Leaders' Guide

for high school girls
About The Women’s Sports Foundation

Founded in 1974 by Billie Jean King, the Women’s Sports Foundation is a charitable educational organization that seeks to advance the lives of girls and women through sports and physical activity. The Foundation’s Participation, Education, Advocacy, Research and Leadership programs are made possible by individual and corporate contributions.

Thanks To...

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The GoGirlGo! Educational Program was selected as a Gold National Health Information Award in the Total Health Information Program category in 2004 and 2006. The awards program, the most comprehensive competition of its kind, is organized by the Health Information Resource Center, a national clearinghouse for consumer health information programs and materials.
We already know the wonderful effects that physical activity participation can have on girls. It can enhance their lives physically, emotionally and socially. GoGirlGo! combines sports participation with an educational intervention that focuses on reducing and preventing the potential hazards of dealing with adolescent issues in unhealthy ways. The sports environment provides girls with experiences of teamwork, goal-setting, positive adult mentoring and leadership training, as well as a ready-made social support system. It is through this environment that you will explore, together, the important health-risk issues that girls face today.

Sports and physical activity leaders, especially coaches, can have a powerful impact on girls. The relationship between a girl and her coach is a special one. Girls, in seeking their coach’s approval and wanting to play their best, will be motivated to participate in this program. With your guidance, the girls can learn how to cope with circumstances and change behaviors that threaten their well-being.

The highlight of each session is the athlete’s story. Elite female athletes have generously shared their personal stories. Some of these issues are difficult and sensitive. So it is through these amazing women that we first get to explore the feelings, behaviors, decisions and changes associated with growing up female. The educational materials are built on these stories. Each session provides you with expert information, activities, ideas, discussion topics and resources for further exploration.

We are very excited about what we can accomplish here. Sport has always been a source of strength for women. Now, with this wonderful program, the social support of the team and you as a positive role model, we can give every girl the power to succeed at a healthy life.

Billie Jean King

P.S. This year’s program focuses on developing leaders with the GoGirlGo! Ambassador Program. Be sure to get your girls involved! They may be eligible for team grants.
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Important General Directions for the GoGirlGo! Program

The program is separated into two age groups, third to eighth grades (ages 8-12) and high school ages (ages 13-18). The materials in this guide are directed at the older age group. If you're interested in materials for the younger age group, please call 1-800-227-3988 or visit www.GoGirlGo.com.

The high school program can be set up in a variety of ways. The program has two components:

* The Ambassador Program (see page 6)
* The Education Program

How you plan the GoGirlGo! program will depend on your schedule, time and flexibility. Here are some suggestions for executing the education program.

**Group sessions**—You can meet as a group and read the stories together, discuss the educational materials and do the group activities.

**Individual**—Have the girls read the stories and educational materials and do the individual activities as an enrichment experience on their own. Meet to discuss and get feedback about their experiences.

**Buddy system**—Girls from your program may choose to go over the stories, educational materials and activities with a “mentee.”

**Length of sessions**—You may choose to have one session per week or more than one per week—it will depend on your schedule. There are 14 athlete stories and topics. Make sure that you allow time for the completion of all the sessions. The session should take 40 minutes to an hour, depending on how much you do. Please make time for the activities, because this can be an important learning experience. By doing the activities, the girls are practicing new skills with you and reinforcing the messages from the sessions.

**Journaling**—It's a good idea to have girls keep a journal of their participation in GoGirlGo! Similar to a diary, it can reflect their feelings and reactions, both positive and negative, experiences they have had and ideas for their future. It's a great place to “share” what they are thinking. Girls can respond to the “discussion questions” in their journal. You may suggest some ideas from each session or let it be free-form.

Some of the sessions contain sensitive material and frank language. Please look over the chapters before presenting them. You may choose to exclude certain chapters if you feel the subject is not suitable for your group. Review each activity beforehand. Be prepared with all materials needed. Be familiar with the activity.

At the beginning of each session, ask if there are any questions from the previous session.

If you don’t know the answers, it’s okay to say so. Plan to research the answer or do it as a group activity. Use the Women’s Sports Foundation’s contacts and resources.

