Bike ride → 60 minutes

Tuesday – After school, practice for a team you've joined or another extracurricular that is physically active → 60 minutes

Wednesday – Pickup game of hockey → 60 minutes

Thursday – Work with your 4-H calf → 60 minutes

Friday – Go bowling with friends → 60 minutes

Saturday – Hike with your family → 60 minutes

Sunday – Go for a run → 60 minutes

What activities would you add to your week?

If your fellow 4-H members see that you are prioritizing being physically active, they are more likely to do the same.



**For more information, check out the Lead Better page at
participACTION.com**



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Activity Guide for Leaders



Physical health is an interesting topic to discuss with your 4-H members, especially at an age when they are constantly learning and growing. By building good physical health routines, they may benefit from these habits for years to come. The key is getting your members started now, so that these formed habits will carry them into adulthood, after they leave 4-H or graduate from the program.



This Activity Guide is split up into four sections:

1. Physical Health, Physical Activity and 4-H Meetings

2. Activities on Physical Health

3. Ways to Get Active

4. Handy Definitions to Know

1. Physical Health, Physical Activity and 4-H Meetings

Why incorporate physical health into your meetings

Incorporating physical health and physical activity into your 4-H meetings may help:

- ✓ stay happy and active;
- ✓ make new friends and build stronger relationships;
- ✓ see many health benefits (physical and mental);
- ✓ improve your 4-H members' ability to learn and think. The topics they learn at the meetings may be more easily remembered;
- ✓ reduce stress and tension that your 4-H members may experience due to school or other aspects of their lives;
- ✓ release endorphins that make your 4-H members feel good;
- ✓ improve self-esteem, self-worth and confidence!

How to incorporate physical health into your meetings

- ✓ Facilitate a 4-H club that focuses on physical activity or physical health – for example, Discover Fitness/ Body Works can be found on 4-H LEARNS.
- ✓ Have your 4-H members lead a 10-minute exercise routine at the start of every meeting.
- ✓ Have your 4-H members set a goal at each 4-H meeting, and report at the next meeting how they did, and how they felt about it.
- ✓ Try out one of the activities in the following sections of this guide.

Tips on talking about physical health

- ✓ Focus on the importance of physical activity and talk about how it can benefit your 4-H'ers in the long run.
- ✓ Speak to how physical activity can positively impact mental health and stress management.
- ✓ Make talking about physical health fun, whether it's through an activity or having your members talk about their favourite one.
- ✓ Mention activities that may not be thought of as 'exercise'. Check out section three of this guide for a list of activities.
- ✓ Try not to connect physical activity to weight loss. Being physically active goes beyond that, and is beneficial to all our systems inside our body.

2. Activities for Physical Health

ACTIVITY

Self-assessment: how active are you?

Purpose: Before you start building a plan on how to get physically active, it's important to determine your current level of activity.

Age: 10 and up

Time: 15 minutes a day

Materials: Weekly Physical Activity Log worksheet and a writing utensil

Instructions:

- As a club, decide how many weeks your 4-H members will fill out the Weekly Physical Activity Log.
- Discuss the meaning of the following key words (you can find definitions and examples of these words in Section 4: Handy Definitions to Know):
 - > physical activity
 - > exercise
 - > aerobic
 - > strength training
 - > flexibility
 - > Moderate Physical Activity (MPA)
 - > Vigorous Physical Activity (VPA)
- Have your 4-H members fill out the worksheet at the end of each day or activity they complete. Record the date, activity, type of activity, time spent on the activity and the intensity.
- At the end of the week, your 4-H members will add up the numbers.
- Discuss how this worksheet can be a tool to help your 4-H members improve their physical health.

