

# Exploring Physical Activity

## Time

20 minutes

## Activity Overview

This module helps define physical activity and its many facets beyond just “exercise.” Participants get a chance to practice taking their pulse, a key skill that youth can use to gauge how hard their bodies are working.

## Activity Objective

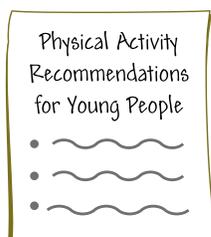
- ◆ Explore the concept of physical activity.

## Materials Needed

- ◆ Flipchart paper (at least one sheet for each group), easel (if available), markers, masking tape, watch/timer
- ◆ 6 Media Questions poster
- ◆ Equipment to play and show the Media-Smart Youth DVD
- ◆ *Pulse Game* sheet (one for each participant)

## Trainer's Preparation

- ◆ Post the 6 Media Questions poster in the room.
- ◆ Set up workstations (quantity is based on number of groups) in different areas of the room where the participants can work in small groups.
- ◆ Write “Physical Activity Recommendations for Young People” at the top of a sheet of flipchart paper. Under the heading, write:
  - Do 60 minutes (1 hour) or more of physical activity daily.
  - Participate in physical activities that are appropriate for their age and are enjoyable so that these activities become a regular part of everyday life.
  - Do a variety of physical activities.



Post the sheet in the front of the room, and cover it until it is needed in the discussion.

- ◆ Write “Top 5 It’s Hard to Believe, But It’s Physical Activity” on sheets of flipchart paper and post in each workstation (enough for one per small group). Make sure each group has markers to write with.
- ◆ Photocopy *Pulse Game* sheets (one for each participant).
- ◆ Set up the equipment to play and show DVD Segment #6: *Activities Fit To Be Tried: Music Sequence*.

Top 5 It’s Hard to Believe, But It’s Physical Activity

## Introduction | 4 minutes

1. **TELL** participants that in this session they will explore the concept of physical activity and how it is addressed in the Media-Smart Youth program.
2. **SAY:**  
*In this session, we will:*
  - Define physical activity and discuss what it does for our bodies.
  - Brainstorm ways to incorporate physical activity into our daily lives.
  - Practice how to calculate our pulse rates while at rest and after varying levels of physical activity.
3. **TELL** participants that the program wants youth to understand what it means to be physically active and to be able to explain why physical activity is important for good health.
4. **SAY:**  
*The program focuses on the following concepts:*
  - Physical activity is anything that gets the body moving.
  - Exercise is just one form of physical activity and often suggests structured workouts, such as jogging and weightlifting.
  - One key to being physically active is to find ways to make physical activity a natural part of our daily lives.

5. **SAY:**



*Media-Smart Youth uses the following physical activity recommendations suggested by health experts:*

**UNCOVER** the paper titled, “Physical Activity Recommendations for Young People” and **READ** the recommendations out loud:

- *Do 60 minutes (1 hour) or more of physical activity daily.*
- *Participate in physical activities that are appropriate for their age and are enjoyable so that these activities become a regular part of everyday life.*
- *Do a variety of physical activities.*

## What Is Physical Activity? | 2 minutes

1. **SAY:**



*As I mentioned earlier, physical activity can be defined as anything that gets your body moving.*

**ASK** participants:

- ◆ What are some examples of physical activity?

**LISTEN** to ideas from participants. If necessary, **GUIDE** them to the following types of responses:

- *Going up and down stairs; playing soccer, basketball, or football; swimming; biking; jumping rope; dancing; throwing a ball; doing sit-ups; playing Frisbee™; walking the dog; or washing the floor.*

2. **SAY:**



*Physical activity is a broad term that refers to all kinds of activities: slow, fast, easy, hard, simple, complicated, done alone, or done with a group. If it gets your body moving, then it's physical activity! Remember that sports and exercising are just one part of physical activity. There are also many other ways to be active.*

