

# “Every WCGS Kid Healthy”

*Every Kid Healthy™ Week* is an annual observance created to celebrate school health and wellness. It is usually observed the last week of April each year, with a daily focus on different topics that affect students’ health. The link between health/wellness and successful learning in children is no secret. Healthy kids learn better!

To adapt to our very unique circumstances of learning from home, **WCGS’s School Health and Wellness Team** (Mrs. Jasper, Mrs. Farrell and Mrs. Cockrell) has chosen to spread out our observance of this week throughout the month of April, and are officially announcing that this month is “**Every WCGS Kid Healthy Month**”! Each Thursday of April (there are four), you will be offered a wellness topic in Thursday Notes that you and your family can focus on over the following seven days, and beyond.

*Social-Emotional Care, Nutrition, a Healthy Environment and Fitness* are vital PROTECTIVE FACTORS. “Protective factors” are components in children’s (and families’) lives that help them deal more effectively with stressful events and reduces the risk of their experiencing lasting negative outcomes. With each new topic, you will be given fun ideas, resources and thoughtful opportunities to implement with your family, as time allows.

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## Week 1 Focus: Social-Emotional Care

E-learning is a critical time to tap into the emotional well-being of children. Many children can sense and feel that this is a chaotic and unsettling time. Our children and teens are facing uncertainty and it is important to provide opportunities for your family to process feelings and learn new skills.

**Growing Leaders** offers a springboard to conversation for 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders.



## TRAINS & TRACKS

### [ STRUCTURE ]

Think about a train moving along tracks. It would be easy to assume the tracks prevent the train from moving freely, but it's just the opposite. The tracks give the train focus and direction. A train without tracks is just a disaster waiting to happen. You are just like this train. If you want to move forward you'll need structures and systems to keep you on track and help you make progress.

*While they don't allow trains to go anywhere they want, railroad tracks actually help the engineer get to the right destinations more swiftly and without accident. They are a system to enable a train to reach its goal the best way possible. They don't hinder, they help.*

### FAMILY ACTIVITY

Using a white board, brainstorm a family schedule during the time you will be home.

Then, have each family member create their own daily schedule. Give time blocks for things such as “chores,” “creative time,” “reading” or “exercise.”

After creating your schedules, stick to them daily & have ongoing conversations about what works, what doesn't & what is important about keeping a regular schedule, even while staying at home.



Click [here](#) for additional ideas for creative and educational ways to stay busy at home

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why are structures and systems so important for our daily life?
2. What is the cost of living without structure? How could a lack of structure potentially derail you from getting to your goals?
3. What can you start doing today to create more structure in your home?

**HABITUDES** | HOME CHATS



### MAKING TRACKS

Want to understand the power of routine habits? Ask any virologist during the COVID-19 outbreak. When each of them is asked what to do to stop the pandemic, their number one answer is very simple: wash your hands. In fact, simply washing your hands several times a day for 20 seconds can *majorly slow* the spread of disease. This is colloquially known as “Flattening the Curve.” Isn't it amazing how a small and simple practice like washing your hands can make all the difference? The same thing is true in our daily routines.

Sometimes, the difference between a bad day and a good day is as simple as whether or not you made your bed, read something positive or used your creativity to make something. Positive and intentional habits like these are the key to a better life. So, what kinds of tracks are you building in your life?













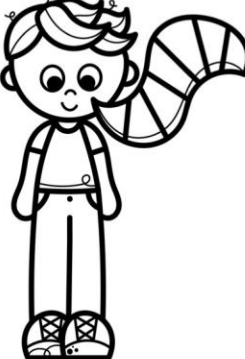
### Tik Tok Hand Washing Video

When Vietnam made a [catchy Handwashing PSA](#), it was turned into a [viral Tik Tok sensation](#). Have your family make your own hand washing video and post it with the hashtag

#HabitudesHomeChats for a chance to be featured on the **Growing Leaders Instagram** @growingleaders

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For Kindergarten-4th graders, **this** will offer opportunities for your child at home.