Try to structure the conversations so that even the quiet girls have a chance to share their thoughts. Make a casual announcement before the discussions that all ideas and comments should be respected and that “there is nothing too weird or silly to say.” You may also want to occasionally break into small groups to have discussions of the stories because some girls may not be comfortable speaking up in a large-group setting. You may find that dividing girls by age will lead to more fruitful discussion. Make eye contact, smile, have an open body posture and thank each girl for sharing her ideas.

Plan on having some physical activity before and/or after each session. They will be working out their minds—they will need the balance of working out their bodies.

Invite experts to share their knowledge and experience. For example, a local psychologist may be better suited to lead the Wrestling with Depression lesson.
Introduction

Everyone is concerned about what high school girls have to deal with these days—from the pressure to smoke and drink to dealing with bullies and intolerance to being stressed out about how they look and if they fit in. We want girls to stay healthy, be active, eat right and feel good about themselves. Sometimes kids don’t have anyone to talk to about tough issues and even when they do, the message is not clear and does not always get through.

Most teens will turn to their friends or the media for information. And a lot of matters they will just keep to themselves. That’s why your role here is so important. There are some tough issues discussed in these sessions. Research shows us that girls want a caring adult to talk about the tough stuff. You have a great opportunity here to develop an open environment for sharing and listening.

SOME BASIC GUIDELINES:

* Be supportive
* Create a safe environment for the girls to share their feelings and ideas

You may find yourself in the challenging position of providing a safe place that girls may say things they want kept confidential—one common code for confidentiality is to tell the girls at the beginning that anything they disclose that poses a threat to the safety of themselves or others will not be kept secret

* Make a plan for addressing confidentiality issues and share that plan with the girls
* Avoid being judgmental—they get that enough from everyone else
* Give positive feedback
* Maintain an upbeat attitude
* Be patient. Some girls take longer than others to feel comfortable
* Never tell—ask
* Be creative
* Be a healthy role model—if you are making healthy changes, share your experiences; eat well, rest, don’t smoke, don’t swear, don’t be easy to anger!

MESSAGES TO GIRLS:

* “You are not alone.” These are common worries and problems.
* “You have the right to feel good and be healthy.” Help them understand that there are choices they can make and things they can do to feel better.
* “There are lots of people who can help.” Encourage girls to find a trusting adult to talk to.

For more tips on creating a positive experience for the girls, check out Appendices A and B: Communication Skills, Signals for Help, Helping Girls With Stress and Six Ways to Boost Girls’ Self-Esteem on pages 58-62.
GOGIRLGO! TEAM OBJECTIVES

* Get active! Stay active for life!
* Encourage a wholesome lifestyle, a happy outlook and healthy self-image
* Promote self-esteem, self-respect and self-confidence
* Endorse acceptance and respect of others
* Become a most vocal advocate for a healthy lifestyle—get inactive girls physically active
* Learn to become great leaders

Overview

The GoGirlGo! Educational Program includes 14 sessions, each of which features a champion female athlete story and accompanying educational information and activities.

The topics appear in parentheses:
Session 1: Jeanette Lee, Accept ‘n’ Respect (Tolerance)
Session 2: Dara Torres, The Skinny Struggle (Body Image)
Session 3: Julie Foudy, Kicking Butts (Smoking)
Session 4: Benishe Roberts, Hooking Up (Sex/Dating)
Session 5: Tina George, Wrestling with Depression (Sadness/Depression)
Session 6: Pam Fernandes, Stand Up (Civic Duty)
Session 7: Barrett Christy, Doing Drugs (Drugs)
Session 8: Kathy Collins, Beating Abuse (Abuse)
Session 9: Sanya Richards, Emotion Commotion (Self-Esteem)
Session 10: Aimee Mullins, Alcohol and Partying (Alcohol/Partying)
Session 11: Lisa Ervin-Baudo, Self-Harm (Self-Harm/Self-Injury)
Session 12: Elissa Steamer, Holding on at Home (Family Issues)
Session 13: Dominique Dawes, Using the Snooze (Sleep Deprivation)
Session 14: Tania Satchwell, Know Your Dough (Financial Literacy)

If you participated in previous years of the program you may recognize some of these sessions. Many of these athletes have appeared in previous years of the GoGirlGo! Program.