Discussion points:

- Here are some questions that you can discuss your 4-H members:
 - > How physically active do you think you are?
 - > How many minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity do you need a day? Why?
 - > How do you think this exercise will go?
- Discuss with your 4-H members what the 24-hour Movement Guidelines are and their recommendations. You can find the guidelines at participaction.com or at csepguidelines.ca.
- The following points can be discussed after everyone has completed their Weekly Physical Activity Log:
 - > Did you reach the recommended daily physical activity levels? Why or why not?
 - > What types of activities did you do that are considered to be moderate to vigorous intensity?
 - > Do you think you did more physical activity than usual because you were keeping track?

This activity called "Self-Assessment: how active are you?" has been adapted from Lam, Elya. "On the Move Activity Guide." May, 2013.

Template – Weekly Physical Activity Log

[illegible]

ACTIVITY

Let's get motivated!

Purpose: We all need motivation to stay active, but sometimes that motivation dims, and you forget why you started getting active in the first place. The purpose of this activity is to help your 4-H members find what motivates them to get active, and to maintain this level of motivation.

Age: 10 and up

Time: 20 to 30 minutes

Materials: Goal and Motivation Creation worksheet, paper, writing utensils

Instructions:

- To get started, discuss with your 4-H members what their goals are and how to make them SMART goals.
 - > **S** – specific
 - > **M** – measurable
 - > **A** – achievable
 - > **R** – relevant
 - > **T** – time specific

Check out this article by ParticipACTION on SMART Goal Setting: <https://www.participaction.com/en-ca/blog/take-goal-setting-to-the-next-level--make-it-s-m-a-r-t>

- Next, have each of your 4-H members write down their goal and reason why they want to get active. Try to avoid using prompts but if your 4-H members are really stuck, try the prompts below.
- Using the following questions, you can either have a discussion with your 4-H members or let them write down their answers if they do not feel like sharing:
 - > Why is this goal important to you?
 - > Why does it matter?
 - > Why now?
- Next, have your 4-H members insert their SMART goal and reason into the following sentence:
 - > I want to _____ because _____.
- After they've completed this, have your 4-H members insert the reason into the first part of the sentence and finish the sentence. Have them repeat this process at least three more times.
- By completing this process, you and your 4-H members will get to the root of their motivation. Sometimes this root is unrelated to physical activity and that is completely okay. The goal is for them to learn that being physically active is a way to achieve their ultimate goal.
- After everyone has come up with their goals, brainstorm a list of ways to keep their motivation last as a group. Work together to come up with 10 different ways.

Discussion Points:

- If your members are having a hard time coming up with their initial goal, here are some potential prompts:
 - > What will people say at your 80th birthday party?
 - > Who do you want to be?
 - > If one sentence were to define your life, what would that sentence be?
 - > What gets you out of bed in the morning?
- If your 4-H members are having a hard time coming up with ways to keep their motivation going, here are a couple of suggestions from ParticipACTION:
 - > Focus on consistency over intensity: change does not happen overnight; it is important to start small and grow overtime.
 - > Don't compare yourself to others: everyone moves at a different pace. Social media only shows what people want others to see. Focus on yourself and your goals, and you will get to where you want to go.
 - > Have fun: when you enjoy what you are doing, your motivation is going to push you forward.

This activity "Let's get motivated" is adapted from ParticipACTION. "5 questions you must ask to find your why, pursue your passion and unleash your deepest motivations." ParticipACTION (blog) January 2, 2018 participaction.com/en-ca/blog/5-questions-you-must-ask and ParticipACTION. "7 tips for making motivation last." ParticipACTION (blog) January 5, 2018. participaction.com/en-ca/blog/7-tips-for-making-motivation-last.



Template – Goal and Motivation Creation!

Name:

Step 1: Initial goal and reason

Initial goal:

Reason:

Step 2: Fill in the blanks...part 1

Take your initial goal and put it here

Take your reason and put it here

I want to because

Step 3: Fill in the blanks...part 2

Take the reason of your new sentence and put it in the first part of the sentence.

I want to because

Answer the reason for the new goal.

Step 4: Fill in the blanks...part 3

I want to because

I want to because

I want to because

List three ways to keep your motivation last:

1.
.....
.....
2.
.....
.....
3.
.....
.....

