

Support for Physical Activity

MAINTENANCE TIP

Support from friends helps you do more GREEN activity.

It isn't always easy to do GREEN activity. You know that. There can be problems with weather. There can be challenges finding time. There can even be some special clothing or gear you need.

But these are usually not the biggest barriers. You can plan for them. Your parents can help you.

Often the biggest barrier is not being sure you want to do it. Lack of desire. Feeling unmotivated. It may be hard to get up and do an activity. Hard to feel motivated. You may be bored. You may not feel like doing it. You may be tired.

Or it might feel OK to just keep doing what you're doing. But you don't feel like pushing yourself to do more. You think, "Who needs to do Fitness

Boosters? Who needs to do 45 minutes a day of GREEN activity? I'm fine doing 30."

And that's where support comes in. It's *easier to keep going* when friends and other people encourage you. It's *easier to push yourself* when friends are doing it with you. It's also more fun.

That's why support from friends is so important. It makes it easier for you to do more activity. It makes it easier for you to do more intense activity. It makes it easier to reach your goals. It makes it easier to limit your RED activity.



KEY GOALS

Getting support will help you meet your 4 key goals:

- ⦿ Limit RED foods
- ⦿ Increase GREEN activity
- ⦿ Hold Family Meetings
- ⦿ Keep Track of Weight

Support from friends and family is more important right now.

You are meeting with your PAL less often than before. You need to do more on your own. You are learning to be your own lifestyle coach. That makes support even more important now. Having support will help you have continued success. The more support you have, the easier it is to make

Support from friends makes it easier to do GREEN activity. It makes it easier to keep going.

Here's what you'll learn about in this module:

- ▶ Identifying friends who can support your healthy lifestyle changes
- ▶ Asking for support
- ▶ What to do if a friend doesn't come through

healthy lifestyle changes. The stronger your support, the better.

How should I go about building a support network?

Just ask friends and family to help you. You won't ask all the people you spend time with. Ask the ones who could have a powerful effect on what you do. Do it in stages. Here's how:

► Make a list.

Make a list of people you would like to do activities with. They may be people you spend time with at school, after school, or on weekends. You may already do activities with some of them. Most of them you probably don't. It's like detective work. You look for clues: *Who might like to help me? How could they help? Who could give me the*

Remember what you learned about asking for support?

- Pick a good time to ask.
- Thank the person for what she has already done.
- Explain how diabetes can harm you.
- Explain how you need to manage your diabetes.
- Explain how she can help you more.
- Be honest and clear about what you want.
- Thank her for helping.

most support for GREEN activity?

These may be friends who like to be active themselves. Or they may be friends who care the most about you and are willing to do whatever it takes to support you.

► Plan it out.

Write down two ways you could make a healthy change in your activity habits with each of these friends. Think about doing more activity. Think about also doing Fitness Boosters. For example, you could:

- Play basketball with David for 30 minutes after school.
- Switch 2 hours of playing video games with David on Saturdays to 1 hour of riding bikes and 1 hour of video games.

Think about all the specifics. Think about the time you want to do something. Think about the place. Will you need transportation? Money? Equipment?

► Practice asking.

Practice with your parent. Pretend your parent is one of your friends. Ask for the help you want. Practicing like this can be a big help, especially if you feel shy about asking. Sometimes your parent should act like a friend who will say, "No." You need to practice dealing with that as well. You can also practice with your PAL.

Practice asking with your parent. Practice helps you be more sure of yourself when you do ask a friend.

► Just do it.

The next step is to just do it. Pick a good time to ask. You will need 5-10 minutes when nothing else is going on. You don't want your friend to be distracted.

Start by telling your friend about your healthy lifestyle goals. Explain why his support would be important. Explain how important physical activity is to managing your diabetes. Be clear and specific about the help you would like. Explain how much you want to do the activity with him. Ask about the times your friend could do it. The place. The amount of time you would do it. Every detail helps.

Have a back-up plan in mind. It helps to know what you can do if a friend doesn't come through for you.

Alicia was getting about 30 minutes of GREEN activity each day. That put her at the silver medal level. But she wasn't pushing herself to do more. She wasn't pushing herself to do Fitness Boosters. Alicia's mother asked her about her physical activity. "How are you doing? How could you feel better about what you're doing?"

"It's OK," Alicia said. "But I'm kind of bored. All I really do is walk. I like it when you walk with me. But a lot of times I walk by myself, and it's kind of boring."

"Maybe it's time to get some friends involved. I enjoy walking and talking with my friends. Let's see if we can find some friends for you to do activities with. Let's start by making a list. Then we'll try to pick a few people to ask," her mother said.

They made a list of her friends. They checked off people who were already active. These people believed in being healthy themselves. They checked off people who really cared about her.

Then Alicia thought of two ways she could make a healthy change in her behaviors with each of these friends. Some of these changes were Fitness Boosters.

That was a new way to look at things. "I don't do much biking myself. But Monica does. And Theresa plays in a basketball league at the Y," Alicia said. "But I don't know if they'd want to do anything with me."

"You'll never know if you don't ask," her mother said. "It's not the end of the world if they say, 'No.' You can just go down your list of friends to ask."

"But I'm not very good at basketball or biking," Alicia said.

"I don't think they are much better than you. Monica says she likes to bike. But she doesn't do it much. She might like company when she bikes. She would probably do it more if you did it with her. And Theresa just started at the Y. She might enjoy practicing with you. You might even want to join her team. That would be a great way to do physical activity, and the Y is a great place to meet people," her mother said.

"Now let's make a plan. Let's figure out whom you can ask first. Let's decide what you will ask her to do. And when you could do it," her mother said. They did that. Then Alicia practiced asking. Her mother pretended to be Monica and Theresa.