The activities are written so you can read the text in quotes directly from the book to your group. These materials are only guidelines. We encourage you to create your own discussion questions or activities if you think of ideas that are more appropriate to your specific group.

The appendices include great information on communications skills, boosting self-esteem, helping girls with stress, recognizing signals for help and getting girls more physically active.

The Leaders’ Guide includes reproducible handouts on training for a 5K race, yoga and strength building without equipment that you may copy and give to your girls (Appendix E). These provide concrete ways your girls may enjoy sports and physical activity beyond your program.
Leadership Information

Girls, in general, are good communicators, sensitive and understanding of others, and value friendships. But when girls reach the beginning of adolescence, they lose their natural leadership tendencies. This is due, in part, to a loss in self-confidence and self-esteem that starts around age 11 or 12. And then there are the expectations that society has for girls.

Leadership skills can be learned. There may be some who are born good leaders—but great leaders can be made!

The things that make a good leader are also the things that make a good friend—she's honest, fair and respectful of your feelings; she's a good listener and you like to hear what she has to say. It's not easy being a good leader. There are lots of responsibilities.

∗ A good leader needs to be fair. You can't favor some people over others, and you have to give everyone a chance.

∗ A good leader is honest. You need to earn the trust of your followers, and being honest and truthful is an important way to do it.

∗ A good leader knows how to be convincing. She is confident in what she is saying and can influence others to believe it. This is a very BIG responsibility. When you inspire others, they will follow what you say.

START GIRLS THINKING ABOUT LEADERSHIP:

∗ Who do you think are great leaders?

∗ There are many in past and present history. Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., Senator Hillary Clinton, astronaut Sally Ride, former President of South Africa Nelson Mandela, tennis great Billie Jean King, television host Oprah Winfrey and more. Ask girls who they think are great leaders and what is it about them that they admire.

∗ Who are the leaders around you?

∗ There are wonderful leaders around. Ask the girls who they can think of at their school, in the community or on their sports team. Suggest to girls that they watch how these “local” leaders do things and learn from them.

LEADER QUALITIES:

∗ Be honest and fair.

∗ Learn to be confident—trust yourself and others will trust you.

∗ Respect the uniqueness and differences of others.

∗ Show that you care.

∗ Be optimistic.

∗ Don't be afraid to challenge others to do their best.

∗ Have a good sense of humor—this comes in handy when everyone messes up.

∗ Patience, patience, patience.
GUIDE GIRLS TO DEVELOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS:

* A good leader is not bossy—she doesn't want everyone to be afraid of her, to blame others or to make everyone else do things.

* A good leader gets everyone enthusiastic, helps to fix mistakes and works together with others. She will get everyone involved.

* She wants everyone to be successful—and she believes that they can do it and she lets them know it.

This year we’re excited to bring you a program that will motivate and activate your high school girls to be leaders for girls in sports and physical activity, the Ambassador Program. See page 6 for a description.

IMPORTANT LEADER SKILLS:

* Paying attention and listening carefully
* Speaking slowly and clearly—have your group repeat what you said.
* Allowing questions—be easy to talk to.
* Demonstrating ideas—show them what you mean.
* Making plans—have things ready ahead of time.
* Letting the group help in decisions
* Learning to calm things down
* Dealing with disagreements in private

Help girls find a mentor. While a girl is learning to be a leader, it’s a good idea to pick a mentor—someone who she looks up to and trusts—who can help guide her along the way.

LEADER GOALS:

* Be able to admit you are wrong
* Forgive mistakes as quickly as possible
* Let others know how they are doing, especially when they are doing it right
* Celebrate successes
Encourage Your Girls to Join the GoGirlGo! Ambassador Program

The GoGirlGo! Ambassador Program encourages girls ages 13-18 to:

* Inspire girls to become leaders in their communities
* Create a new level of physical activity and/or sports participation for girls led by girls
* Help inactive girls gain the confidence to succeed and lead a healthier, happier life

HELP YOUR GIRLS BECOME GOGIRLGO! AMBASSADORS!