<b>How are you feeling today?</b>										<b>Day 01</b>				
														
content	worried	sad	tired	happy	silly	scared	annoyed	angry	sick					
<b>Self-Care Tip:</b> Make a list or draw pictures of all the things that make you happy.	<b>Think About It:</b> What could you say to a friend who is feeling sad? _____ _____ _____					<b>Character Trait of the Day:</b> <b>helpful</b> help · ful (adjective) giving or ready to give help How will you be helpful today? _____ _____ _____								
<b>Try this Mindful Exercise!</b> <b>Rainbow Breaths</b> 1. Start with the first color of the rainbow. 2. As you inhale, fill your mind & body with that color. 3. As you breath out, imagine that color leaving you and taking away all of the negativity as you prepare to breathe in a new color. 4. Repeat this with each new color until you get through the rainbow.										Draw a picture of someone being <u>helpful</u> .				

Share with us your pictures of your family working to “stay on track,” or doing “rainbow breaths.” 😊

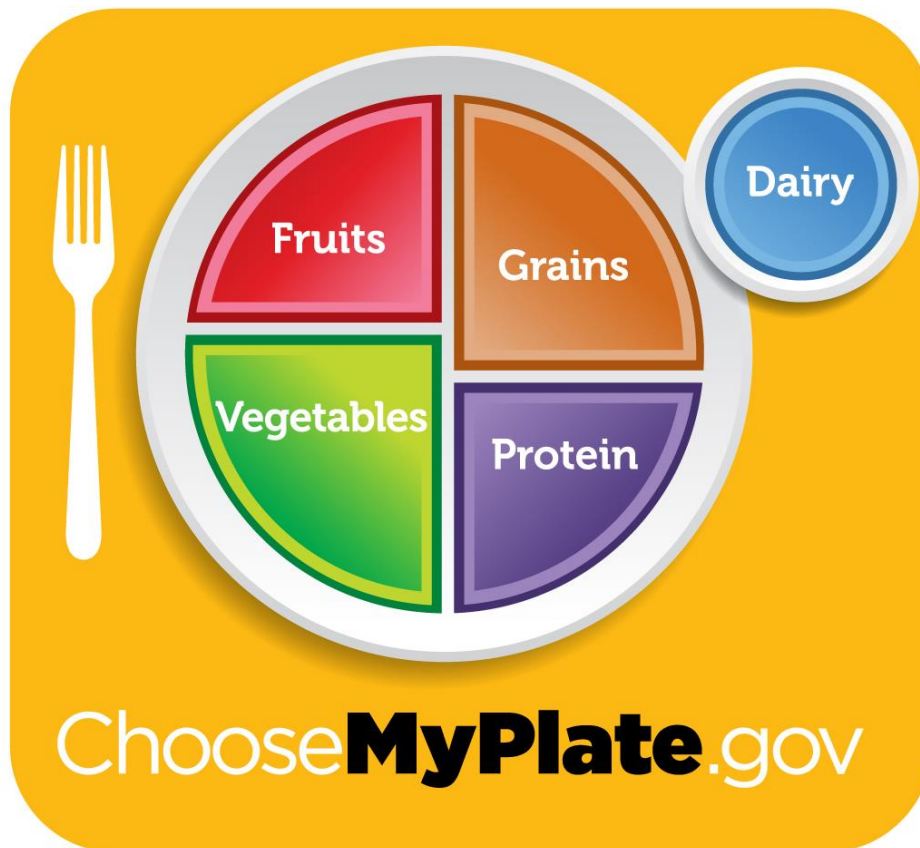
# “Every WCGS Kid Healthy”