3. **ASK** participants:
  - ◆ What does physical activity do for you and your body?  
**LISTEN** to ideas from participants. If necessary, **GUIDE** them to the following types of responses:
    - Keeps your body healthy
    - Makes your heart and lungs fit and strong
    - Makes your bones and muscles strong
    - Makes you feel energetic
    - Builds strength and endurance
    - Helps you feel good about yourself
    - Gives you something to do when you are bored
    - Creates a fun way to meet others or spend time with friends

### Creating a Top 5 It's Hard to Believe, But It's Physical Activity List | 6 minutes

1. **SAY:**



*Now you're going to work in teams to create a Top 5 It's Hard to Believe, But It's Physical Activity list. These lists should include any physical activity that gets your body moving, especially everyday activities. Don't include traditional sports or exercises, such as basketball or weightlifting. You can be as imaginative as you want, as long as the activity gets your body moving!*

2. **ASK** participants for an example of an activity that would go on this list. Some examples might include sweeping, vacuuming, or having a snowball fight.
3. **DIVIDE** the participants into small groups of seven or eight people.
4. **ASK** each group to select one or more participants for each of these roles:
  - ◆ Notetaker(s) will write down the group's ideas on flipchart paper.
  - ◆ Encourager(s) will cheer on the group and urge it to finish the activity in the time available.
  - ◆ Presenter(s) will read the list when the group is done.
5. **ALLOW** the groups 2 minutes to create their lists on the flipchart paper. **TELL** participants when they have 1 minute left and when it is time to stop.

6. **ASK** one group to present its list to the larger group, counting from 5 to 1. **TELL** all participants to drum their hands on the table right before the group reads its number 1 It's Hard to Believe, But It's Physical Activity idea from the list. Have the remaining groups present any activities that were not mentioned by the original group. **CONGRATULATE** the participants for having such creative and clever ideas.
7. **DISCUSS** the lists briefly. **ASK:**
  - ◆ Which activities on the list surprised you because you never thought of them as physical activity before today?
8. **SAY:**  
 *As your Top 5 lists show, being active doesn't mean you have to play an organized sport. You can be active in many other ways as part of your daily life. Just keep in mind that being active in any way is important.*

## The Pulse Game: Learning to Take Your Pulse | 8 minutes

1. **TELL** participants that they are going to do a short activity called the *Pulse Game*.
2. **ASK:**
  - ◆ What is your pulse?**LISTEN** to ideas from participants. If necessary, **GUIDE** them to the following responses:
  - Your pulse is the throbbing of your arteries as your heart pumps blood through them.
  - Your pulse tells you how fast your heart is beating; pulse is also known as heart rate.
  - Your pulse can give you information about how hard your body is working.
3. **EXPLAIN** to participants how to take their pulse.  
**SAY:**  
 *Take your pulse by putting your index and middle finger on the inside of your wrist, or on the side of your neck, and counting the number of beats per minute that you feel.*
4. **ASK** participants to take the *Pulse Game* sheets out of their folders.

5. **SAY:**



*Resting heart rate is the number of times a person's heart beats per minute when that person has not been moving. Your resting heart rate is different from your heart rate when you are active, which is what we'll take later. Let's practice by taking our resting heart rate together.*

**DEMONSTRATE** for participants the way to take a pulse as you guide them through the steps.

6. **SAY:**



*Here's how we'll do it:*

- *Sit down quietly and relax.*
- *Put your index and middle finger on the inside of your wrist of your opposite hand, below your thumb. Or place your fingers on the side of your neck, in the soft hollow area next to your windpipe.*
- *Now feel for your pulse. Don't use your thumb because it has its own pulse.*
- *Count your pulse for 6 seconds. Take that number and multiply it by 10. The resulting number is your resting heart rate.*



7. **ASK** if participants have found their pulse. **HELP** participants if necessary.

8. **TELL** participants when it is time for them to begin counting their pulse. **ALLOW** 6 seconds to pass on your watch or timer. **TELL** participants to stop counting when time is up.

9. **ASK** participants to write down the number of beats they counted during the 6 seconds in the Step #1 section of the *Pulse Game* sheet. **ASK** them to multiply that number by 10 (by adding a zero to their original number). **NOTE** that the resulting number is their resting pulse rate.

