IN THIS SECTION YOU WILL LEARN:

- Different solutions to limitations
- How to address body image in your after school program
- Structural issues
- Activities for girls

WHAT ARE SOME BARRIERS I MAY ENCOUNTER? HOW CAN I SOLVE THEM?

Youth are excluded from activities because of size or athletic ability. I find that activities are only suited for athletic youth.

When planning activities, be sure all games and activities can be adapted for all skill levels and abilities. Create different options for activities. Stay away from levels, as levels imply a higher level is better.

Examples of how to modify activities:

ACTIVITY	ALTERNATIVE OPTION
Running	Speed walking, skipping, toe-hee walks, tip toe walks, hop on one foot
Jumps	Gentle hop one leg at a time or squats
Sit ups	High knee raises, Body twists
Push ups	Wall or table pushups

Other tips to include all youth:

- Keep it simple—if the game sounds too complex, it will probably deter youth from participating
- Try out the activity yourself—if you think it is too difficult, it probably is
- Make sure all youth have a chance to demonstrate or be a team leader for a game or activity
- Don't single out or identify individuals who are not as athletic and identifying them as such. Focus on fun for everyone

Youth are teased because of size or athletic ability.

Apply the Health at Every Size principles in your program.
Make sure messages are consistent and stereotypes are addressed.

Common Stereotypes:

- Fat = lazy. Size does not determine athleticism or laziness. Everyone can be healthy regardless of size. It's most important to eat healthy and be active every day.
- Non-athletic youth just don't want to participate.Youth may feel stigmatized by their size and may have suffered teasing in the past.. This can deter youth from participating. Create activities with the help of all youth in your program, or adapt the activities so that they are suited for all skill levels. Some youth may not want to participate for fear of being made fun of or teased.

Youth in my program do not think physical activity is important.

Stress the importance of being healthy overall. Exercise is not strictly used to "lose weight" but is also important to keep the brain active, heart healthy and bones strong. A person will feel better overall when they're consistently being active!

Common arguments:

"I'm skinny, I don't need to exercise"

- Heart disease and diabetes depend on your eating habits, physical activity and family history. Chronic disease affects people of all sizes.

"I have more interesting things to do than exercise."

- Exercise doesn't have to mean running laps around a track. You can set up an activity with your friends or siblings.

Youth participate in activities, but are not fully engaged.

Youth will be more likely to engage in activities if they are fun, suited to all ability levels and see their role models participating as well.

Tips to engage youth in activities:

- Participate in the activity yourself and have fun with it.
- Modify the activities based on suggestions (or complaints) from the youth.

We end up playing the same games all the time —I would like to introduce new activities!

Check out Step 5, especially the More Games section on page 28, to add more variety to familiar activities. Also, have youth create their own activities and have them lead it with their peers.

Adolescents in my program don't like to participate in games anymore.

Check out the activities section of this guide for more games and activities that you can try at your program. If you are looking for alternative activities for adolescents, try setting up an activity circuit that incorporates drills from traditional sports, weight training and plyometrics.

Youth with fewer skills don't want to participate in sports!

Although playing sports is a great way to get youth moving while teaching them important traits like teamwork and cooperation, they may require skills that not all youth have. Make sure to emphasize skill-building exercises and activities that support life-long physical activity (See Step 5).

DO ANY OF THESE APPLY TO YOUR PROGRAM?

The neighborhood is not safe for youth to play.

Is there a park you can take the youth to so that they can play? Through joint-use agreements with other local schools, parks, and recreation and community centers, youth can possibly be transported to safer areas for physical activity. (Transportation may not be available in rural communities.) Also, law enforcement can be called on to monitor areas of play.

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There is not enough space to do physical activity.

Check out Step 5 of this guide for more games and activities that you can try at your program. There is a special section on how to implement activities in a limited space.

We do not have adequate staff training to incorporate physical activity.

Many after school programs spend their money and resources on staff development and trainings, make sure those include trainings in nutrition and physical activity. Also, refer to the physical activity trainings chart to find trainers that best suit your program's specific needs. www.canfit.org/pdf/trainings%20in%20PA.pdf

How can we engage staff in physical activity?

