

Sports challenge

Physical Education

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General

This section challenges you to engage in sport and fitness activities under a range of different circumstances. Normally we think of sport as an outdoors group activity, but the COVID-19 pandemic has changed that for the time being. In addition to traditional group sports, we look at the challenge of maintaining motivation for independent, indoor fitness activities.

Good health

The value of good health

People sometimes underestimate the value of good health. In fact, we tend not to think about health at all until we become ill, at which point we suddenly appreciate being well! Chronic disease can have an especially powerful influence on one's appreciation of good health.

Some chronic diseases are linked to lifestyle. People who smoke are at increased risk of lung cancer, for example. Similarly, people who are overweight are at increased risk of diabetes, and people who consume too much alcohol are at increased risk of liver and kidney disease.

Overall health and fitness can also affect our chance of developing health issues, from heart disease to the flu. Lifestyle and fitness become particularly important as we get older, with people who have a good overall level of health being at reduced risk for age-related diseases like Alzheimer's.

What does it mean to be healthy?

Let's start by looking at what we actually mean by 'health'. Some children share their thoughts in this short video:

Playing time: 2:40

[watch](#)

Defining health (5 coins)

How do you define 'health'? What does it mean to be healthy or unhealthy? Take a look at the video below for ideas, and then share your thoughts in the '[Defining health forum](#)'.

Playing time: 8:35

[watch](#)

Health contexts (5 coins)

The word 'health' takes on a different meaning at each of the following levels:

- individual
- local community
- public
- global

Global warming, for example, could be considered a global health issue as it can't be limited to a particular individual or community, whereas a chemical spill could be considered a community health issue.

For this activity, find an example of a health issue at each of the above levels, and post them on the '[Health contexts forum](#)'.

Factors affecting health

The video below looks at a few different terms related to health. It also highlights the importance of both social and physical factors:

Playing time: 1:59

[watch](#)

Stress (5 coins)

The video above notes stress as a major factor contributing to poor health. What causes you stress, and do you think it's to a level that might affect your physical health? Discuss your thoughts and experiences in the '[My stressors forum](#)'.

A healthy brain

The next video discusses the impact of stress and exercise on the brain.

Playing time: 2:27

[watch](#)

Destressing (5 coins)

The video claims that not only does exercise create new brain cells but it also reduces stress which and so reduces the negative impact on brain cells. In that sense, exercise is super-good for the brain! What short exercise routine could you put in place to do whenever you feel stressed? Post some ideas on the '[Destressing forum](#)' and see if you might like to try a suggestion from someone else.

Nutrition

While cardiovascular fitness tends to receive the most attention, it's also important to consider mental fitness and nutritional fitness:

Playing time: 1:23

[watch](#)

A healthy diet (5 coins)

The '[Food deconstruction challenge](#)' focuses on nutrition and diet. It even challenges students to design a high-performance diet for an elite athlete! If you haven't done the food deconstruction challenge yet, you might want to look at it before doing this activity. What would be your optimum diet? How closely does it match your actual diet? What are you missing out on, and what might you be eating too much of? Share your thoughts and experiences on the '[My diet forum](#)'.

The role of role models

The next video discusses the role of parents in modeling a healthy lifestyle:

Playing time: 1:00

[watch](#)

Modeling good health (5 coins)

Share your thoughts and experiences for each of the following discussion points, on the '[Healthy lifestyle forum](#)':

- What sorts of lifestyle and health-related behaviours do the adults in your life model? How well do they take care of themselves? What could they change in order to model a more healthy lifestyle for you and other young people ?
- The video above claims that teenagers should get 8 to 10 hours of sleep every night. Do you get that much sleep? Do you think it justifies sleeping in or going to bed early? What impact do your sleeping patterns seem to have on your wellbeing?

Mental wellbeing

Tired and hungry

Mental and physical health are closely linked, so being tired and hungry can have a big impact on your mental wellbeing, and it can affect your ability to learn. You may know from experience that when you're hungry, it's hard to concentrate on anything other than food, and when you're tired, you just can't concentrate at all! Poor mental health can cause you to feel tired, sad, lethargic, and lacking in motivation. The next video provides five ways to improve your mental health:

Playing time: 3:38

[watch](#)

My pledge to mental wellbeing (5 coins)

Which one of the five suggestions in the video above can you try right now? Make a pledge to do something for your mental wellbeing in the '[My pledge forum](#)' .

Wellbeing

What is wellbeing?

What do we even mean by wellbeing? It's not exactly the same as 'health', though it's closely related. Some people share their thoughts in the next video:

Playing time: 1:59

[watch](#)

Some people in the video above suggest that wellbeing is about happiness. Of course, 'happiness' is another notoriously complex term. The next video discusses factors that contribute to happiness:

Playing time: 3:57

[watch](#)

The next video returns to the theme of wellbeing more generally, discussing the role of pleasure and anxiety, and its connection to our overall evaluation of our life:

Playing time: 4:25

[watch](#)

Eudaimonia

'Eudaimonia' is an ancient Greek term that refers to flourishing and realising our potential. It offers a broader perspective to wellbeing that suggests that we won't achieve it without finding purpose in our lives .

Defining wellbeing (5 coins)

How do you feel about the notions of purpose and meaning in life? Are they important determinants of happiness and self-worth, or do they not really matter? As usual, there's no right or wrong answer here. Having learned a bit about wellbeing, share your personal definition on the '[Defining wellbeing forum](#)'.

