

# Grade **8** Lesson Package



heart healthy kids™  
volume 2

Jeunes cœurs en santé<sup>MC</sup>

volume 2





## OVERVIEW OF LESSON PACKAGE FOR GRADE 8

LESSON	TITLE	TOPIC
Lesson 1	<i>911 – There’s More to it than Pushing Buttons</i>	How to Help Without Panicking
Lesson 2	<i>The Balancing Act – Who’s Pressing Your Buttons?</i>	Heart Healthy Nutrition
Lesson 3	<i>Breathing Easy</i>	Heart Healthy Breathing Habits
Lesson 4	<i>Hearts, Soles, and Videos – Who’s the Real Expert?</i>	Evaluating Your Own Fitness

### General Information

#### STRUCTURE OF STUDENT LESSONS

1. Each lesson is provided in photocopiable Black Line Master format, with one page per lesson.
2. Each lesson begins with a introductory story-like scenario to set a context.
3. The story is followed by a student-centred activity with a well-defined objective (e.g., students work together to develop a recovery plan for a teacher who’s had a heart attack at age 39).
4. In each lesson, students create or collect something to take home and share with their families (e.g., the results of a student-organized taste test).

#### STRUCTURE OF TEACHER GUIDELINE PAGES

1. Each photocopiable student lesson is supplemented by its own teacher guideline page.
2. Each guideline page provides point form information on the following topics:
  - \* Materials / Equipment
  - \* Learning and Thinking Skills
  - \* Teaching Tips
  - \* Common Misconceptions
  - \* Goals Objectives
  - \* Extensions (home, community)
  - \* Background
  - \* Curriculum Connections
  - \* Procedures, Pointers Precautions

#### DECIDE HOW MUCH TIME YOU CAN ALLOCATE

The time required will depends on your goals. Each lesson can stand on its own, if necessary. Yet each can become the theme of a multidisciplinary study.

#### DECIDE WHAT APPROACH SUITS YOUR SITUATION

1. Station approach: Student groups rotate through four stations during four lessons. Eventually all students do each lesson. This approach is good for split class – each grade can do lessons for its own level. (There is a separate, related, set of lessons for grade 7, and for grade 6.)

2. Collaborative approach: Students split into four groups (made up of 25% high achievers, 25% low achievers, 50% from the middle of the pack). Each group becomes expert on one lesson topic, and prepares a presentation (poster, skit, lesson, etc.) for the other three groups. This approach is good for mixed-ability and mixed-grade classes.
3. Whole-class approach: Teacher-directed lessons in sequence with active class participation. This approach is good for single-grade classes with little diversity in ability.

#### INTRODUCING THE UNIT

Ask your students: How many years until you turn 27? How does that compare with your present age?

Ask: Do they know what’s significant about age 27? Answer: Only 10 years ago, early onset heart attacks were happening at age 35. Now – it’s 27. Can students guess/infer why such a serious illness is striking so much earlier? Would they like to improve their personal odds? Would they like to educate the adults they live with?

#### INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Start with the scenario. Read it aloud yourself, or invite a student to do so. This would be a good opportunity for an ESL student or another struggling reader to shine. The language is simple, and the student could be given the story ahead of time in order to prepare.

Allow a few minutes for discussion of the scenario. Let students put themselves in the story before you hand out the photocopies.

## Teacher's Guideline – Grade 8



### LESSON 1 911 – *There's More to it than Pushing the Buttons*

#### MATERIALS / EQUIPMENT

- Photocopies of BLM Student Worksheet Grade 8 – 1
- Research materials, such as telephone directory
- Pen and paper

#### BACKGROUND

- 911 Emergency Telephone Service is available in most urban centres. Some outlying regional areas do not have 911 service, and must call the emergency services number in their community. Ascertain which service is available in your students' area before you do the activity. You may need to modify it accordingly.
- In some cities, the 911 operator re-directs your call to the appropriate department.
- Most students will be aware of the 911 service from television and media items.
- Almost everyone who has to call 911, is nervous or downright scared. Students should recognize that this is normal. The important thing is to remain as calm as possible.
- Calling for help is the number 1 action in helping someone.

#### COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

- Many people think that calling 911 is easy. It's not as easy as it sounds. After all, a crisis is interfering with the way we think. People with nerves of steel have been known to have quavering voices when they had to call 911.
- People who don't speak English may be anxious about calling 911. Discuss possible solutions to this issue.

#### LEARNING AND THINKING SKILLS

- Critical thinking
- Measuring pulse

- Creative thinking and writing
- Presentation skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Recording information

#### GOALS / OBJECTIVES (*In this activity students will...*)

- be able to use the Emergency Telephone Service in their area
- present their ideas in the form of a skit
- know the kind of information the 911 operator may need (i.e. address, phone number, etc.)
- know and understand why they may feel scared in crisis, and they will be able to take steps to remain calm

#### TEACHING TIPS

- If you have ever had to call 911 yourself, you probably have a story you can share. Encourage students to share their own experiences too.
- Knowing how to use 911 and how to remain as calm as possible are the two main points of this activity.
- Expect some noise while the students prepare their skits.
- You may want to divide the class into two groups for writing the skits: one group for the panic-stricken approach and another for the calm, cool, collected approach.

## EXTENSIONS

### *In the classroom*

- Appoint safety officers for things like fire drills, first aid, helping someone get to the nurse/office if they are ill.
- Create a bulletin board of current events related to dramatic 911 calls and assistance.

### *Elsewhere in the school*

- Post essential information (name of school, address, nearest intersection, telephone number) by each telephone.
- Display the 911 Do's and Don'ts charts prepared by students at the end of this lesson (under Prepare to Take Action). Discuss the best possible location--in the school lunch room, perhaps?

### *In the community*

- Visit a 911 call centre or a fire department (Make sure students have prepared thoughtful questions for their guide).

## PROCEDURES, POINTERS AND PRECAUTIONS

- This lesson is intended to help students reduce anxiety if they should ever need to call 911. Make sure to end on a positive, "you-can-handle-it" note.
- Encourage students to share their real-life experiences, but be sensitive to privacy issues.
- It is important for the caller to remain calm, but it is equally important for the "victim" to feel reassured. Panic is contagious and dangerous. A panic-stricken victim will add to the caller's anxiety, so the caller should do his or her best to reassure the victim.
- Make sure students understand why it is important never to call 911 as a joke or prank.

## CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS STUDENTS WILL:

### LESSON 1

- describe the basic factors that contribute to the effective functioning of the human respiratory and circulatory systems (Sc. & Tech. -- Life Systems)

### LESSON 2

- adopt personal goals that reflect healthy eating practices (H & PE -- Healthy Living)

### LESSON 3

- outline the possible negative consequences of substance use and abuse (H & PE -- Healthy Living)
- apply the steps of a decision-making process to address age-specific situations related to a personal health and well-being in which substance use or abuse is one of the factors (H & PE -- Healthy Living)

### LESSON 4

- apply the factors that motivate their daily activities e.g. health benefits, to positively influence others to become physically active (H & PE -- Active Participation)

## Answers to Questions for Grade 8 Lesson 1

### 911 – There's More to it than Pushing the Buttons

#### HERE'S THE SCENARIO

"Hello, 911 operator. How can I help you?" ... My grandfather's house..."