Alicia went ahead with the plan. She wasn't feeling very sure of herself, but she tried. She talked to Monica first. Then to Theresa. She was really surprised at their reactions. Once she explained herself, they were excited to be asked. They wanted to help her be more active. "It will help me, too," said Theresa.

"You were right, Mom," Alicia said later. "They were excited to help. Thanks for encouraging me. Thanks also for helping me practice asking."

"You're certainly welcome. Now we should practice what to say if a friend doesn't show," her mother said. "We also need to make a back-up plan if a friend lets you down."

You don't need a lot of friends in your network. Even a few can give you strong support.

What activities could you do if you wanted to do Fitness Boosters with friends?

Which friends would you ask?

Ask your parents to help you practice talking to a friend about giving you support.

KEY QUESTION

What should I do if I can't depend on a friend who said, "Yes"? What if she doesn't show?

Prepare for it. Plan ahead. Having a back-up plan in place will help you meet your goal.

Friends will sometimes let you down. Friends aren't always reliable. You can't always depend on them. That's why it's good to have a back-up plan in place. You need to know what to do if someone doesn't come through for you.

Here are some things to think about when making a back-up plan:

- ▶ Can I go ahead and do it alone?
- ▶ Do I need to have another activity to do? What activity?

- ▶ Is there anyone else I can get to fill in on short notice?
- ▶ Can I reschedule with the friend?
- ▶ Don't get discouraged if she lets you down. Taking it personally probably won't help.
- ▶ Be sure to say you are disappointed if she lets you down. Tell her how much you count on her. Tell her how important the activity is. Ask about the reason she backed out on you. Is it the activity itself? Is it a scheduling problem? Is it an equipment problem? Some of these reasons can be planned for.
- ▶ If the same friend lets you down several times, you may need to ask someone else.

SPECIAL FOCUS

How many friends should I ask? How large should my support network be?

- ▶ Your long-term goal is to have a network big enough so that you can get support for GREEN activity throughout the week.

Skills and Goals for building a support network

- ▶ Identify friends who can support my healthy lifestyle changes.
- ▶ Ask 1 or 2 friends for support.
- ▶ Move on if a friend says, "No."
- ▶ Have a back-up plan in mind.
- ▶ Your short-term goal should be to talk to 1 or 2 friends over the next 2 weeks. That will get you started. Remember, you build your support network one friend at a time.
- ▶ A good network doesn't need to be huge. Even a few friends can give you strong support. What's important is that they really want to help. That's more important than the number of people. Of course, you need to spend enough time around them during the week to get support.

Notes to myself—some things I want to keep in mind this week:

Support for Physical Activity

My Physical Activities

List the GREEN activities you like the most.
Put a (✓) by the Fitness Boosters.

My Favorite Physical Activities	Fitness Booster?

List the GREEN activities you would like to try.
Put a (✓) by the Fitness Boosters.

Physical Activities I Might Like to Try	Fitness Booster?

Build Support for Physical Activity

Step #1: In the chart below write down the names of people you often spend time with.

List people you spent time with at school, after school, and on weekends.

Name	✓	*	Name	✓	*

Step #2: In the chart above, put a checkmark (✓) by friends you spend the most time with.

Step #3: In the chart above, put a star (*) by friends who could give you the most support for being physically active. These may be people who are physically active themselves. They may be people who really care about you. They may want to really help you lose weight and manage your diabetes.

Build Support for Physical Activity (continued)

Step #4: In the space below, first write down the names of friends who have both checkmarks (✓) and stars (*) by their name. These are the most important people for you to ask for help. You spend the *most time with them*, and they are *most likely to help*.

Next, write down those with a star by their names. Last of all, write down those with a check by their names.

List two ways you can do GREEN activity with each person. Be as specific as you can. Use the lists you made to help you. Try to include Fitness Boosters in your plan. Think about: *When? Where? What? How? What will I do instead if my plan falls through?*

Step #5: Next, make a plan to approach these people. When will you talk to them? Where? What will you say?

Name: _____

Physical Activity #1: _____ Fitness Booster? yes no

Physical Activity #2: _____ Fitness Booster? yes no

My Plan:

Name: _____

Physical Activity #1: _____ Fitness Booster? yes no

Physical Activity #2: _____ Fitness Booster? yes no

My Plan:

Name: _____

Physical Activity #1: _____ Fitness Booster? yes no

Physical Activity #2: _____ Fitness Booster? yes no

My Plan:

Support for Physical Activity

Build a support network in stages

It's a lot easier to do physical activity if the people you spend time with are behind you. It's a lot harder if they aren't.

- ▶ Ask yourself:
 - ▶ What friends do I often spend time with?
 - ▶ Who likes to do physical activity?
 - ▶ Who cares a lot about me?
- ▶ Write down 2 ways you could make a healthy change with each of these people. Be as specific as you can. Use the questions on the Help Sheet to guide you.
- ▶ Practice asking. Have your parent act like a friend. Go through it several times.
- ▶ Plan how you will go about asking. Figure out a good time to ask. Explain why it is important. Explain how it will help you lose weight and manage your diabetes.
- ▶ Just do it.

What to do if a friend lets you down

- ▶ Don't get discouraged, and don't take it personally.
- ▶ Ask your friend to explain. Is it something that could be fixed, like a schedule?
- ▶ Use your back-up plan. Here are some things to think about when making a back-up plan:
 - ▶ Can I go ahead and do it alone? How?
 - ▶ Do I need to have another activity to do? What activity?
 - ▶ Is there anyone else I can get to fill in on short notice?
 - ▶ Can I reschedule with the friend?

How many friends should you ask?

Your goal should be to talk to 1 or 2 friends over the next 2 weeks. That will get you started. You build your support network one friend at a time.