Encourage your girls to visit the Ambassador Headquarters at [www.GoGirlWorld.org/Ambassador](http://www.GoGirlWorld.org/Ambassador) and sign up. An Ambassador is a high school girl who recognizes the importance of being physically active and wants to make a difference by encouraging inactive girls to get moving. Official Ambassadors promise to get at least one other girl active in the next year. As Ambassadors, girls can:

* Create a personalized Web page
* Access the Leader Playbook with lots of useful information and ideas
* Share their ideas and track their progress through an Ambassador online journal
* Communicate with other Ambassadors through the message board
* Search for other Ambassadors nationwide
* Apply for a $2,500 grant through the GoGirlGo! Ambassador Team Awards championed by Gatorade
* Apply for Ambassador of the Month to win a prize pack, which can include everything from sweatshirts to sporting goods gift cards. Not only that, but the winner will also be featured on the Ambassador Headquarters home page!

Visit [www.GoGirlGo.com](http://www.GoGirlGo.com) and click on the Program Leaders’ area to check out the many resources available to you. With this program and your support, we can give every girl the power to succeed and lead a healthier life.
Distributing the Materials

The stories and educational materials can be copied and distributed to each girl from your Leaders' Guide. These materials can also be found online at www.GoGirlGo.com.

* Review this guide; become familiar with the topics and text. Do not pass out any materials without reviewing them first
* Review the Ambassador postcard and Ambassador Web site at www.GoGirlGo.com/Ambassador

A Suggested Format

PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY

Meet with your fellow adult leaders to review the materials and the suggested format. Decide whether you will participate in the Ambassador Program, the Educational Program or both. Decide how often you will conduct the sessions, how long each session will be and who will lead each session.

Make any adjustments necessary to best fit your program.

Determine whether or not you have the right number of materials.

Register. For participating in the GoGirlGo! Educational Program, you and the girls in your program are entitled to membership in the Women's Sports Foundation. Membership is free and includes a membership card and pin and one-year subscription to the Women's Sports Experience, the Foundation's quarterly newsletter for adults, or GoGirl News, the Foundation's quarterly newsletter for girls. The Women's Sports Foundation does not share membership information without your authorization.

Online: Go to www.GoGirlGo.com/signup and use code: G3EPMDCM to activate your membership and let us know you've received everything you need. Please be sure to include your school or program's name. Have adult leaders register for their memberships online too.

Offline: If anyone in your group doesn’t have access to the Internet, tear out the registration form provided in the back of this guide. Complete and return to: Women's Sports Foundation, Eisenhower Park, 1899 Hempstead Turnpike, Suite 400, East Meadow, NY 11554.

THE FIRST DAY

Encourage the girls to go to www.GoGirlGo.org/signup and use code: G3EPMDCM to activate their membership. Remind them to include your school or program's name. While they're there, they can browse around and become familiar with GoGirlWorld.org and register to become Ambassadors.

Give each girl a copy of the stories and educational materials you are doing together. You can copy them from this guide or download them from www.GoGirlGo.com.

Review with the girls how the program will be implemented.

Keep track of your experiences with the program. You may be asked to evaluate the program.
GoGirlGo! Ambassador Program: Introduce the girls to the Ambassador Program at
www.GoGirlGo.com/Ambassador, an exciting initiative that aims to get one million new girls physically
active. You’re doing your part by being a program leader, but each of your girls can also take part. The Web
site includes tips on how they can get their friends, a younger sister or neighbor physically active. They
can report their progress to the group and/or write about it in their online journal. All your girls can join
the Ambassador Program! See page 6 for more details.

PRIOR TO EACH EDUCATION SESSION
You can choose Peer Leaders for the upcoming session. Delegate some of the work to the peer leaders
and meet with them to make sure they understand their responsibilities. This provides girls valuable
leadership experience.

If you have not already done so, hand out the next story and educational information.

Remind the girls to read the next story and educational information.

EVERY EDUCATION SESSION
Each session will begin with the athlete’s story.

You or one of the girls can read the short story aloud while the girls follow along, or each girl can read
a paragraph.

Encourage a discussion of their reactions to the story. (Some discussion questions are suggested
at the end of each athlete story in this guide.)

Do an activity together.

If there is time, or further interest, do any extra activities.