#### PUT YOURSELF IN THE PICTURE

What if you were in a similar predicament? How would you feel?

Give students time to respond.

Remember the last time your teacher passed out a "pop test" without any warning?

Have you ever done this? Did the grade 7 teacher do this?

Did your hands get cold and sweaty? Did your heart pound? Did your stomach seem to fall to your knees?

Many students may never have analyzed the physical symptoms of fright. They just know they feel "scared" or "angry." They don't know how closely the two emotions are related.

If someone you care about developed alarming symptoms, would you be able to answer the questions that Jason is being asked?

Students aren't being asked to answer this long bulleted list; merely if they would be able to.

#### THINK ABOUT IT

**1.** One reason Jason's upset is that he knows a sudden pain in the arm or shoulder may signal a heart attack. Would you know the symptoms of a heart attack, stroke, or other serious condition?

Probably not, but they can find out.

Here's a summary:

**Stroke:** The first symptom of a stroke is often a sudden, extremely severe headache. A stroke occurs when something blocks one of the arteries to the head, so the brain cannot get enough food and oxygen. If the brain's speech centre is affected, the person may not be able to say anything. But, a good observer may be able to guess that a stroke might be happening. The person's face might look surprised, or confused. The eyes might look out of focus. An arm or a leg might suddenly go limp. The person might fall as a result.

**Heart Attack:** Chest pain is likely, but in many cases, the first sign is a puzzling pain in the arm or shoulder (puzzling because there's been no injury or other history to account for it). Often the person won't admit that this pain could signal a heart attack. It stands to reason that a heart under attack is probably not sending as much blood as usual to the brain, so it's

not surprising if the person is not thinking clearly. So it is NOT a good idea to "wait awhile and see." If the only responsible person around is a kid, then the kid should call 911 and let the operator decide if there's anything to be worried about.

Which should you do first: call 911, or care for the patient?

Unless the patient is in immediate danger-of falling down stairs, of being burned by hot bathwater – call 911. The operator can decide when you should return to the patient, and what you should do.

**2.** Just how would you keep your cool?

Student lists will vary, but should include things the student can practice NOW, before the crisis. If they can learn to keep their cool when something disturbing happens at school, that's a good start..

**3.** What could you say to reassure a patient? Examples: "I've called 911, an ambulance is coming. The 911 operator told me to roll you over on your back (side, stomach)."

Why might you have to repeat the words over and over?

The patient may drift in and out of consciousness: hearing may wax and wane. The patient may be really scared, like a toddler, and may need constant reassurance.

Would you know how to position someone who may be injured or having a heart attack? (What could Jason do?)

Make the patient as comfortable as possible.

#### PREPARE TO TAKE ACTION

What specific thing should you prepare for if someone you live or work with is elderly, ill, or otherwise at risk? Answers here will vary, of course. However, students need to consider how they can get the information they need from adults who may not think a kid is mature enough to help. All too often, a "kid" is the only one who can help.

Are any of your classmates severely allergic to bee stings, peanuts, over the counter medications?

If so, everyone in the class should know it.

When should you know about someone else's health or medication?

Whenever someone you're with a lot has a known life-threatening condition.

Do any of your classmates carry prescription inhalers?

If so, everyone in the class should know it.

# STUDENT WORKSHEET GRADE 8 LESSON 1

911 – *There’s More to it than Pushing the Buttons*

## HERE’S THE SCENARIO

“Hello, 911 operator. How can I help you?”

“My grandfather! He’s on the floor. We were just sitting here, watching TV like we always do, and then he dropped his milkshake, and grabbed his shoulder, and then he sort of slid off the sofa, and then he started moaning... Oh, no! He’s not moaning any more. Is he breathing? What...”

“This is the 911 Operator. I’m going to cut in on you. What’s your name?”

“J-Ja-Jas-Jason.”

“Okay, Jason. We’re going to help you. But before I can send an ambulance, I need you to calm down. First, I need to confirm your address. Are you there Jason? Give me the address...”

“Address? My grandfather’s house...”

## PUT YOURSELF IN THE PICTURE

Jason is in what his grandfather might call “a tizzy.” What if you were in a similar predicament? How would you feel? Remember the last time your teacher passed out a “pop test” without any warning? Did your hands get cold and sweaty? Did your heart pound? Did your stomach seem to fall to your knees? That’s how it feels to be scared-like Jason.

Scared is a perfectly normal feeling. When humans (and other animals) sense danger, their bodies release extra adrenaline to help them fight off an enemy or run from danger. If you need to fight or run, extra adrenaline is great because it makes your heart pump extra blood to your muscles.

But it doesn’t take a grizzly bear to trigger extra adrenaline. Suddenly facing a test you didn’t expect can do it too. So can a situation like Jason’s. Now extra adrenaline may not be so great. Fighting can’t help with the test, and running won’t help Jason.

Adrenaline is a hormone. Humans and other animals use a wide array of hormones to control specific body tasks. During adolescence, your body suddenly starts to produce large amounts of reproductive hormones. These new hormones can charge you up with extra energy, or leave you feeling tired and irritable – all on the same day.

It can take months or even years for your body to adjust to these changes. Emergencies and emotional crises like the one Jason is facing can be particularly difficult. While you are reading this page, it’s easy enough to think, “Just call 911.” But it can be another thing to actually pick up the phone and

press the right buttons.

Adrenaline will always give you a rush of energy in an emergency. But adrenaline can also make your fingers shake, make your voice squeak, or make you babble, as Jason did. That’s why the 911 operator cut in on Jason – to calm him down by talking to him. If someone you care about developed alarming symptoms, would you be able to answer the questions that Jason is being asked?

- Where are you now?
- What is the street address?
- The nearest large intersection?
- How old is your grandfather?
- Is he awake? Breathing?
- Is there any visible injury?
- How long has he been like this?
- Has anything like this ever happened to him before?
- Is he taking any medications? (If yes, which ones and how much?)
- Did he complain of any pain before collapsing?

## THINK ABOUT IT

At school, you have likely participated in many fire drills, and you likely know the reason for them. The idea is that when there is a real crisis, everyone will be able to do the right thing automatically, without panicking. The same idea applies to obtaining emergency medical assistance. Advance planning can help you stay calm and in control if someone you know needs you to call 911. Use the following questions as guidelines to develop your own “911 drill.”