10. **POINT OUT** the “Levels of Intensity” chart on the bottom of their *Pulse Game* sheets. **TELL** them to find their level of intensity and mark it on their paper in the far right column.

## A Note About Matching Pulse Rates to Levels of Intensity

The “Level of Intensity” numbers in the *Pulse Game* sheet are not intended to be an absolute indicator of the intensity of the different activities. They are there merely to show the youth that some activities will make their hearts beat faster than others and to give them a way to understand the subjective definitions of “low,” “moderate,” and “vigorous” intensity.

### 11. **SAY:**



*The resting heart rate for youth older than 10 years of age and for adults is usually between 60 and 100 beats per minute.<sup>8</sup> Between 60 and 100 is an average. People’s heart rates change from day to day and throughout the day depending on what they are doing. The pulse rates that each of you will calculate during our activity are specific to the particular setting you are in today and may be influenced by many factors, including the tempo of the music. The heart rates you will calculate do not reflect your ability to do any physical activity.*

12. **EXPLAIN** to participants that they will now try out different kinds of physical activities in two separate groups. Each group will do a specific physical activity.

### 13. **SAY:**



*You are going to see how different physical activities and how you do them affect your pulse rate. I will divide you into two groups, and each group will do a different physical activity for 1 minute. After 1 minute, you will stop and immediately take your pulse.*

*I will keep time and let you know when to start and stop the activity and when to take your pulse. When you are done taking your pulse, write it in the second column of Step #2 on the *Pulse Game* sheet. Then multiply it by 10, and write this number in the fourth column—Beats Per Minute—of Step #2.*

*Lastly, you will determine the level of intensity you used for the activity. Don’t compare your answers with one another because two people can experience different levels of intensity when doing the same physical activity.*

*After you finish the first activity, I will tell each group to do a different physical activity. You’ll do a total of two activities for 1 minute each, and you will calculate your pulse rate after each one.*

<sup>8</sup> National Institutes of Health, National Library of Medicine. Medline Plus. Pulse. Retrieved March 23, 2013, from <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003399.htm>.

14. **EXPLAIN** that first, one group will be walking and one group will be pretending to jump rope, and that the groups will switch activities the second time around.
15. **DIVIDE** participants into two groups, and tell the rope jumpers to stand in front of their chairs and the walkers to walk around the room. **STAND** in the front or in the middle of the room to count time for the participants and give directions.



16. **PLAY** music from DVD Segment #6: *Activities Fit To Be Tried: Music Sequence* while the groups do their activities.
  - ◆ For the first minute, **TELL** Group 1 to walk and Group 2 to pretend to jump rope. When there are 10 seconds left in the minute, **TELL** the walkers to walk toward their chairs.
  - ◆ When participants finish the activity, **TELL** them to stand still and immediately take their pulse rates. **CALL OUT** start and stop times for participants to count their pulse rates (6 seconds).
  - ◆ **ASK** participants to record their pulse rate on their *Pulse Game* sheets.
  - ◆ Next, **TELL** the groups to switch activities. Group 1 will now pretend to jump rope, and Group 2 will walk. After 1 minute, **TELL** each group to take and record their pulse rates.
17. **ASK** all the participants to come back together to talk about what they've learned. **ASK** participants:
  - ◆ What did you discover about these physical activities?
  - ◆ Do you think that the same activity could be moderate-intensity or vigorous-intensity depending on how you do it?**LISTEN** to ideas from participants. If necessary, **GUIDE** them to the following responses:
  - Some activities make your heart beat harder than normal and make you breathe harder than normal. That tells you that your body is working harder than it does at rest.
  - The way you do an activity affects how hard it is and what level of intensity it is. For example, if you walk slowly, your body might be working a little, but if you walk very quickly, your body will work harder.
  - Activities can benefit more than one part of your body. Running in place and jumping rope, for example, make your heart and lungs strong and better able to pump blood and oxygen around your body. These activities also make your muscles and bones strong.

## Closing the Activity | 2 minutes

1. **CONGRATULATE** participants on their great work, and **THANK** them for participating. **ASK** whether they have any comments or questions. **ANSWER** any questions.

2. **SAY:**



*Now it's time for a Snack Break!*