Talk about some ideas for their journal writing. You do not need to have the girls write in their journals
during the session. Some girls may find it easier to express their thoughts on their own time.

Suggest the girls check out some of the resources listed.

If you’ve handed out all of the materials at once, remind the girls to bring their materials with them for the
next session. If not, hand out the next story and educational information.

Remind the girls to read the next story and educational information.

Helping Girls Use a Journal

This is like a diary or a chronicle of the girls’ reactions, thoughts and feelings. Encourage the girls to use
a notebook strictly for journaling. Here are some guidelines you may want to share with the girls about
journal-keeping:

* This is your record—nobody has to see it, unless you want to share something.

* There are no right or wrong answers. Nobody is going to grade it.

* You can put down your inner thoughts, feelings and pictures.

* It’s a way of keeping track; it’s a way of learning about yourself.
It's easiest to have a special time each day that you set aside for journal writing.

- Write it all down—honestly and clearly.
- Write the good and the bad.
- This is a place to record all the anger, frustration and negativity you may have.
- It can be used as a way of letting go of self-doubt.
- This is a place to record all the joy and happiness you feel after an accomplishment.
- It can be used to reinforce how good you feel about yourself.

Some girls may not have a safe place at home to keep journals—think about options: Are you willing to hold onto a girl's journal if she asks you? Do you provide a locker or other place to store items for the girls?

Evaluating the Program

The conclusion of your GoGirlGo! program marks the point at which we would like you to evaluate the materials. You and any other adult leaders may be contacted to fill out a program leader survey. We would also be pleased to receive additional feedback at any time.

We will be conducting visits to some of the programs so we may better understand the strengths and weaknesses of the GoGirlGo! program. A representative of the Women's Sports Foundation may call on you to participate in this important process. This project would not be possible without the generous support of our donors. They are very interested in the results of GoGirlGo!, as they will base any decisions on granting additional funds on its success.

Your cooperation in participating in this aspect is critical to its continuation.

We would love to receive photos of your program and the girls participating in GoGirlGo! We also welcome letters, drawings, collages, etc., from your programs that demonstrate how the girls are learning and growing. Please send these materials, along with a letter stating that you allow the Foundation to use the photos, letters, etc., in our nonprofit materials or in materials to be sent to current and/or potential program sponsors, to the Women’s Sports Foundation, Attn: Publications Department, Eisenhower Park, 1899 Hempstead Turnpike, Suite 400, East Meadow, NY 11554. If you wish to send images by e-mail, please send each photo as a 300 dpi JPEG file to Pubs@WomensSportsFoundation.org.

Please note that any materials sent to The Women's Sports Foundation will not be used for any commercial purposes without your knowledge and consent, as well as that of the participants and/or their parents or guardians, if applicable.
General Extra Activities

Here are additional activities that might be fun and beneficial for your girls.

Library research. Look up incredible, amazing women, like Wilma Rudolph, Marla Runyan, Yuliana Perez, Kathrine Switzer, Althea Gibson...see how these women overcame adversity.

Interviews of family members. It's a good way to discover information and attitudes.

Community service. Volunteer at a local teen shelter or do a community health project.

Guest speakers. Invite teen health care workers, nurses or female physicians to help answer questions and make the girls comfortable in seeking help.

Career day. Plan a day emphasizing careers in sports, health and fitness for women.

National Girls and Women in Sports Day (NGWSD). The 22nd Annual NGWSD will be February 6, 2008. Plan an event to celebrate the day and recognize girls and women in sports. Visit www.NGWSDCentral.com for ideas.

GoGirlGo! Open House. Host an open house to introduce girls to a new sport or physical activity and to recruit new girls to your program. Visit www.GoGirlGo.com for how-to information and to receive a free planning kit.

General Resources

In addition to the resources at the end of each chapter in this guide and online, a list of Web sites and phone numbers you and the girls may find useful appears in Appendix D on pages 64-66 in this guide. Several of the sites have links to information in Spanish. These resources were checked for accuracy just prior to the materials going to print. PLEASE NOTE: Occasionally Web addresses and organizational phone numbers change. We will check their accuracy regularly during the course of the next year and publish changes on www.GoGirlGo.com. If you discover that any of them are wrong, please let us know, and we’ll make corrections on www.GoGirlGo.com.