1. One reason Jason’s upset is that he knows a sudden pain in the arm or shoulder may signal a heart attack. Would you know the symptoms of a heart attack, stroke, or other serious condition? Which should you do first: call 911, or care for the patient?
2. Understanding your own reactions is important. Just how would you keep your cool? Make a list of things that would help you keep your cool in a crisis. (This won’t be the same for everyone, but most people find that it helps to take a few deep breaths, and to focus on what must be done rather than personal feelings.)
3. Chances are, you aren’t the only one who’s scared – likely the patient is too. And fright can trigger shock, a life-threatening condition. Fortunately, people who look unconscious may still be able to hear.

- What could you say to reassure a patient? (What could Jason say?)
- Why might you have to repeat the words over and over?
- Would you know how to position someone who may be injured or having a heart attack? (What could Jason do?)

### PREPARE TO TAKE ACTION

1. Everyone hopes an emergency will never happen. Being prepared “just in case” can increase the chances of a positive outcome. Use the following questions as guidelines to come up with a personal emergency plan.
  - What specific thing should you prepare for if someone you live or work with is elderly, ill, or

- otherwise at risk? (For example, are any of your classmates severely allergic to bee stings?)
  - When should you know about someone else’s health or medication? (For example, someone with asthma could have a serious attack at any time. Do any of your classmates carry prescription inhalers?)
2. Now that you know what to do, help others learn how to handle this difficult kind of situation.
    - In small groups, prepare skits that demonstrate a calm cool approach versus a panic stricken approach. Present your skits to each other, and then to younger students.
    - As a class, prepare a chart of 911 Do’s and Don’ts. Make copies for everyone to take home. Where should the chart be posted: at school? At home?

## Teacher's Guideline – Grade 8

### LESSON 2 *The Balancing Act – Who's Pressing your Buttons*

#### MATERIALS / EQUIPMENT

BLM Student Worksheet Grade 8 – 2

Pen, paper, and ruler

Lesson 4: *The Balancing Act*

(Proper Nutrition and Eating Habits)



#### BACKGROUND

- The tone of this reading is deliberately “laid back.” By the time that students reach grade 8, they have been taught Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating several times.
- Adolescents want to make their own decisions, and they are gradually gaining the maturity and knowledge to do so responsibly. What they choose to eat is often influenced by external factors, including advertising, what their friends like, what’s easiest, what they enjoy eating. This activity is intended to get students to think about what they eat and why. If they discover they are not making their own choices, or good choices, we can encourage them to make healthier choices of their own.

#### COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

- Some active teenagers have high metabolisms that burn off their food energy quickly. These teens don’t seem to gain weight, regardless of what they eat. They may begin to think that what they eat doesn’t matter. It does. If their growing bodies are to grow right, they need the nutrients that are available only through a balanced diet. In addition, adolescents who learn healthy eating habits early in life are developing tastes and habits that will last a lifetime.
- Be aware that some teens think there is no such thing as “being too thin.” Developing a positive body image is extremely important for teenagers. Body image is a critical aspect of self esteem. Unfortunately there are many forces that make it difficult for teenagers as well as ourselves to develop a positive body image. All of us are bombarded with messages that ‘thin is good’. Teachers can

play a unique role in assisting students to accept others and themselves as they are regardless of their body size. A positive attitude towards healthy eating and healthy living are important in developing a positive body image.

- Many teens choose to become vegetarian. When a variety of food sources are enjoyed, vegetarians can have a healthy and nutritious diet. For teens that choose not to eat meat, iron, protein, and several other nutrients need to be replaced. Beans, peas, lentils, nuts and seeds, tofu, eggs, fish, poultry, meat alternatives, fortified cereals, breads, grains, and some vegetables are good choices for replacing meat.

If teens choose to avoid all animal products (including eggs and milk products), it will be necessary to replace calcium, vitamin D and vitamin B12. Fortified plant-based beverages (such as soy), tofu (made with calcium sulphate), beans, peas, lentils, and a variety of vegetables and fruits can replace the nutrients found in milk products. Remember to check the nutrition label.

Supplements may be necessary. A teenager who is trying to follow a strict vegetarian diet should be encouraged to visit a dietitian to learn the basics of following a healthy eating plan.

#### GOALS / OBJECTIVES (*In this activity students will...*)

- record and organize information in a chart
- evaluate their own food choices
- know and understand some of the factors that influence the food choices they make

## SUBJECT INTEGRATION

- Reading / Writing
- Physical Education / Health

## LEARNING AND THINKING SKILLS

- Critical thinking
- Organizing and Recording information
- Self-awareness
- Evaluating skills
- Decision-making skills

## TEACHING TIPS

- Initiate a class discussion about how advertising and peer groups might influence food choices.
- Ask if students have ever noticed any connection between watching TV, snacking, and what they choose to snack on.
- What do students think about the ads they see for food on TV?.
- Discuss their food record in class. Ask students to identify personal goals. Stress the need to take small steps to accomplish their goals
- Let the students do most of the talking, and keep the focus on how what they choose to eat is up to them.

## EXTENSIONS

### *In the classroom*

- Individually or in small groups, students could develop ads for their food group favourites. These could be done as posters, radio or video ads or a multi-media approach. Students might consider famous people they would put in their ads. They should be able to justify their choice of advocates.
- Have the students write a letter to the editor of a magazine or newspaper about a food advertisement that appeared in their publication.

- Have students keep a food diary for three days (2 week days and 1 weekend day) and then have them fit the foods they ate into the food groups from Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.

### *Elsewhere in the school*

- You might be able to organize a Market Day (like a Pizza Day) for fresh fruits and veggies. Make a list of available fruits and vegetables, and have the kids make their selections the week before. On Market Day, have the fresh produce prepared and sorted for the students who take part. Strawberries, kiwis, bananas, carrots, spaghetti squash, fresh peas, celery, oranges usually go over well. If you are in a multi-cultural school, the kids might enjoy taste-testing from a more culturally diverse selection.

### *In the community*

- Have students visit their local fast food restaurant. Ask them to evaluate the current menu. How many items on the menu fit into the four food groups and are prepared using low fat methods (e.g. baked, stir-fried)? Have them make suggestions of additional food items that could be added to the menu. Ask them to explain why they have chosen the new items for the menu. From their experience do they think that these items will be popular and convenient for the restaurant people to provide. Why?

## PROCEDURES, POINTERS AND PRECAUTIONS

- SAFETY PRECAUTION: If you choose to do the Market Day, have students advise you of any food allergies. Make sure that none of the foods being brought in will cause an allergic reaction in sensitive students. (NOTE: Many schools are now prohibiting peanuts, peanut butter, and even foods with possible peanut-derivatives.)

## Answers to Questions for Grade 8 Lesson 2

### The Balancing Act – Who’s Pressing Your Buttons?

#### HERE’S THE SCENARIO

Mina sat down to watch her favorite TV show...