## Week 2 Focus: Nutrition

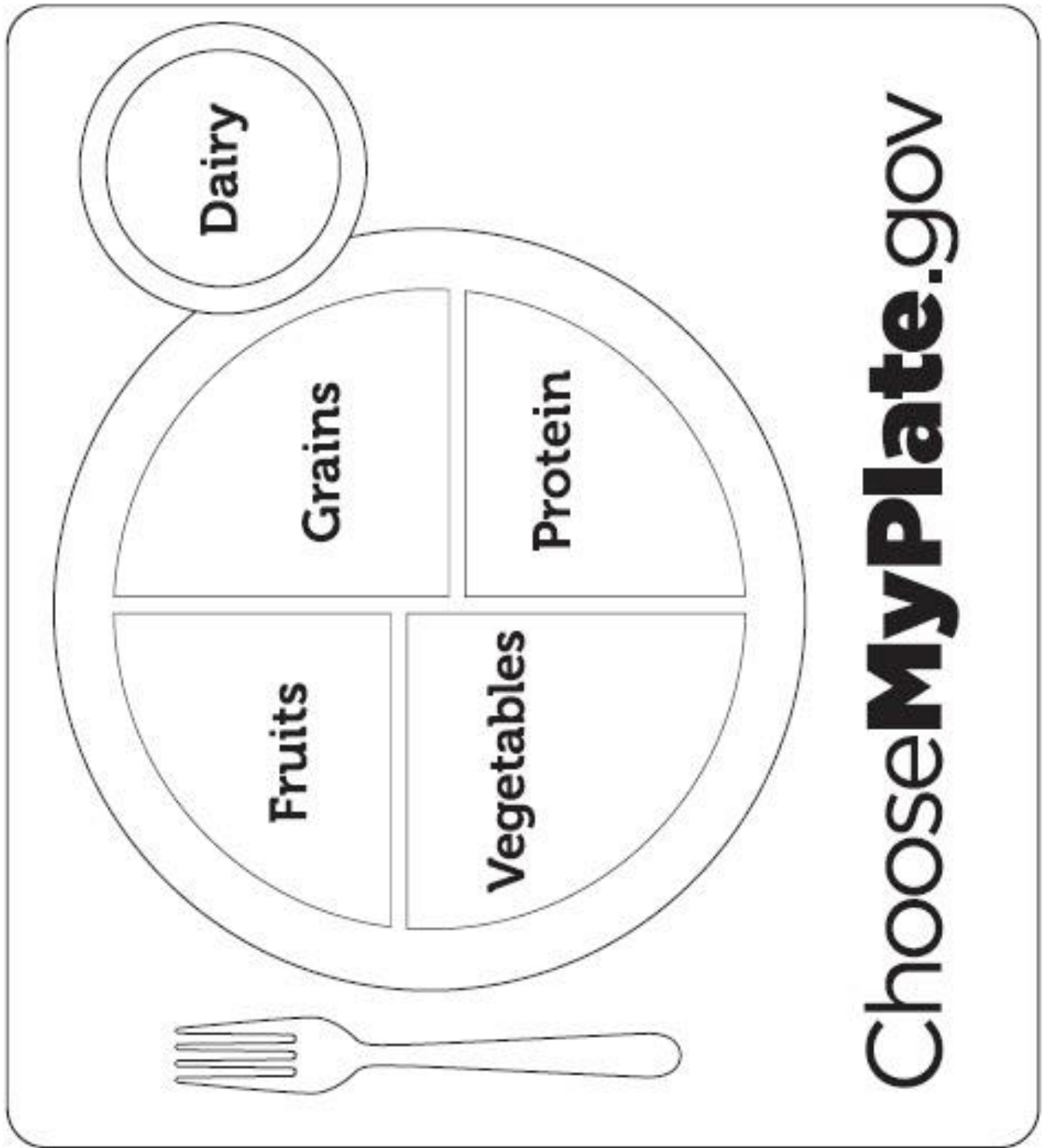
Good nutrition is one of the cornerstones of optimal physical and mental development in growing children. Decades of research show that healthy eating increases brain function and promotes better behavior, both of which contribute to a favorable learning environment and overall success in education. In addition, healthy eating plays a crucial role in our ability to effectively manage increased stress. A balanced diet is important for energy, mental concentration and mood stability. **Good nutrition is a PROTECTIVE FACTOR for our families.**

For these next seven days of **Every WCGS Kid Healthy Month**, the WCGS School Health and Wellness Team would like you to focus on good nutrition in your home. Every family member can participate! Send us your pictures of healthy eating in your home!