Web Resources Available at www.GoGirlGo.com

- Tips on how to get girls physically active
- How to design a sports program for girls
- How to conduct a GoGirlGo! Open House
- How to become a GoGirlGo! Center
- Posters and Stickers promoting GoGirlGo!
- Icebreakers
- Links to the GoGirlGo! Network, where you can register your girl-serving organization and share with other program leaders
- Sample press releases announcing your GoGirlGo! activities. Wouldn’t you like an easy way to publicize your GoGirlGo! program, whether you receive a grant, are running the program or have set a date for a GoGirlGo! Open House?
- Spanish translation for materials (www.GoGirlGo.com/Spanish)
- All athlete stories from previous years. See Appendix C for a complete list.
- Get It Going, Keep It Going: A resource for Sports and Exercise Programs for Urban Girls. This guide includes ideas on recruitment, retention and evaluation of program effectiveness.
Seeking Funding to Support Your GoGirlGo! Program

The GoGirlGo! Ambassador Team Awards championed by Gatorade is providing $50,000 in team grants. The Awards are designed to inspire teams of high school aged girls to become leaders in their communities. As true “ambassadors,” they will take the lead in getting other girls active. Teams must lead their own project that will encourage girls to get involved in sports and physical activity. A total of $50,000 in grants will be awarded to 20 teams. Funding can be used for uniforms, travel, equipment and more! Visit www.GoGirlWorld.org/Ambassador for details and an application.

The Women’s Sports Foundation is able to provide a letter of support to accompany other grant proposals you are submitting. Proposals must include the use of the GoGirlGo! curriculum as a part of your programming. One way to secure funding is to thoroughly explain why being active is so important for girls. The Women’s Sports Foundation has a resource available that has compiled existing research on the relationship between girls’ physical, social and psychological well-being and participation in sports and physical activity. Issues covered include cardiovascular disease, obesity, disordered eating, tobacco use, drugs and teen pregnancy. The Women’s Sports Foundation Report: Her Life Depends on It: Sport, Physical Activity and the Health and Well-Being of American Girls is available free as a downloadable PDF (Adobe Acrobat Reader file) from www.WomensSportsFoundation.org. Click on shop, then free downloads to access the report.

To request a letter of support, please e-mail AwardGrant@WomensSportsFoundation.org. Due to a conflict of interest we cannot provide a letter of support to accompany an application to a national foundation or funders because we are seeking such funding for girls’ programs in all states.

Whether or not you request a letter of support from the Women’s Sports Foundation, we ask that you refer to the program as “the Women’s Sports Foundation’s GoGirlGo! program” in proposals.

GoGirlGo! curriculum materials are provided for use in connection with your local activities. Aside from providing these curriculum materials, The Women’s Sports Foundation does not endorse and should not be identified as affiliated with your other local activities. WOMEN’S SPORTS FOUNDATION®, the Women’s Sports Foundation logo and GOGIRLGO!® are trademarks of the Women’s Sports Foundation and may not be used in any printed materials or in any other way without the prior written approval of the Women’s Sports Foundation. If you wish to create and distribute promotional materials concerning your activities using the GoGirlGo! curriculum and wish to use any of the Women’s Sports Foundations’ trademarks, please send your proposed materials to the Women’s Sports Foundation, attention Trademarks/Publications (via mail at Women’s Sports Foundation, Eisenhower Park, 1899 Hempstead Turnpike, Suite 400, East Meadow, NY 11554, or via e-mail at Pubs@WomensSportsFoundation.org), for prior written approval, which the Women’s Sports Foundation may withhold in its sole discretion. We will respond to such requests for approval promptly.

We wish you the best as you take your girls through the program.
Frequently Asked Questions:

**What about parents?**

Try to have an initial meeting with just parents to introduce the GoGirlGo! program. Encourage them to follow along on the Web site, www.GoGirlGo.com. Always get permission for participation. Have a wrap-up session at the end with parents and girls. If you have parents who are primarily Spanish-speaking, there are translations of sessions available online or by calling 1-800-227-3988.

**What if parents want to sit in?**

Explain how important it is for the girls to have a safe, girl-only environment for talking about these important issues. Make sure to ask about any specific concerns the parents have.