#### PUT YOURSELF IN THE PICTURE

Does this ever happen to you? Probably – it does to most of us. Ever wonder why? The nudges can be so subliminal that we often don’t wonder until we have already consumed the beverage, the candy, the chips. Could it be that the ads on TV suggested that you’re hungry? Certainly that’s what teen time TV ads suggest, and they’re not too far wrong.

And what might they decide to feature for the teens at ten?

Exactly what they do feature: Beavis and Butthead types proclaiming the virtues of pizza puffs, or clean cut kids scarfing chips rhythm and rhyme.

Does this idea explain why there just happen to be so many commercials for soft drinks and salty snacks when you’re watching your favorite program?

Are those my choices?

Many adults are no more resistant to sales messages than kids. But the adults know they will have to pay for whatever it is personally. Kids simply nag their adults to obtain “it” whatever it happens to be.

#### WHO’S REALLY PRESSING YOUR BUTTONS?

If you’re a teen, a lot of people are: parents, siblings, teachers, and-more than anyone else-peers. [Those attractive-looking youngsters in the TV commercials are selected for their potential to become surrogate peers.]

#### WILL YOU HAVE FRIES WITH THAT?

Well, fries can be part of a balanced diet, but not if you have them every day (or every time someone asks that question).

Do you get the stuff you really need most of the time? Enough of the good stuff to make your muscles and

bones strong? The vitamins and minerals that regulate your heartbeat and boost your immune system?

Only honest answers are useful here, and only your students can decide what the answers really are. [Don’t press them to lie to themselves.]

You take personal responsibility for balancing your own food intake.

If you have a cheeseburger, how do you balance it: with fries-or salad? With an ice cream sundae for dessert, or a calcium-rich low-fat yogurt shake? Which would you rather have? Which would your heart rather have? Which will You choose?

This series of questions is not really rhetorical. Rather, it’s an invitation for your students to reflect on the choices they have.

#### HOW’S YOUR BALANCE?

The value of this exercise will depend on how much effort the students put into it. Assist them with their personal goals and their plan of action. Ensure that their plan is realistic. Help them break their goals into small steps.

#### PREPARE TO TAKE ACTION

When it comes to food and nutrition, are the adults in your life setting a good example?

There are no right answers, only true ones.

If not, what could you do to influence them?

Families differ in their willingness to share this type of information. The range of cultural influences may make this difficult for some students. Whether kids this age can work out an action plan that could make a difference for their families without causing hard feelings is for them to decide. Proceed with caution: an overambitious “action plan” may be difficult to actually implement but a plan could be worked out without being carried out.

<i>Time and Place</i>	<i>Food or Drink</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Food Group</i>
Breakfast			
Snack			
Lunch			
Snack			
Dinner			
Snack			

ANSWERS WILL VARY

# STUDENT WORKSHEET GRADE 8 LESSON 2

*The Balancing Act – Who’s Pressing Your Buttons?*

## HERE’S THE SCENARIO

Mina sat down to watch her favourite TV show. It was just as funny as usual. But also as usual, Mina missed bits of the program because she was in the kitchen looking for potato chips. The kind in the commercials would be best, but right now she’d settle for any brand. Just give her potato chips!

## PUT YOURSELF IN THE PICTURE

Does this happen to you? Ever wonder why? Could it be that you are responding to the ads on TV or are you actually hungry? Since you’re in a growth stage of your life, you probably are hungry a lot of the time. But if you find yourself craving the chips or pizza or ice cream you just saw on TV, then maybe the ads are working a little too well.

Advertisers are pretty smart cookies. They make a living by knowing who’s watching what when, and then gearing their commercials to that audience. Toys and sugary cereal for the cartoon gang on Saturday mornings. Disposable diapers for young parents at 7:30 p.m. What might they feature for teens at ten? Does this idea explain why you see so many commercials for foods such as soft drinks and sweet, salty fatty snacks when you’re watching your favourite program?

## WHO’S PRESSING YOUR BUTTONS?

Think about it. If you find yourself in the kitchen looking for chips and pop every time an ad suggests it, you’ve got to wonder: Are those my choices?

There are many factors that influence what you eat. Media has a big impact. You are also influenced by taste, family eating habits, school policies and your friends. You also have a strong influence over what you eat - at home, at school and socializing with your friends.

And these days, everyone your age already knows all about good nutrition. So you know exactly what to say about a steady diet of cheeseburgers, fries, pizza, nachos, and ice cream. “Too much fat. Too much salt. Bad for your heart.”

What’s bad for your heart can’t be good for the rest of your body. Your face, feet, fingers – every body part depends on your heart to pump blood. Blood delivers food to build and repair those body parts. Blood also delivers the oxygen needed to release the food’s energy to keep those body parts running. And the core of that delivery system is your heart. But you are the one who decides what will be delivered. If you’re making healthy food choices, that’s what it delivers. If you’re not, whatever you are eating gets delivered to your

heart and to every other part of your body. That’s why it is important to eat a balanced diet.

## WILL YOU HAVE FRIES WITH THAT?

Balance. Do you get the stuff you really need most of the time? Enough good stuff to make your muscles and bones strong? The vitamins and minerals to regulate your heartbeat and boost your immune system. The adults in your life used to try to make sure you did. And chances are, you’re still getting at least one balanced meal at home every day. But more and more often, you’re the one making the choices.

If you have a cheeseburger, how do you balance it: with fries – or salad? With an ice cream sundae for dessert, or a calcium-rich low-fat yogurt shake? Which would your heart rather have? Which will you choose?

## HOW’S YOUR BALANCE?

It’s hard for teenagers to lead a balanced life these days. Homework, clubs, part-time jobs. And since your body hasn’t finished growing yet, you probably still need a lot of sleep. It doesn’t leave much time for friends, never mind self-reflection. If you begin to develop unbalanced eating habits, you may not even notice. Now is a good time to become more aware of your own food choices. The following questions will help you rate your own eating habits.

1. On the following page is an outline of a 3 day food record that Mina kept to look at her eating habits.
  - a) Make a chart like Mina’s. Write down everything you eat and drink at meal and snack times for 3 days. Keep your record for 2 days during the week and one day over the weekend. Write down as much detail as possible as soon as possible after eating.
  - b) Add up the number of foods you ate from each food group from Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating as well as Other foods.
  - c) Compare your intake to the recommendations in Canada’s Food Guide.
  - d) Identify personal goals to improve your eating habits.
  - e) Develop a realistic plan to achieve your personal goals.
2. What facts or habits contribute to the food choices you make? For example, do you eat fast food on the run because you’re always busy? (Would fruit be just as convenient?) Do you fill up on snacks after school and don’t have room for a balanced dinner?