To begin with, make sure that at each major meal of the day, YOUR plate looks like MyPlate! 😊



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Dairy

Grains

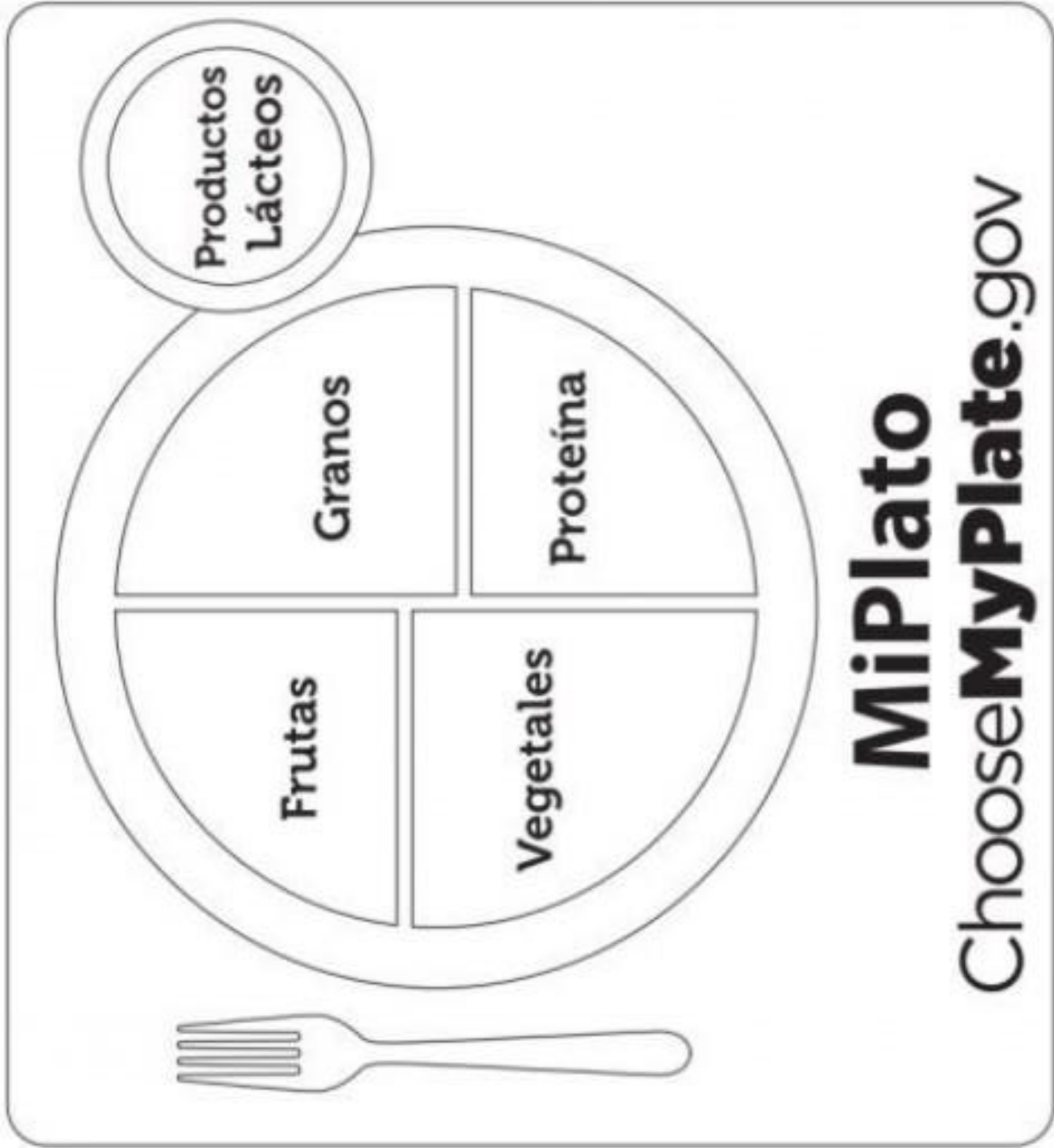
Protein

Fruits

Vegetables

Choose**MyPlate**.gov

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## Hold a Family Taste Test































Buy different brands of a healthy food (whole-grain pasta, for example) and let family members decide which one they like best. Buy different types of apples or pears and hold a taste test to see which ones are favorites.

## Eating the Alphabet Taste Test

Challenge your family to taste test fruits and vegetables and learn about all the varieties from A to Z. You might choose to find a fruit or vegetable for every single letter of the alphabet OR choose particular letters to highlight (**may we suggest W-C-G-S? 😊**). Want to offer an incentive to your young, picky eaters? Take a look online for the book *Eating the Alphabet: Fruits and Vegetables from A to Z*, by Lois Ehlert as a prize.



# FOOD TASTE TESTING



## Junior Salad Bar

Salad isn't just for grownups. Set out all the ingredients and let the kids choose a little bit of this and a little bit of that. A colorful salad is a nutritious one, so encourage a rainbow in every bowl!