At your next staff meeting, try out an activity that you think the staff will enjoy. If your staff members enjoy the activity, they will be more likely to participate. If youth see staff having fun with an activity, they will be more likely to participate as well.

TRY OUT THE ACTIVITIES

We do not have proper equipment to play games or do physical activities.

You can use a variety of common items as weights or you can have youth come up with creative ways to use what you have.

IDEAS TO MAKE EQUIPMENT USING COMMON ITEMS:

- Canned foods, water bottles or one-gallon milk containers with water can be used as weights.
- Benches can be used for doing step ups
- Monkey bars can be used as a pull-up bar or part of an obstacle course
- Space permitting, brooms can be used as hockey sticks to play broomball

Check out the activities in Step 5 on how to incorporate physical activity with limited equipment.

We have lots of girls who don't want to participate in physical activity.

There is a huge need to identify and provide physical activity programming that appeals to girls. There are many common barriers for girls' involvement in physical activity, including concerns for physical appearance, boys dominating field space, lack of interest and fear of trying. These issues need to be addressed from several angles, such as including different activities, further staff training, and developing a comfortable environment for girls at the program.

Some ways to develop a comfortable environment for girls:

- Welcome girls into physical activity
- Do noncompetitive activities where girls can feel a sense of success
- Avoid contact sports
- Avoid sports that are inappropriate to girls' clothing, such as running if they don't have jogging bras, or bending over if they are wearing short skirts

ADDRESSING BODY IMAGE

PROMOTE A POSITIVE BODY IMAGE

- Promote Health at Every Size and combat myths and stereotypes about size and health.
- Never use the words "fat,""obese" or "overweight."
- Emphasize inner qualities of youth rather than appearance.
- Teach respect, create a positive atmosphere and do not tolerate size discrimination.
- Be conscious of unintended subtle discrimination toward heavier children from both staff and students. If witnessed, pull the person aside to help them become aware of the negative effects their actions can have on a young person.
- Role-play how staff can effectively respond to negative comments about body image.
- Do not allow teen magazines that promote an unhealthy body image. Replace them with alternative magazines that focus less on outside beauty. Check out *Yo! Youth Outlook, New Moon, Teen Voices* and *Sierra* magazines.
- Talk with the youth in your program about body image and the issues they face. Create activities or subsequent discussions that work on tackling unhealthy body image and low self-confidence.

Body image is how someone sees him or herself and can greatly affect a person's self-esteem. A healthy body image is connected to physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

Ways for you to promote healthy body image in your program:

Together with your youth, explain and recognize that differences are okay. Discuss differences in body type, physical features, talents, and personality traits.

Help youth become aware of the messages that media and advertising are sending them. Challenge these myths by discussing why they are false.

Empower your youth and build confidence in them by allowing them to make some decisions and take responsibility for their behavior.

Maintain a welcoming sense of "connectiveness" and comfort at your program. Remain a positive role model to the youth you are serving.

BODY IMAGE AND SELF-ESTEEM

Body image focuses on size, weight, shape, and even color. It is very much tied to influence and power. Youth are very aware of what body types influence members of the opposite sex, peers, and authority figures, and for most adolescents, body image is more a matter of appearance than of health. While the popular culture of the United States exerts psychological and social pressures to be thin, particularly on females, body image can vary along both ethnic and gender lines. Several ethnic groups in the United States associate being big with health. This may explain why, if an African American or Latina mother has a thin child, she may be told that she is not feeding her child enough and made to feel guilty. Understanding body image and body image conflicts in a particular ethnic group is an important prerequisite to devising ethnically sensitive approaches to healthy eating.

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ACTIVITY 1: WHAT MAKES ME, ME?

The following activities can help start conversations about healthy body image.
For more activity ideas, see Step 8, Nutrition and /body Image resources.

Stress the importance of respect and discourage disparaging remarks by participants during the discussion.

TIME NEEDED: 45 minutes.