<i>Time and Place</i>	<i>Food or Drink</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Food Group</i>
Breakfast			
<i>Snack</i>			
<i>Lunch</i>			
<i>Snack</i>			
<i>Dinner</i>			
<i>Snack</i>			

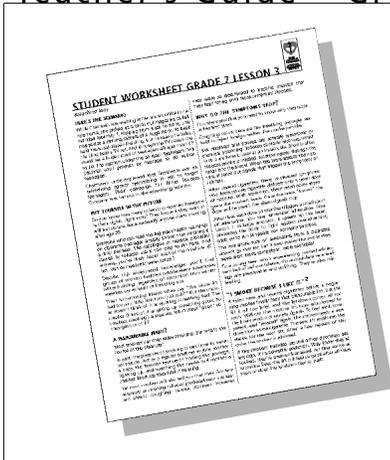
3. What makes a food appeal to you? Can you determine whether it's the taste (salty, sweet), the texture (crunchy, smooth), or some combination that you find appealing?
4. Any food can be included in a healthy diet as long as you don't eat too much of a single food. Sometimes it's possible to substitute a healthy snack for a less healthy snack. What substitute foods might satisfy your food cravings with a healthier choice? For example, when Mina feels like eating chips, bananas probably won't satisfy her craving for something to crunch. But popcorn

might, especially if she got it ready before her favourite TV program began. What about you? If you crave something sweet, would an ice-slush drink instead of ice cream work for you?

#### **PREPARE TO TAKE ACTION**

When it comes to food and nutrition, are the adults in your life setting a good example? If not, what could you do to influence them? Work out an action plan that could make a difference without causing a family argument.

## Teacher's Guide – Grade 8



### LESSON 3 *Breathing Easy*

#### MATERIALS / EQUIPMENT

BLM Student Worksheet Grade 8 – 3

Research resource

Pen, paper, ruler

LESSON 3: *Breathing Easy*

#### BACKGROUND

- This activity focuses on the vulnerability of adolescence. Physically and intellectually, adolescents are maturing. However, the hormones that are a natural part of physical maturation can cause havoc with how teens feel and think. What doesn't seem to change is their desire to make their own decisions, even to the point of reckless rebellion. It's important for teens to understand the value of healthy living, but they adopt healthy habits more readily when they feel they are making the choices themselves..
- The desire to “fit in” – from make-up and hairstyles to disregarding the risks of smoking and poor diets – has a significant impact on many teens' choices. See if you can find articles about your students' current media idols who extol the benefits of healthy living. Students may not know how hard some of these people work at feeling good, looking good, and performing well.
- Current studies suggest that second-hand smoke is at least as dangerous as smoking a cigarette yourself. The hardest part for many teenagers is recognizing that they are not invincible. Part of the problem is that they are young and the habits are not old. Their bodies are resilient. If they sneak one or two cigarettes, they'll get away with it. Even if they start to become regular smokers, they probably won't feel the damage until much later in their lives. The same is true of healthy habits: Teens may not feel the benefits immediately, or understand their long-term nature.
- This lesson likely revisits content from previous health courses. That is why it does not reiterate the health hazards, bad smells, high costs, etc. Instead,

this lesson is intended as a starting point to help students really think about the lifestyle choices they make and why they matter. Especially now.

#### COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

- Many adolescents have the misconception that they are not vulnerable to death or disease. A lot of teens take big risks with their health, even their lives. The unfortunate truth is that many teens survive the risky behaviour and the myth of invincibility lives on. Even more unfortunate is the truth that other teens could have prevented tragedy if they had realized the impact of their behaviour. Adolescents can make good choices, but they need peer support as well as adult guidance.
- Some teens, and some adults, have a narrow understanding of healthy habits. They may focus on only one aspect of a healthy lifestyle and think that alone protects them. (Think of enthusiastic gym rats who end the evening with several beers!) It's really the combined aspects of healthy living that will have the greatest impact on our general health.

#### LEARNING AND THINKING SKILLS

- Critical thinking
- Predicting outcomes
- Reading / writing
- Presentation skills
- Research skills

#### GOALS / OBJECTIVES (*In this activity students will...*)

- evaluate their own lifestyle choices
- understand the relationship between the choices they make and the way they look, feel, and perform

- gain an operational understanding of the term addiction and explain its insidious nature

#### **CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**

- Reading / Writing
- Science
- Physical Education / Health

#### **TEACHING TIPS**

- First, get the students to read the article aloud and discuss it. They should do most of the talking. The teacher should take a back seat.
- Second, while it's perfectly legitimate for the solitary genius to create a song, poem, story, skit, or comic strip in isolation, only the teacher can facilitate the formation of groups for students who would like to collaborate. A good writer who "can't draw" might hesitate to start a comic strip, while the artist in the crowd might not feel able to write the story. Together, they might produce a work worthy of being copied and sent home.

#### **EXTENSIONS**

##### *In the classroom*

- Have students make posters illustrating the various aspects of healthy living habits.
- Invite a health care professional who deals with heart and lung diseases to speak with the class or someone who has been affected by smoking to speak with the class.

##### *Elsewhere in the school*

- Students might enjoy writing healthy habit jingles that can be played during opening exercises.

##### *In the community:*

- Your class could organize a Healthy Habits open house at the school for the whole community. Include their creative works of art. If possible, have some relevant pamphlets from health organizations or fund raising groups that can be handed out as well. You may even be able to get some representatives from these groups to participate in the open house.

#### **PROCEDURES, POINTERS AND PRECAUTIONS**

- You might want to consider having students do a multi-media presentation to keep the interest level high.
- The Internet is a useful research tool, but be aware that many people who have web sites are not necessarily "experts." (This could be another entire lesson in itself: learning to question what you read, who is saying it, etc.)

## Answers to Questions for Grade 8 Lesson 3

### Breathing Easy

TeenBeem was an advertising agency specializing in ads to target teenagers.

#### PUT YOURSELF IN THE PICTURE

Do you know how many tobacco companies have you in their sights, right now?

Most kids do know that they are the focus of many advertising campaigns. It makes some of them feel as if they are the centre of the universe – in other words it complements their developmental stage. Some realize that they are being manipulated, but don't really care as long as the benefits (as defined by the campaigns and the campaigners) seem rewarding. And a few hate it.

To smokers, smoking's a pleasure. Why? What "good" do they get out of it? A Pleasurable Habit? But what's the source of the pleasure?

Hormones acting on the brain.

Why do the symptoms stop?

Because the brain has been reprogrammed so that it detects the poison, but does not react to it.

"I smoke because I like it."<sup>1</sup> Does the lift still feel so good after all these years or does the let-down feel so bad?

According to die-hard smokers, both. Nearly all have tried quitting at some time, and they hated the let-down. They enjoy the lift, every time they light up. They hate the let-down that happens not long afterward – so much that they light up again.

#### THINK ABOUT IT

**1.** Studies of senior high students found that most smokers started in junior high. Why did they start?

Answers will vary. Almost nobody starts for the lift, though many girls start to prevent weight gain. Usually, junior high schoolers start to look cool, to feel cool, to feel part of a group, to gain acceptance, to feel or look more "adult," etc.