Resources and Activities

forum: Destressing forum

What short exercise routine could you put in place to do whenever you feel stressed? Post some ideas here.

Link: [Destressing forum](#)

forum: Defining health forum

How do you define 'health'? What does it mean to be healthy or unhealthy? Share your thoughts here.

Link: [Defining health forum](#)

forum: Health contexts forum

For this activity, find an example of a health issue at each of the following levels, and post them here: individual, local community, public, global.

Link: [Health contexts forum](#)

forum: My stressors forum

The video above notes stress as a major factor contributing to poor health. What causes you stress, and do you think it's to a level that might affect your physical health? Discuss your thoughts and experiences here.

Link: [My stressors forum](#)

forum: My diet forum

What would be your optimum diet? How closely does it match your actual diet? What are you missing out on, and what might you be eating too much of? Share your thoughts and experiences below.

Link: [My diet forum](#)

forum: Healthy lifestyle forum

Respond to the two 'modeling good health' prompts here.

Link: [Healthy lifestyle forum](#)

forum: My pledge forum

Which one of the five suggestions in the 'Five ways to wellbeing' video can you try right now? Make a pledge to do something for your mental wellbeing here.

Link: [My pledge forum](#)

forum: Defining wellbeing forum

How do you feel about the notions of purpose and meaning in life? Are they important determinants of happiness and self-worth, or do they not really matter? As usual, there's no right or wrong answer here. Having learned a bit about wellbeing, share your personal definition below.

Link: [Defining wellbeing forum](#)

Team sports challenge

This challenge asks you to participate in a competitive, team-based physical activity. This could be a race, a team obstacle course, an orienteering contest, or a team sport such as soccer, rugby or netball. It's up to you what activity or sport you choose, but it needs to be physical and team-based. Watch this video to find out why we chose to focus on team sport:

Playing time: 2:57

[watch](#)

The challenge (20 coins)

You are asked to complete one or both of the options below:

- **Option 1:** Join a team sports club and actively participate for at least six months. Keep a diary where you reflect on what you learn from the experience.
- **Option 2:** Organise a physically active team event in your community, with or without a local club. If you work with a club, you can seek support from club employees, which will be helpful when it comes to ensuring the safety of participants. Run the event with the help of your club or chosen community and reflect on the experience and what you learned from it.

The focus here is as much on teams and connectedness as it is on fitness. Hopefully you will discover how team sports can give you even more than fun and physical fitness. For many people, team sports are an important source of connectedness, which is an important aspect of each person's overall wellbeing. If you'd like to know more about connectedness, take a look at '[What do I need to survive?](#)'

When you finish the challenge, post about how it went on the '[Team sports challenge forum](#)'.

Resources and Activities

forum: Team sports challenge forum

When you finish the team sports challenge, post about how it went below.

Link: [Team sports challenge forum](#)

Individual fitness challenge

The challenge (20 coins)

Your challenge is to create a fitness program that will incrementally improve someone's fitness over the course of six months, increasing the pressure and routine every month or so. You'll need to do some research about how to structure the routine , but there are plenty of resources online.

The plan

Draw up a rough six-month plan with daily and weekly exercise routines. It should increase in difficulty with time. The first four weeks could involve a mixture of walking and stretching, for example. This could increase to a full-on boot camp by the last month!

Action

You don't have to do the full six-month routine, but we do ask you to put your plan into action for four weeks, starting at a point that matches your current level of fitness. For some people, that might be the first four weeks. For those with a higher level of fitness, it might be somewhere in the middle. If you're already super-fit, you might begin with the final four weeks! Whatever you decide to do, it's important that it's achievable.

Reflection

You are encouraged to keep a diary where you record the routine over four weeks, reflecting on what you did each day and how you feel both physically and mentally. It can be incredibly challenging to stick to a routine for almost any amount of time. It can help to work your new activity into an existing daily routine rather than shaping your existing routine around the new activity. It's important to note too that while this is an individual challenge, you are free to undertake elements of your new routine with friends or family. Some people might like to go for a walk or run with a friend or a parent, for example.

When you finish the challenge, post about how it went on the '[Individual fitness challenge forum](#)'.

Resources and Activities

forum: Individual fitness challenge forum

When you finish the individual fitness challenge, post about how it went below.

Link: [Individual fitness challenge forum](#)

Pandemic challenge

The challenge

The circumstances

Our final challenge relates to the COVID-19 pandemic during which physical distancing has caused many people to become housebound. Distancing procedures differ by area, with people in some places being able to go out for exercise and people in other places being restricted to the home. The challenge, then, is keeping fit when you're stuck at home.

The challenge (10 coins)

Come up with a week-long exercise routine that differs for each day of the week, so as to avoid boredom. You should aim to raise your heartbeat and sweat every day, without risking injury or damaging the house! When developing your routine, you should work from the assumption that the house has no sporting or exercise equipment so you can't just go on the treadmill if you have one.

Don't be afraid to get creative, in the absence of actual exercise and sporting equipment. Make a short video of some of your ideas and post it on the '[Pandemic challenge forum](#)' for others to see and comment on. Let's see if we can come with a big collection of fun activities to try next time we're stuck at home!

Resources and Activities

forum: Pandemic challenge forum

Make a short video of some of your at-home exercise ideas and post it here.

Link: [Pandemic challenge forum](#)