ACTIVITY

Create a Physical Activity Plan

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to help your 4-H members realize how they can fit in 60 minutes of physical activity every day, and experience the benefits.

Age: 10 and up

Time: 30 to 45 minutes

Materials: For this activity, your 4-H members will need a writing utensil and the workout template, which can be found at the end of these instructions and ParticipACTION's Movement Log.

Things to keep in mind:

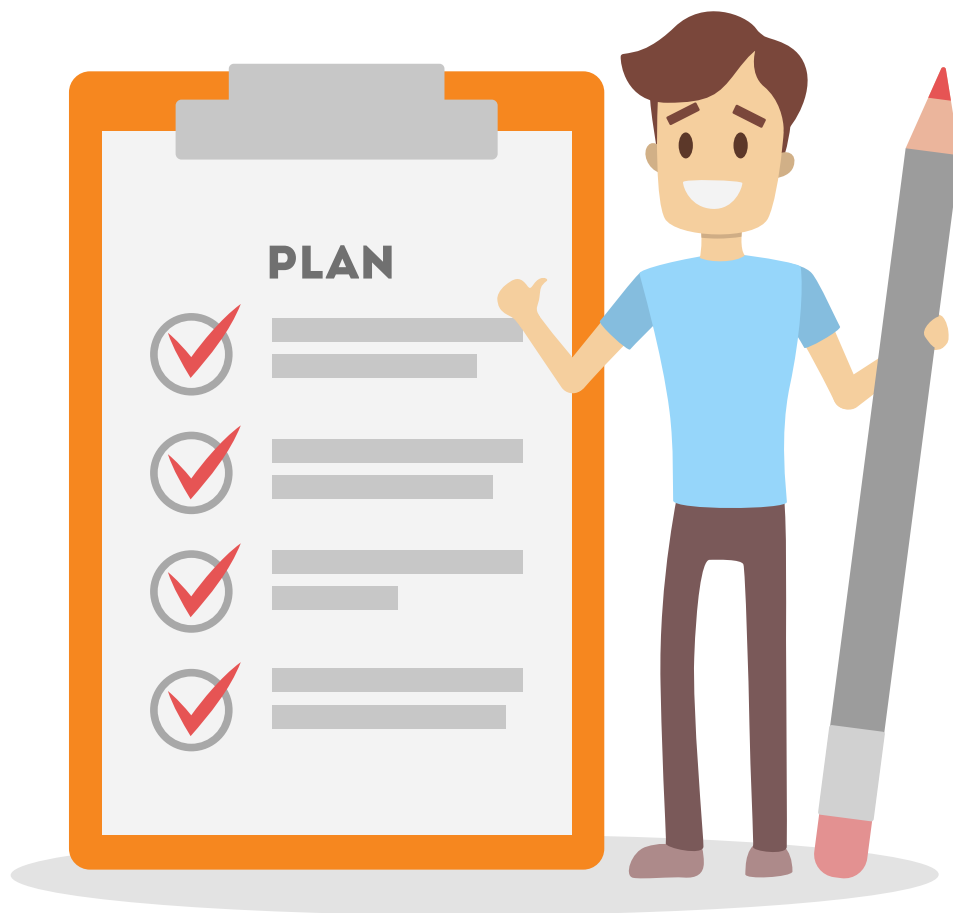
- Workout and exercise plans come in all different types. What a 4-H member uses will depend on their goals and the level of physical fitness they are at. For example, if you have a 4-H member who does not participate in regular physical activity, it would not make sense for them to begin exercising four times a week.
- The 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth recommends that youth between the ages of 5 and 17 get a minimum of 60 minutes of heart-pumping physical activity per day. For youth 18 and older, it is recommended that they get 150 minutes of heart-pumping physical activity per week.