**2.** Most believed they would quit soon. But 75% were still smokers 5 years later. Why did they think they'd quit?

They didn't understand the stakes of the game they were getting into.

**3.** Why didn't they just quit?

They were addicted. After five years, smoking had become an entrenched habit, and their brains were thoroughly reprogrammed. (Rats can become addicted to nicotine in just a few days, and people don't take a lot longer.)

#### PREPARE TO TAKE ACTION

**1.** Create a song, poem, skit or comic strip to portray one of these situations:

The suggested scenarios can spawn a lot of creative energy. There are no "right" answers, but it should be noted that doing what you feel like doing without thinking about it can lead to trouble.

<sup>1</sup> This slogan was part a popular ad campaign about 30 years ago. It's still popular among older smokers.

# STUDENT WORKSHEET GRADE 8 LESSON 3

## *Breathing Easy*

### HERE'S THE SCENARIO

While Charmain was waiting at her uncle's office for a ride home, she picked up a colourful magazine called *Ad Mad Monthly*<sup>1</sup>. Flipping from back to front, she stopped at a striking picture of a huge stork. Its beak held the usual diaper-like sling, but instead of a baby, the sling held a TV set. And through the TV screen she could see a huge crowd of teenagers—all ages from 13 to 19. The caption under the ad read: TeenBeem: WE DELIVER your product or message to 60 million teenagers.

Charmain's uncle explained that TeenBeem was an advertising agency specializing in ads to target teenagers. Their campaign for Ninja Tobacco Company was famous in the advertising industry.

### PUT YOURSELF IN THE PICTURE

Do you know how many tobacco companies have you in their sights, right now? They know if they wait, it will be too late, because hardly anyone starts smoking after age 20.

Everyone who can read the big black health warnings on cigarette packages already knows that smoking is a risky business. The catalogue of medical problems caused by tobacco use is too long to list here. And anyway, you've likely heard most of them before. (If not, visit our website: [www.hsf.ca](http://www.hsf.ca))

Despite this widespread knowledge, you'll find groups of smokers huddled outside every downtown office building, regardless of discomfort from winter weather, car exhaust or blistering sun.

Their non-smoking friends often say "You know it's bad for you. Why don't you just quit?" But the smoker doesn't think of it as quitting something bad. The smoker thinks of it as giving up something good. To smokers, smoking's a pleasure. Why? What "good" do they get out of it?

### A PLEASURABLE HABIT?

Most smokers say they enjoy smoking. But what's the source of the pleasure?

In part, the pleasure of smoking comes from its habitual nature. Just as a regular bedtime routine soothes a baby, the familiar routine of finding the package, lighting up, and watching the smoke curl soothes a smoker. Most say they find it relaxing.

Yet most smokers will also tell you that their first few attempts at smoking tobacco produced very unpleasant effects: coughing, nausea, dizziness. However,

they were so determined to become smokers that they kept trying until those symptoms stopped.

### WHY DO THE SYMPTOMS STOP?

To understand that you need to know why they occur in the first place.

Coughing occurs because the breathing passages are built to reject foreign matter like smoke particles.

But dizziness and nausea are actually symptoms of chemical poisoning. Tobacco contains nicotine, which in its pure form is used as an insecticide. Shortly after tobacco smoke is inhaled, nicotine passes through the lungs into the blood. When the brain detects the nicotine, it sends out signals that trigger the symptoms of sickness.

After several cigarettes, these unpleasant symptoms stop because one cigarette delivers only a small dose of nicotine. With repetition, these small doses reprogram the smoker's brain. Once the brain "knows" the dose will be small, the alarm signals stop.

After that, each dose of nicotine triggers a small spurt of adrenaline. You may remember adrenaline from Lesson 1. In large amounts, it speeds up the heart, preparing the body to fight against overwhelming odds, or to run at speeds not normally possible.

The miniature rush of adrenaline from a cigarette doesn't go that far. But it does make the smoker feel more alert, more competent, more confident.

To a young teen who's experiencing normal adolescent lack of self-confidence, those confident new feelings are pleasurable and uplifting. They're also misleading.

### "I SMOKE BECAUSE I LIKE IT."<sup>2</sup>

It takes time and several cigarettes before a beginning smoker finally feels that pleasurable lift. But the lift is all too brief, and the let-down comes all too soon. Without the nicotine it's now accustomed to, the brain sends out anxiety signals. To feel alert, competent, and "relaxed" again, the smoker needs a new dose from a new cigarette. The new lift reinforces the desire for the next lift. After a few repeats of this cycle, the smoker is addicted.

If the smokers huddled around office doorways are any sign, it's a powerful addiction. They know they're hooked; they're even embarrassed; yet they continue to smoke. Does the lift still feel so good after all these years or does the let-down feel so bad?

That's not TeenBeem's problem. Their job is to persuade young teens to sample smoking, and stick to it long enough to get over the unpleasant symptoms. Then the nicotine will reprogram the brain and Ninja will have a steady source of income.

### THINK ABOUT IT

1. Studies of senior high students found that most smokers started in junior high. Why did they start?
2. Most believed they would quit soon. But 75% were still smokers 5 years later. Why did they think they would quit?
3. Why didn't they just quit?

### PREPARE TO TAKE ACTION

1. Create a song, poem, skit or comic strip to portray one of these situations:
  - Your parents find a package of cigarettes in your laundry bag. What would they say? What would you say?

- Two adults are smoking on a park bench. The baby between them is coughing. What would you say? What would you do? What would you feel like doing?
  - Your city has just issued an air quality advisory. Pollution levels are high. Your visiting grand mother has a heart condition. Your uncle lights up a cigar in the house. What would you say? Do? Feel like doing?
2. Share your creation with the adults in your life. How do they react?

<sup>1</sup> Ad Mad Monthly is a real magazine; Ninja and TeenBeem are real companies, but those aren't their real names.

<sup>2</sup> This slogan was part a popular ad campaign about 30 years ago. It's still popular among older smokers.

## Teacher's Guideline – Grade 8

### LESSON 4 *Hearts, Soles and Videos*

#### MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT

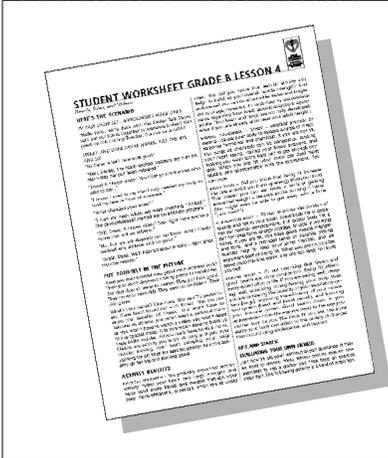
BLM Student Worksheet Grade 8 – 4

Research materials

Pen and paper

Skipping rope and a clock/watch marked with 60 minute intervals

LESSON 1: *Hearts and Soles*



#### BACKGROUND

- Physical fitness is one of the most important factors for attaining and maintaining good health.
- Physical activity is an essential component of physical fitness. Physical activity strengthens your muscles and bones, makes you more flexible, gives you better endurance, helps you keep your balance, gives your heart and lungs a work out, and boosts your immune system. Physical activity can also reduce stress levels and help your body deal with additional physical and emotional stress.
- People who are not physically fit are more susceptible to serious conditions such as high blood pressure, heart attacks, strokes, obesity, and diabetes.
- To be effective, moderate aerobic activity must be done for at least 30 minutes over most days of the week, preferably daily.