**HELPFUL TIP** If avocado was included in your salad bar, save the pit. Use toothpicks to suspend the avocado pit (pointed side up) in water and watch the roots grow. Did you know avocados grew on trees

### What you need:

- shredded lettuce
- cherry or grape tomatoes, sliced or quartered
- shredded carrots
- broccoli, cooked and chopped
- sliced avocado
- shredded cheese
- mandarin oranges
- croutons
- low-fat dressing (optional)
- bowls
- serving spoons and plastic forks

### What to do:

-  Ahead of time, chop and prepare the salad fixings.
-  Create signs to label each item.
-  Place each item in a small bowl or on a small plate.
-  Don't forget serving spoons.
-  Give each child a bowl and open the junior salad bar for business!

**DISCUSSION:** When kids are munching on salad, it's an opportunity to talk about textures. Ask them to describe what they're eating (crunchy carrots, sweet oranges, smooth avocado, etc.).

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## Week 3 Focus: Healthy Environment

Every child, no matter their age, should understand the importance of creating and maintaining a healthy environment, and have access to living and learning in one. At WCGS, we take God’s first Biblical commission to humans seriously and teach our students to care for His created world.



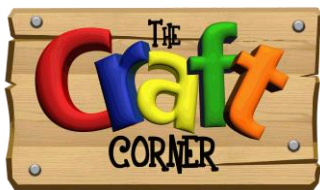
Educating our children to care for their environment teaches them secondary lessons – **TOOLS** - that they will benefit from in all circumstances of life:

- It teaches responsibility
- It teaches nurturing and caring behaviors
- It teaches respect for things and beings beyond themselves
- It fosters a sense of connectedness to a larger world of living things
- It teaches them habits that increase quality of life and years of healthy living

# “Every **WCGS** Kid Healthy”

The 50th Anniversary of **Earth Day** was yesterday, Wednesday, April 22nd. As a community, we can care for and celebrate God’s creation in many ways.

Pick a craft, STEM learning activity, or a STEM experiment from the resources provided by Mrs. Lauriat below. God will be glorified as the students care for His creation.



Check [here](#) for 30 Earth Day crafts such as;

- Make a wildflower seed bomb
- Create a nature wreath
- Construct a bug hotel
- Make paperbag paintings
- Fashion a pop-top bracelet
- Make “chair fidgets”
- Recycle old crayons (and click [here](#) to use solar power to do it)



Check [here](#) for STEM learning activities and projects such as;

- Make a water cycle in a bag
- What is a carbon footprint?
- Create a desert biome in a jar

Check out this Pinterest page for many more outdoor activities and crafts: <https://www.pinterest.com/spunkoney/nature-activities-for-kids/>

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Check out these experiments that teach us about our environment and climate change;

- Make a glacier with Borax and glue [here](#).
- Interested in wind turbines? Check [this](#) out.
- Do you have a budding geologist? Look [here](#).
- Get the oil out! Use straws to simulate the process of extracting oil from deep within the earth and discuss natural resources and how we use them. Check [this](#) out.

And to dive into more incredible learning about caring for our environment and Earth, visit

<https://www.nasa.gov/content/earth-day-2020>



# “Every WCGS Kid Healthy”

## Week 4 Focus: Fitness

In our last week of **Every WCGS Kid Healthy** month, our focus is on the great benefits of physical activity and fitness as PROTECTIVE FACTORS for our family. We are well aware of the benefits of exercise on our physical health. Let’s not forget the equally important benefits that it has on our mental and emotional health. The Anxiety and Depression Association of America reiterates this point:

“Exercise is also considered vital for maintaining mental fitness, and it can reduce stress. Studies show that it is very effective at reducing fatigue, improving alertness and concentration, and at enhancing overall cognitive function. This can be especially helpful when stress has depleted your energy or ability to concentrate.

When stress affects the brain, with its many nerve connections, the rest of the body feels the impact as well. **So it stands to reason that if your body feels better, so does your mind.** Exercise and other physical activity produce **endorphins**—chemicals in the brain that act as natural painkillers—and also improves the ability to sleep, which in turn reduces stress.