MATERIALS: Copies of popular teen magazines (e.g. Teen People, Latina, Vibe, Teen)

Divide youth into smaller groups. Have them look through magazines to find one picture of someone who looks like them and one picture of someone who they would like to look like. In the large group, have volunteers share their pictures. Ask whether or not it was easy to find someone who looks like them and what qualities they looked for when searching for someone they would like to look like. Note the diversity in the pictures they choose and point out any emphasis on external vs. internal characteristics. Encourage youth to think about the inner qualities that may be a part of developing external qualities. Example: An athletic body is often developed through discipline and determination. Here are some questions to ask the group:

Do you think society puts a lot of emphasis on physical appearance?

Does someone's outer appearance determine their worth as a person?

Are there different ideas of beauty/body standards between different ethnic groups? What about between sexes?

What can young people do to promote positive messages to honor diversity (of people)?

ACTIVITY 2: $100 BEST FRIEND

Ask youths to brain storm qualities of a good friend. Write their responses on a board or large piece of paper for the entire group to view. (Make sure that both external and internal qualities are noted i.e. trustworthy, likes to have a good time, dresses nice, good listener, funny, etc.) Tell the youths that they have $100 to "buy" a best friend using the list of qualities. If each quality "costs" $25, which qualities would they choose and why? Ask volunteers to share their "$100 Best Friend." Note the different responses, including both internal and external qualities.

ACTIVITY 3: WHO ARE OUR ROLE MODELS?

1. Ask youth to name someone they admire or someone who is their role model.
2. Divide youth into small groups to discuss what person they chose and why.
3. As a group list the qualities mentioned.

Make sure to note internal and external qualities listed. Encourage youth to focus on internal qualities that may be a part of developing certain external qualities. Find out what qualities they think other people might admire about them. Find out whether or not physical appearance matters when determining if someone is a role model.

INTEGR8 new ideas into Physical Activity

[IN•TE•GRATE]

STEP 7

MAKE HEALTHY NUTRITION PART OF YOUR PROGRAM

IN THIS SECTION, YOU WILL LEARN:

- Why nutrition matters in physical activity programs
- The truth about sports drinks
- Nutrition basics to include in your program

WHY NUTRITION MATTERS

Nutrition and physical activity go hand in hand. The relationship between good nutrition and regular physical activity are critical for the healthy development of youth and for chronic disease prevention. The food and beverages served to youth at your program play a key role in any successful physical activity program.This section includes information about sports drinks, hydration, serving healthy snacks, and gives you a checklist of specific ideas to assess nutrition at your program.

THE TRUTH ABOUT SPORTS DRINKS

Sugar has found its way into most of the beverages that are sold to youth. Many youth drink products like vitamin water or Gatorade with the idea that it is improving their fitness performance or adding to their health. In fact, on average, more than 30% of daily calories are coming from these liquids especially for teenage boys. (Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010). This is way too high. The best way to improve the healthy development of youth is to reduce or eliminate beverages that contain added sugar and to encourage them to start drinking more water.

The average teen should get less than 32 grams or 8 teaspoons of added sugars a day. One bottle of a sports drink exceeds the daily limit.

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ACTIVITY: THE LOW DOWN ON DRINKS

Start today: Do this activity with youth or staff to bring awareness to added sugar in beverages.

YOU WILL NEED:

Measuring spoons and cups—
1 set for each pair of participants

Empty beverage containers or labels from beverage containers—1 container or label for each pair (for example, Vitamin water; Gatorade; Monster energy drink; bottled sparkling water)

One small plastic zipper bag for each pair

Three 1 lb boxes of white sugar

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Divide group into pairs and give each pair a measuring set, drink container or nutrition label, and plastic bag. Put boxes of sugar within easy reach.
2. Have each participant determine the amount of sugar in their container:
   - Find the "amount per serving" sugar content on the nutrition label
   - Find the number of servings on the label
   - Multiply the per-serving sugar content by the number of servings
   - Convert grams of sugar to teaspoons: 4 grams = 1 teaspoon
3. Have the pairs measure out the amount of total sugar—in teaspoons—found in their container into their small plastic bag.
4. Have participants present their findings and compare.
5. Close by reinforcing to the group that water is the best choice for physical activity.

For more examples, download the 'How Does Your Drink Measure Up' Handout: http://canfit.org/pdf/Sugar_and_Beverage_Handout.pdf

DRINK 8 TO HYDRATE

Water plays lots of important roles in your body, especially for physical activity. In fact, water makes up more than half of your body weight. So it's important that you get enough water for safe and fun physical activity. The goal is to drink 8 cups or glasses of water—64 ounces a day.