#### Definitions:

HIGH IMPACT AEROBIC ACTIVITY – means that both feet are off the ground at the same time during some of the routine. There tends to be a more forceful landing than in low impact aerobics.

LOW IMPACT AEROBICS – means that at least one foot always remains on the ground, or that the person's body is somehow supported by equipment (or water, as in swimming).

#### COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

- Many teenagers do not know that they need to be physically active during their adolescence just as much as a 40-year-old needs to be physically active.
- Some people think that physical activity is only a matter of skill or muscle strength. It actually involves the whole body, and there is an attitudinal aspect as well.

- Many students may think that the heart rate always increases with exercise. After a few weeks of proper aerobic activity/training, a person should be able to maintain a slower heart rate during physical activity than they did at the start of their training period. This means they need to increase their aerobic physical activity routine if they want to increase their endurance and fitness levels.
- Different cultures view physical activity differently. Have your students discuss the activities common in their culture and families.

#### LEARNING AND THINKING SKILLS

- Critical thinking
- Numeracy skills
- Creative thinking and writing
- Presentation skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Recording information

#### GOALS / OBJECTIVES (*In this activity students will...*)

- understand the importance of physical activity in their own lives
- measure the resting and post-activity heart rate of another student, by taking the student's pulse
- understand that aerobic activity increases their heart and lung power as well as increasing their general physical strength and endurance
- know the difference between high and low impact aerobic activity
- identify and compare/contrast high and low impact aerobic activity

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

- Math
- Reading
- Creative writing
- Science
- Physical education / health

## TEACHING TIPS

- **READ THE SAFETY PRECAUTION BELOW.** Some students may have health conditions that preclude them from participating in the skipping.
- This activity needs space and may be quite noisy. You may want to book the gym, or do it outdoors if the weather permits. If you stay in your classroom, make sure the desks are arranged so there is plenty of room for skipping.
- Advise students ahead of time that they will need to wear or bring appropriate clothing for this activity (jeans/pants/shorts, T-shirts, running shoes).
- Students with younger siblings may be able to help supply skipping ropes if necessary.
- You may want to provide resources about high and low impact aerobic activities for students to use, or alternatively, assign the question as library research.
- Encourage students to organize their heart rate results in a concise form such as a chart.

## EXTENSIONS

### *In the classroom*

- If all the students in your class are comfortable with the idea, post a Class Work Out Chart, and have students record their sessions of aerobic activity.
- Have a Star Athlete Day each week, so students can share their own triumphs, special interest sports and/or favourite athletes.
- Students can plan the warm-ups for gym periods.

### *Elsewhere in the school*

- If you are in a K-8 school, students can teach their chants and games to younger students during a joint physical education class.

### *Elsewhere in the community:*

- You and your students could coordinate the Jump Rope for Heart or Hoops for Heart programs at your school.

## PROCEDURES, POINTERS AND PRECAUTIONS

- **SAFETY PRECAUTION:** Make sure that you know of any students with any kind of condition that prohibits them from taking part. You may want to consider including them by appointing them as special time keepers in a threesome.
- Noise and excitement are natural outcomes for this activity. Be aware of the noise level so you avoid disturbing other classes.
- Students may have trouble taking someone's pulse at first. It may be appropriate to have students find their own pulse and then try finding their partner's.

## Answers to Questions for Grade 8 Lesson 4

### Physical Fitness – It’s Your Move

#### HERE’S THE SCENARIO:

“Still, Dane. A fitness video? Says right here you’re a movie star, not an athlete.”

No, but my job depends on my looks. And I finally realized why athletes look so good.”

#### PUT YOURSELF IN THE PICTURE

Have you ever noticed how good most athletes look?

Many kids may never have thought about athletic celebrity in this sense. Not everybody would want to look exactly like Michael Jordan, but who would not want to look that self-assured, confident, healthy?

#### FITNESS BENEFITS

More food. Did you know that being fit increases the rate at which you burn up energy from your food?

Note: It’s not just that the quantity of energy increases because you are spending more time exercising. The amount of energy burned up per minute increases as well.

#### FITS AND STARTS:

##### EVALUATING YOUR OWN FITNESS

Just how fit are you?

Kids this age are very hard on themselves. Their hearts and lungs are not fully grown yet, even if they are near their adult height. They should not expect to be as strong or as fast as an adult.

##### THINK ABOUT IT

1. a) What happened to both partners’ heart rates after the skipping exercise.

Rates will rise.

b) Whose heart rate was faster before the exercise? After the exercise?

This is a matter of interest only. It doesn’t “prove” anything.

c) What factors do you think affect a person’s heart rate?

Age, body size, stage of development, fitness level.

2. What do you think happens to the member’s heart rate after a few weeks of training?

Probably the heart rate goes down. With exercise, the heart muscle gets stronger, and won’t have to contract as often to push the blood around.

#### PREPARE FOR ACTION

1. a) How does high impact aerobic exercise differ from low impact aerobic exercise?

Low impact exercise (e.g., cycling) does not jar the joints as much as high impact exercise (e.g., tennis).

b) What do all forms of aerobic exercise have in common?

They make your lungs take more air into your body.

c) Based on your own experience with skipping would you agree that it is an aerobic exercise?

Anyone who has done much skipping would have to agree. Some students may not have done very much of it, but if they’ve watched much TV, they’ll have seen how boxers use skipping drills to build up endurance. Explain why.

Skipping makes you breathe hard.

2. People are more likely stick to a fitness program if it is fun. Young children have the idea with songs and chants for skipping games.

a) What chants do you remember? Go out to the playground and listen. Are today’s children using the same ones, or have they made up new ones?

Many of the rhythms remain much the same, while the chants mutate gradually as new phrases or names replace the ones we remember. Your students are still young enough to catch the rhymes in transition.

b) What aerobic activities do you enjoy?

There are no right answers-only true ones.

How would they fit into a fitness program for you?

c) How could music or rap rhymes make your fitness more fun?

For clues: Take a look in the park. A lot of joggers wear “Walkman” style radios. Look at any TV fitness program. What kind of music do you hear? How does it vary as the program progresses?