Scientists have found that regular participation in aerobic exercise has been shown to decrease overall levels of tension, elevate and stabilize mood, improve sleep, and improve self-esteem. Even five minutes of aerobic exercise can stimulate anti-anxiety effects.”

(<https://adaa.org/understanding-anxiety/related-illnesses/other-related-conditions/stress/physical-activity-reduces-st>)

*There are so many easy ways to build exercise into our daily lives. Here are just a few ideas to get you started....*

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## Go on an Adventure Story

The next time you are walking to the park or playground, turn it into make-believe action! Encourage children to begin a story and play along with new twists and turns. You can use this time to tie in physical activity (“Hop on one foot until we reach the bridge.”) and subjects being studied (“That bee is taking something from that flower... do you know what it is?”).

- Start with a prompt. This could be something related to your surroundings like a crack in the sidewalk that might just be a bridge or a piece of litter that might need a recycling superhero.
- Ask children what you should do next, and have them tell a little more of the story. Use your imagination to look at your surroundings through a different lens:
  - A tree could be a secret hiding place until it’s safe to pass.
  - A log could be a rickety bridge across the water.
  - The mailperson could be from superhero headquarters delivering the latest mission.
- Take turns if in a group and work together to overcome challenges and obstacles.

## Take Action

Encourage everyone to think of fun activities that get you up and moving. Make getting more physical activity and exercise a **family challenge** through family activity points. Here’s how it works:

- Develop a list of activities to try on a weekly or monthly basis.
- Choose a different activity each day or each week to try. Think of ways to have fun and be physically active at the same time. For example, turn on music while making dinner and have a dance party while waiting for the meal to cook!
- Assign various points depending on the activity. For example, walk around the block is 1 point, jump rope for 10 minutes is 2 points, and run for 15 minutes is 3 points.

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- Add in bonus points if a family member does an extra physical activity that day.
- ☑ Set goals! Measurable goals will help your family become more physically active and celebratory of achievements along the way. At the end of each week or month, assess your progress. Types of measurable goals can include distance, frequency, intensity or time.
- ☑ Keep a family activity calendar to record the amount and type of activity for each family member and award points accordingly. Post the calendar on the fridge or share through social media.
- ☑ Choose activities that are both enjoyable and accessible.
- ☑ Integrate new activities as you build success and momentum. Take pictures, share stories and words of encouragement with one another.

## **Backyard Fitness Circuit Course**

Fitness circuit courses are a fun and interactive way for anyone to be physically active. These courses consist of setting up several stations of different activities that kids rotate through in a short period of time (one or two minutes).

Consider including some of these fitness stations in your Backyard Fitness Circuit Course:

- Movement Dice: On index cards, write down 10 different exercises such as push-ups, sit-ups, jumping jacks, etc. Randomly pick a card. Using dice, roll a number. That’s the number of exercises you’ll need to do!
- Pull a wagon along a sidewalk chalk path.
- Throw bean bags into a laundry basket or corn hole set.
- Basketball throw! How many baskets can you make?
- Walk the tight rope using a jump rope or garden hose. If you fall off, you have to start again!

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- “Army crawl” from one cone to another.
- Bowling: Using half-filled water bottles, arrange them in the shape of a triangle. Using a heavier ball, try to knock down all the bottles.
- Hula Hoop Hop: Spread hula hoops hopping distance apart so you have to hop from one to another without stepping outside of the hoops.
- Balloon Hunt: Inflate 5 balloons for each child participating. Using an upside-down laundry basket, try to capture all of the balloons as they try to float away.
- Shoe Box Race: Place a shoebox on each person’s feet. Run to the cone and back as fast as possible without falling.
- Noodle Toss: Hang a hula hoop from a tree. Using pool noodles, see how many noodles you can throw through the hula hoop before rotating to the next station!
- Run through the sprinkler (this is good for the finale!)



## Social Emotional Health Highlights

Activities such as these help kids explore **self-awareness and social awareness**. Encourage children to use their creativity to come up with their own ideas for stations in a backyard fitness circuit! Involving children in the creation of a backyard fitness circuit course may help them to develop a better understanding of the mind-body connection. Children may have an idea but quickly realize that it is too simple or too challenging, improving self-perception and recognition of modifications needed to create an environment inclusive to all.

*As always, we’d LOVE to see pictures of your family participating in healthy activities together!*