**What if I need more time to cover a topic?**

Sometimes there is a great deal of interest in a topic. This is terrific. It is perfectly okay to continue the next time and use two sessions to complete one topic. Also, think about doing one of the extra sessions included in the Leaders’ Guide and on the Web site. There are other topics that may be connected and fit into the girls’ interests. See the complete list of topics in Appendix C on page 63.

**Is it okay to go out of order?**

Yes. We have suggested an order to the sessions. But there isn’t just one way of doing it. Sometimes the girls will want to vote on the next topic or a particular topic seems to flow naturally after a session.

**Are the journals meant to be shared?**

This should always be a girl’s personal choice—because the journal is her own place to vent and write down ideas and feelings. We suggest setting aside a time at the beginning of each session to see if there are any questions, leftover thoughts, or if anyone would like to share from her journal.

**There is a male coach working with us. Do you think that it’s okay for him to participate in all the sessions?**

Part of GoGirlGo! is establishing a safe, secure, trusting group atmosphere for everyone. It is important that the girls know that everyone’s thoughts and feelings are valuable. If the girls seem okay—go for it. It would be great to have another point of view. Girls need good strong role models—both male and female. It could be a wonderful life lesson for everyone.

**What if I suspect that there is a real problem going on from what a girl is expressing? How will I know for sure that it is serious?**

We suggest you keep a list of names of local professionals who you could call on for advice (school guidance counselors, school nurses, social workers, community mental health therapists). They would even make great guest speakers. Trust your instincts—if you think there even might be something going on—speak privately and honestly with the girl. Tell her, “I might be totally mistaken, but I think...” Encourage her to talk to someone. Offer to go with her. Do not confront a girl in front of others. Check to make sure you are following your organization’s policies with regard to confidentiality. (See Appendix B: Signals For Help on page 59.)
I grew up in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, N.Y., the daughter of Korean immigrants. Although it was a neighborhood full of all kinds of people, I was the only Asian-American. Being a kid was tough for me—I was pretty unhappy a lot of the time. Because I was different, I didn’t have tons of friends. Every day, I was made fun of everywhere I went—in my neighborhood and at school. I would be tormented with “Hey, China girl” or “Chink” or “Ching Chong Cholly Wong.” I fronted like I could ignore the teasing, but deep down it was tearing me apart.

Everyone wants to fit in. It’s hard enough for young girls to deal with growing up. I was smaller, less developed and distinctly different-looking. The bullies never even cared about getting to know the real me. Sometimes I would react to the teasing and name-calling by shouting, “Stop” or “Shut up!” Needless to say, I got beat up a lot! Most of the time I would just cry. Nobody ever had my back. I felt very alone.

Constantly being knocked made me an angry kid. It made me not want to be around people at all. I thought there were too many bad people, and that all the nice people were victims. The seventh grade was the worst for me. Fortunately my mother saw the harm it was doing and removed me from the school and sent me to a private school in Manhattan where the kids were nicer. But, I think that it had already affected me. Then I was accepted to the Bronx Science School in ninth grade. It was a whole new world. There were all kinds of kids and so many Asian-Americans. Although I still had my guard up a lot, I could see, for the first time, that all kinds of kids could be accepted for being uniquely themselves.

Life started to shine for me when I was 18 and began shooting pool. Inside, I knew that billiards was my destiny. The more I practiced and played, the more my self-confidence grew. I started to focus on my talent and strengths and stopped tripping about what other people thought about me. And something else happened. I went from always being the outsider to being the popular one. I felt unique, not like a freak. As I gained respect for myself, it was easier to accept and trust the respect I got from others. Prejudice kept people from seeing the good in me—and in some ways, kept it hidden from me as well. Had I not found the light in myself through billiards when I was a teenager, I wouldn’t be the person that I am proud to be today.
Every day in practically every school in America, kids are picked on for being different. They are misunderstood, ignored, left out, teased and beat up. The reason? Something about them sticks out. Sometimes it's easy to see, like the color of their skin, their size, style or disability. Other times it's harder to see, like their religion, family history or sexuality. In elementary and middle school the pressure to fit in can get really bad.