3. Do any of the adults in your life need to get involved with a fitness program? How could you help them get started and stick to it?

Ask the adult to help you get started and stick to it - that’s one possibility.

# STUDENT WORKSHEET GRADE 8 LESSON 4

*Hearts, Soles, and Videos*

## HERE'S THE SCENARIO

*TV TALK SHOW SET – ANNOUNCER'S VOICE OVER*

"Hello folks, we're back with the Smiley Talk Show. Let's put our hands together to welcome Smiley's first guest on this smiling Tuesday: D-a-n-e J-a-n-o-f!!!!

*SMILEY AND DANE SHAKE HANDS, KISS THE AIR, AND SIT*

"So Dane, what's new with you?"

"Well, Smiley, I'm really excited because my first fitness video has just been released."

"Dane! A fitness video? You? But you're the one who used to say..."

"I know. I used to say that I only needed my body to hold my face in front of a camera."

"What changed your mind?"

"I hurt my neck when we were shooting "Pinball!" The physiotherapist started me on a fitness program."

"Still, Dane. A fitness video? Says right here you're a movie star, not an athlete."

"No, but my job depends on my looks. And I finally realized why athletes look so good."

"Great, Dane. We'll hear all about it folks – right after this commercial."

## PUT YOURSELF IN THE PICTURE

Have you ever noticed how good most athletes look? Their jobs don't depend on being pretty or handsome. But that doesn't seem to matter. They just look good. They move so smoothly. They seem so confident. Their skin glows.

What's their secret? Like many film and TV performers, Dane Janof found out – it's fitness. You too can enjoy the benefits of fitness. You won't have to become an athlete, you won't need a personal trainer, you won't have to watch a video, you won't need to buy special shoes. And you won't have to build up huge bulky muscles. All you really have to do is move. Choose any activity you enjoy. As long as it gets your muscles moving, your heart pumping, your lungs panting for air, then it's aerobic activity. And the benefits go far beyond looking good.

## ACTIVITY BENEFITS

**PHYSICAL STRENGTH** – You probably know that aerobic activity makes your heart and lungs stronger, and helps send more blood and oxygen through your body more efficiently, especially when you're under

stress. But did you know that aerobic activity also helps to build up your overall muscle strength? And endurance? You can do all activities faster and longer. (At your age, however, it's important to use common sense regarding how much aerobic exercise is appropriate. Your heart and lungs are not fully developed, even if you are already at or near your adult height.)

**MENTAL TOUGHNESS** – Stress – whether physical or mental – causes your body to release a surge of stress-response hormones and chemicals. If you are not fit, this surge of chemicals can be dangerous, sending your heart racing, raising your blood pressure, and making you work extra hard just to get enough oxygen. When you are fit, your mind can deal more quickly and appropriately with the excitement. You can cope.

**MORE FOOD** – Did you know that being fit increases the rate at which you burn up energy from your food. That means you can eat more – without gaining unwanted weight – because you're burning it faster. (You might even be able to get away with a little "junk food!")

**A BALANCED BODY** – Fitness improves the division of muscle and fat in your body. Some body fat is essential for normal development, but excess body fat is just for long term energy storage. Muscle is working tissue. If you are fit, you have good muscle strength and tone, and a stronger sense of balance. Strong muscles help to keep your joints flexible, also an important part of being fit. When you are fit, you can move smoothly and easily, and are less likely to injure yourself.

**FEELING GOOD** – It's not surprising that fitness and good health are close companions. Being fit affects every aspect of your life. If you are eating well, sleeping well, exercising, strengthening your body, then you are increasing the capacity of your respiratory system (lungs), improving the efficiency of your circulatory system (heart and blood vessels), and boosting your immune system. Good health shows in your appearance – from the way you stand to the way your clothes look on you. The more fit you are, the more easily your body can adjust to the variety of changes that occur during adolescence, and beyond.

## FITS AND STARTS:

### EVALUATING YOUR OWN FITNESS

Just how fit are you? Without expert guidance, it may be hard to decide. Many fitness centres require new members to see a doctor and then take an exercise stress test. The following activity is a kind of stress test.

It uses a skipping routine to apply physical stress and measures your heart rate to indicate how the stress affects your body. (Incidentally, skipping isn't just for little kids. Competitions involving teenage males and females are common on TV, and professional athletes use skipping to push themselves beyond the average level of personal fitness.)

You'll need to work with a partner so that there's one person to act as Test Subject, and another to act as Timer. Halfway through, you'll swap roles.

**IMPORTANT:** Advise your teacher if you have any health problems that might make the skipping part of the activity unsafe for you. You can participate as a Timer.

### WHAT YOU WILL NEED

A skipping rope, a watch or clock marked with 60 second intervals, a pen and paper.

### WHAT TO DO

**1.** First, practise taking your own pulse. Here's how. Feel the inside of your wrist to find a pair of ridges near the base of your thumb. Probe around with your middle and index fingers until you feel a regular beating sensation. It may help to shut your eyes. Can you feel it? That's your pulse. It beats every time your heart contracts (squeezes) to push blood around your lungs and the rest of your body.

**2.** Practise taking your partner's pulse. By now your partner should be able to guide you to the right spot. But it may take a few seconds to feel anything.

**3.** Test subject: Sit quietly. Hold your hand out with your palm facing up.

Timer: Take the Test Subject's pulse. Watching the clock, count the pulse beats in one minute and record the result.

**4.** Test Subject: Pick up the skipping rope and wait for the signal to start.

Timer: When you are ready, call out "start!" Keep your eye on the clock.

Test Subject: Skip rope or jog on the spot, or jump up and down for two minutes

Timer: When two minutes are up, call out stop!

**5.** Timer: Take the Test Subject's pulse right away. Record the result.

**6.** Both partners: Switch roles. Repeat steps 3, 4, and 5.

### THINK ABOUT IT

1. a) What happened to both partners' heart rates after the skipping exercise.  
b) Whose heart rate was faster before the exercise? After the exercise?  
c) What factors do you think affect a person's heart rate?
2. After a fitness centre puts a new member through a stress test like this, a suitable activity program is prescribed. What do you think happens to the member's heart rate after a few weeks of training?

### PREPARE FOR ACTION

1. Investigate different kinds of aerobic activity
  - a) How does high impact aerobic activity differ from low impact aerobic activity?
  - b) What do all forms of aerobic activity have in common?
  - c) Based on your own experience with skipping would you agree that it is an aerobic activity? Explain why.
2. People are more likely stick to a fitness program if it is fun. Young children have the idea with songs and chants for skipping games.
  - a) What chants do you remember? Go out to the playground and listen. Are today's children using the same ones, or have they made up new ones?
  - b) What aerobic activities do you enjoy? How would they fit into a fitness program for you?
  - c) How could music or rap rhymes make your fitness more fun?
3. Do any of the adults in your life need to get involved with a fitness program? How could you help them get started and stick to it?