Instructions:








- Before your members begin making their exercise plan, ask them how they get physically active. By doing this, your 4-H members can start building a list of potential activities to incorporate into their plans.
- Discuss with your 4-H members how they warm up before exercising, and how they cool down when they are finished. Warm up and cool down exercises/routines are an important part of each exercise plan.
- Have your 4-H members create an exercise plan using the workout template. Be sure they go into as much detail as possible. The plan should include equipment, time needed to complete each activity, and whether they are using the activity to train for something. They can also include the amount of reps and sets that need to be done to reach their goal.
- Have your members also track their progress. Hand out ParticipACTION's Movement log found at participaction.cdn.prismic.io/participaction%2Fdbf893b2-b5d0-4966-b50f-cd710b240374_get+started+activity+tracking+log+english.pdf. Before they start with their physical activity plan, have them write their goal at the top of the Movement log sheet. Have your 4-H members fill out the Movement log each day, and answer the reflection questions at the end of the week.
- Then as a club, set a length of time for your 4-H members to work on their exercise plans. When that time is up, have everyone give a little presentation to the club or to a small group on how they did.








Discussion points:

- Have your 4-H members share their program with others so that they can receive feedback on their plan, and pick up other ideas for activities they can do to switch it up.
- Ask your 4-H members the following questions:
 - > How can participating in physical activity make you feel?
 - > Why it is important to keep track of your results? Check out five ways tracking progress helps you reach your goals participaction.com/en-ca/blog/two-steps-you-must-take-to-tackle-any-challenge-life-throws-your-way.
 - > Why is it important to reflect back on the week?



Template – Physical Activity Plan

Week 1							
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Activity 							
When you will do it 							
Where 							
Length of time 							
Warm-up 							
Cool down 							
Notes 							

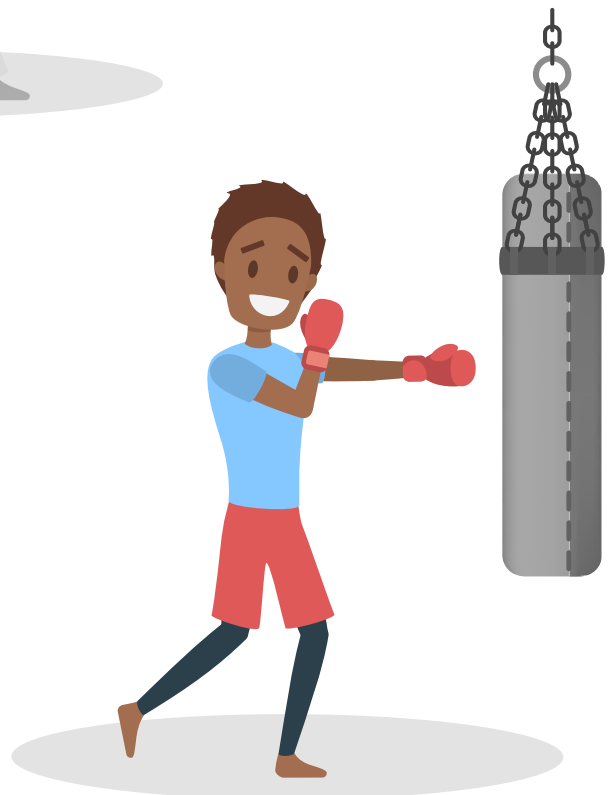
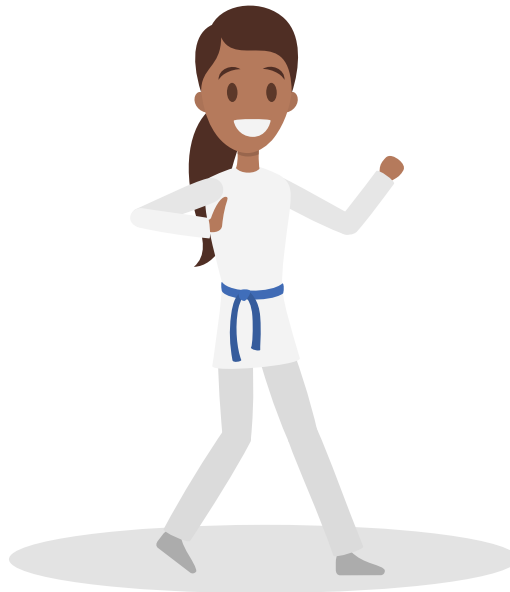
Week 2							
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Activity 							
When you will do it 							
Where 							
Length of time 							
Warm-up 							
Cool down 							
Notes 							