Here are some ways to promote healthy habits among youth to drink more water daily:

- Suggest they carry a (PABA-free) water bottle.
- Suggest adding lemon, orange, cucumber or lime to water for taste.
- Provide frequent water breaks, every 15 minutes for active youth.
- On hot days when youth are being physically active, help them to increase water intake.
- Serve water, 100% fruit juice or unsweetened herbal teas during snack time.

SMART FUEL FOR ACTIVE YOUTH

Snacks are an important part of a young person's diet and can provide the necessary fuel to support physical activity. Considering the less nutritious foods youth are exposed to during the day—fast foods in their neighborhoods and school cafeterias, vending machines and corner candy stores—your program may be the only place your youth get healthy snacks. Whether you have the facilities to prepare snacks or you must purchase them, you should do your best to ensure that the snacks you serve are not only affordable, healthy, and nutritious but also appetizing. Healthy snacks like fresh fruit, whole grains and fresh vegetables don't have to be boring, and can even reflect a variety of cultural backgrounds. Some examples: a soft taco filled with shredded cabbage, chicken, cilantro and salsa; buckwheat noodles with peanut sauce; or fresh fruit with cheese.

GET THE NUTRITION BASICS	DESCRIPTION	SNACK IDEAS	BEFORE OR AFTER ACTIVITY
Carbohydrates: The #1 source of energy to sustain youth during physical activity.	Fruits, vegetables, breads and grains are carbohydrates.	Brown rice Couscous Graham crackers Rice crackers Reduced fat Triscuits Rice noodles Buckwheat or soba noodles Whole grain bread Corn tortillas Apples/ Bananas/ Oranges Mangoes 100% fruit/ vegetable juice Fruit and nut trail mix Apple chips Hominy Jicama Coleslaw Nopales	Eat carbohydrates 30 minutes before and 30 minutes after exercise. They refuel your body to give it energy to build muscle and recover.
Protein: Maintains muscle, supports growth and satisfies hunger.	Meats, beans, seeds/nuts, dairy products and meat alternatives are high in proteins.	Turkey/Beef jerky Tuna lunch kit Teriyaki chicken bowl Chicken skewers Chicken/beef flautas Cheese ravioli Stuffed chicken breast Garden/Boca Burgers Black beans Three-bean salad Cottage cheese Soymilk Lowfat pudding cups/ yogurt Licuados made with low or nonfat milk	Eat proteins 30 minutes before and up to 45 minutes after exercise. Choose low-fat meat and dairy products. Pair with carbohydrates for the best options.
Fats: Supports energy needs, growth and development.	Nuts, seeds, avocadoes and oils are high in healthy fats.	Avocados Cashews Peanuts/Almonds/Walnuts Hummus/ Tahini Peanut butter/ Almond butter Sunflower seeds Pumpkin seeds	You can eat fat before exercise and in small amounts throughout the day. Avoid fats during or after exercise.

For a complete list of healthy snacks, sample menus and recipes, download CANFIT's Healthy Snack Guide at www.canfit.org.

ASSESS YOUR PROGRAM

Use this checklist to conduct an inventory of how the snack patterns at your program support physical activity and to see where changes can be made. Choose one or two of the guidelines to start.

DOES YOUR PROGRAM . . .	YES	NO	COMMENTS
• Provide water with all snacks, especially during physical activity?			
• Avoid packaged foods with sugar listed as the first two ingredients?			
• Serve fresh fruits and vegetables every day?			
• Serve a variety of snacks from different food groups?			
• Choose the reduced-fat and reduced-sodium snacks when possible?			
• Serve only 100% fruit juice?			
• Combine a protein with a carbohydrate for an after activity snack?			
• Pick whole grains, as listed in the ingredient list, for all bread products?			
• Follow the calorie requirements for snacks? elementary schools —175 calories per item; middle and high schools 250 calories per item			
• Provide culturally relevant snacks, such as pico de gallo with corn tortillas or peanut sauce with soba noodles?			

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