

Family Time

Active and Fun

SESSION OVERVIEW

This session is intended to help busy mothers and their families be more physically active and begin to make healthy choices for meals and snacks. As an activity opener, participants will show how physically active they are. Then they will discuss why being physically active is important and the challenges to being active every day. Participants will work with partners to come up with solutions to the challenges of being more physically active every day and share with the group.

Using *The Healthy Family Guidebook* participants will discuss ways to fit smart food choices into a healthy eating plan. At the end of the session, participants will be reminded to make being physically active and eating healthy a part of their daily habits. Participants will make a personal commitment to at least two actions to follow a healthy eating plan and be physically active for at least 30 minutes most days of the week.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Mothers with children between the ages of 2 and 18

GROUP SIZE: 5 to 7 participants

NEEDED TIME: 45 minutes

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES:

After the session participants will be able to:

- Identify and commit to at least one action to get at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity with their family most days of the week.
- Identify and commit to at least two actions to help kids eat in a healthy way, every day.

KEY MESSAGES:

- Being physically active and following a healthy eating plan can be fun and may promote a longer and healthier life in many ways.
- Regular physical activity is a key factor in maintaining a healthy body weight for adults and children.

- Parents play an important role in helping their children make physical activity an everyday habit.
- Most families need to be more physically active.

MATERIALS NEEDED FOR SESSION

- Nametags/markers
- Highlighters or pencils (one per participant)
- Flipchart/markers
- *MyPyramid* poster – Hang poster at eye level so everyone can see it
- Lively and fun musical CDs and player
- Resources for mothers:
 - *The Healthy Family Guidebook*
- Optional: Order *Make Family Time an Active Time* as a take home brochure for each participant at www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/

Outline of 45-minute session:

- Welcome and introduction to the *Family Time - Active and Fun* session (5 minutes)
- Discussion group activities (35 minutes)
- Sum up and home activity (5 minutes)

For additional background information, review “*Inside the Pyramid*” and “*Tips and Resources*” on the USDA website, www.mypyramid.gov.

TIP:

Consider using the Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ music or *Power Up Moves* found at website



www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/

WELCOME TO FAMILY TIME – ACTIVE AND FUN

Welcome participants and ask them to make their own nametag (first names only). Make sure each has a copy of the *Guidebook*, and a highlighter or pencil. Mention other points of interest as needed, such as the location of restrooms and water fountains.

BEGIN:

What are your favorite ways to be physically active? Write responses on a flipchart.

DISCUSSION GROUP ACTIVITIES

CONTINUE:

Tell the mothers that the group will be talking about:

- Planning easy and low-cost ways to be physically active each day
- Using the *MyPyramid* eating plan to choose foods and eat in a healthy way, every day
- Discussing ways to include children in their physical activity and healthy eating plans every day

Ask everyone to stand up and then discuss how physically active they think they are by asking the following questions.

ASK:

- Do you mostly sit during the day, at work, at home, or somewhere else? If so, cross your arms in front of your chest.
- Do you think you move enough during the day? If so, shake your hands.
- Is your day full of a lot of physical activity? If so, wave your arms wildly.

SAY:

Clap your hands...if you think moving more than you do now would be good for you. Now with that “applause for being on the move,” it is time to get moving! While the participants are all still standing, have fun by being physically active together.

- **Explain** that being physically active does not mean you have to participate in sports. Any kind of moving around is good, including dancing or moving to music.

- **Turn up** the Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ music for “If You Wanna Be Like the Power Panther” or other lively, fun music. Lead (or ask someone else to lead) the group in some easy but active moves to the Power Panther song. They might step in place, do a line-dance, walk around the room, swing their arms, or just move to the music in any way they would like. *Option:* if you would like to talk to them as the music plays, use the instrumental version (without the lyrics). *Note:* “Power Panther is Here” is a shorter song and does not give as much time for parents to move.



- **Talk about** their “moves.” **Ask:**

- How did it feel to move a little in our time together today? (Responses might include: fun, energizing, relaxing, helps relieve stress.)
- Could you still talk while you were moving? Could you sing with the music?

POINT OUT:

The “talk-sing test” is a good way to see if you are getting the right level of physical activity.

If you can talk while you move, it is probably a good pace for you; if you can sing while you move, you may need to move faster or harder; and if you are too breathless to talk while you move, slow down.

ASK:

- Why is dancing a good way to be physically active?
- Why is it important to be physically active?
- How much physical activity do you think adults need? How much do children need?

Provide time for mothers to share their responses for each question before moving to the next one.

POINT OUT:

- Adults need at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most days of the week. Children need at least 60 minutes. Ask participants to turn to pages 26 and 27 in the *Guidebook* and highlight or circle the amount of physical activity that adults and children need.
- Physical activity helps you control body weight by balancing the calories you take in as food, with calories you use each day; and may reduce your risk of certain chronic diseases.
- Dancing, walking, riding bikes, and climbing stairs are low-cost, fun ways to be physically active with your children. Have participants turn to pages 26 and 27 in the *Guidebook* for more ways to be physically active.



ASK:

- Why it is hard to be physically active?
- Acknowledge their challenges and ask, What are some solutions to these challenges?
- Let the group members share their challenges and possible solutions.

REINFORCE POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS:

- *“Too tired when I get home”* (Solution: Make your lunch or break time active; take a 10-minute brisk walk.)
- *“No time – too many other things to do”* (Solutions: Be more active in the everyday things you do; use the stairs instead of the elevator or park further away and walk.)
- *“Nobody to be active with”* (Solution: Plan fun ways to be active with your family; play with your kids or walk the dog.)

CONTINUE:

Tell the mothers that food choices are also important to a healthy family. Remind them that making smart choices from every food group is the best way to give their bodies the nutrition they need.

- Point to the *MyPyramid* poster and review that a healthy eating plan is one that:
 - 1) emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products;
 - 2) includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts;
 - 3) is low in solid fats, salt (sodium), and added sugars;
 - 4) balances food and physical activity.
- Ask the participants to turn to page 7 of the *Guidebook* and together read aloud the amounts of food shown for a 2,000-calorie meal plan.
- Ask: What makes it hard to follow this plan?
- Let the participants discuss some solutions. Then ask them to turn to page 28 in the *Guidebook* and together read aloud some of the tips for making it easier to eat smart.

SUM UP AND HOME ACTIVITY:

Now that you know some fun and easy ways to be more physically active and eat healthy, you can take steps to make these habits part of your daily life.

- Ask each mother to highlight or circle two activities on page 26 of the *Guidebook* that she will do with her children, and
- Highlight or circle two actions on page 28 of the *Guidebook* that she will do to help her kids eat right.



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