3. Fun Ways to Get Active

Here is a list of fun ways to get physically active. This list is by no means exhaustive; it is recommended that you and your 4-H members keep adding to the list when new activities come up.

** Tip: The more fun and enjoyable it is, the more your 4-H members will want to keep coming back!

- Canoeing
- Cycling
- Swimming
- Pilates
- Soccer
- Golf
- Volleyball
- Walking
- Hockey
- Yoga
- Gardening
- Housework
- Dancing
- Running
- Dog walking and agility
- Tai Chi
- Fitness activities
- Basketball
- Hiking
- Aqua fit
- Weightlifting
- Obstacles course
- Downhill skiing
- Pickleball
- Mini putt
- Kayaking
- Ladder toss
- 5-pin bowling
- Tennis
- Badminton
- Boxing
- Snowboarding
- Cross-country skiing
- Snowshoeing
- Farm chores
- Folk/cultural dancing - ex: Highland dancing
- Mountain biking
- Working with your 4-H animal
- Piloxing



4. Handy Definitions to Know

Aerobic physical activities

Dynamic activities that involve large muscle groups and result in substantial increases in heart rate and energy expenditure. Also known as endurance activities. *Examples: rowing, dancing, running, bicycling*

csep.ca/en/guidelines/glossary-2017

Bone-strengthening activity

Physical activity that increases the strength of specific sites in bones that comprise the skeleton. *Examples: jumping rope, running, lifting weights*

csep.ca/en/guidelines/glossary-2017

Dopamine

Neurotransmitter that helps the brain to process emotional responses and enhance our experience of pleasure.

hms.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/HMS_OTB_Spring10_Vol16_No2.pdf

Endorphins

Hormone that helps regulate pain and stress and to induce euphoria.

hms.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/HMS_OTB_Spring10_Vol16_No2.pdf

Exercise

Physical activity that is purposeful with the goal of improving components of physical fitness such as flexibility, endurance and muscular strength.

csep.ca/en/guidelines/glossary-2017

Flexibility

The range of motion of joints or the ability to move freely.

participation.com/en-ca/content/glossary

Light (Low) Physical Activity (LPA)

Does not result in sweat production or shortness of breath. *Examples: slow walking, stretching, playing with animals.*

csep.ca/en/guidelines/glossary-2017

Moderate-Intensity Physical Activity (MPA)

Is intense enough to increase the heart rate and elevate body temperature. During MVPA, a person can talk but not sing. *Examples: hiking, cycling, pushing a lawn mower, gardening*

csep.ca/en/guidelines/glossary-2017

Muscle strengthening activity

Physical activity that increases skeletal muscle strength, power, endurance or mass. *Examples: push-ups, sit-ups, swinging, lifting weights, heavy gardening*

csep.ca/en/guidelines/glossary-2017

Physical activity

Physical activity is the umbrella term and is any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that results in energy expenditure, and increases heart rate and breathing.

csep.ca/en/guidelines/glossary-2017

Serotonin

Neurotransmitter that mediates satisfaction, happiness and optimism.

ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4449495/pdf/IJPH-43-1468.pdf

Vigorous-Intensity Physical Activity (VPA)

Results in substantial heart rate increase and quick body temperature elevation; the person cannot say more than a few words without pausing for a breath. *Examples: running, cross-country skiing, jumping rope and martial arts*

csep.ca/en/guidelines/glossary-2017



4-H Canada has partnered with ParticipACTION to develop this resource
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