Wanna know what's bizarre? We are ALL that different kid in one way or another. There is something about each one of us that is unique. It is the ways in which we are different that make this world a cool place to be. Can you imagine how dull this place would be if we were all the same? Acting, thinking, dressing, sounding and living just like one another? Ew!

The world would be a much more awesome place if humans quit trippin' on each other about their differences and started to appreciate what makes each person special. We'd have less war, less school violence and less sadness, and growing up would be a whole lot easier!

What kind of kid are you? Do you make the world a better place with how you treat people? Or do you bust on people who are different from you? When you play sports, do you make fun of the other team, talk smack to the referee? Every time you step out on the court, track or field, you choose what kind of kid you are.

Wanna help make the world a better place? Learn about differences, so they won’t seem so weird. Try spending the day in a wheelchair, eat food you’re not used to, go to someone else’s church—just put yourself in someone else's shoes. Next, know that everything you do or say makes a difference. If someone is making fun of people because they are different, stand up and say something. Lastly, help other people open their minds. It takes courage to step outside your gang to stick up for someone or try something new. Know that it’s worth it—that you have the power to make a change.

Leaders’ Tip:
Girls come in all shapes and sizes, talents and abilities, colors and religions, interests and family backgrounds. When a girl can learn to accept and respect these differences, she will gain acceptance and respect from others. And by embracing both uniqueness and similarity, she can feel better about who she is in this world. Unfortunately, prejudice is learned. That’s why tolerance needs to be taught.

Resources:
www.fpg.unc.edu/~pfi/pdfs/diversity_booklist.pdf
www.ittakesateam.org
www.nyacyouth.org
www.tolerance.org
ACTIVITIES

1. WHO AM I? POETRY WRITING

You’ll need: pens, small pads of paper. Break the girls into small groups.

Distribute pens and small pads of paper to each girl.

Tell them: “I’d like each of you to write a poem called ‘Who I am.’ Each line should begin with ‘I am…’ The lines don’t have to rhyme.”

“Include things like your family background, interests, customs or traditions. Things like: ‘I am an Italian-American,’ ‘I am from a large family’ or ‘I am a good athlete.’”

After giving the girls time to write, ask the girls to share their poems.

Encourage applause for each poem.

You can also repeat the activity with “I am unique because…”

2. TEAM PLAY—BUILD A TOWER OF POWER

You’ll need: cardboard, tape, paper, markers. Divide up the girls into two teams. Pass out cardboard, tape, paper, markers. Have each girl make a “building block” out of cardboard and tape.

Tell them: “Write on one side a name you’ve been called because you’re different and write on all other sides positive things you have because you are different. Then come together and assemble ‘power blocks’ with your team to build towers or buildings with the blocks.”

Compare the teams’ constructions discussing tolerance issues as appropriate.

JOURNAL IDEAS:

Do you think you are sensitive to other people and the way they live their lives? Do you sometimes tell jokes based on someone’s identity? Do you stand up for someone being picked on? Make a plan for being more sensitive to others and their differences.
I guess I was pretty lucky as a teen. I was pretty confident as a girl and an athlete. I never felt that pressure about getting the ultra-thin body. I felt that I could eat anything I wanted. It wasn’t until I was 18 years old and I got to college that I started to have a problem.

On the very first day the coach said to me, “I think that maybe you should lose 10 pounds, Dara.” And we had team weigh-ins. Everyone would line up and get weighed. I really wanted to swim well, and for the first time I thought that I had a weight problem.

A friend told me about “binging and purging.” At first it really grossed me out. But after a while I got used to it. I did it for about a year before I realized that it was a problem. I lost the weight, all right, but there were a lot of other changes, too.

My face would become very puffy. My emotions were all messed up. I became very, very moody. I was no fun to be around. I just wasn’t my happy-go-lucky self anymore. And I had no energy at all. I was tired all the time. I wasn’t able to swim as fast as I should have.

The worst part was the stress about being so secretive—nobody knew about it. I had to hide it from my family, friends, coaches and teammates. It wasn’t easy. I would worry all the time about when and where we were eating. Instead of swimming, food was all I would think about.

But it took me five years to go see someone about getting help for my eating disorder. My mom knew something was wrong and asked me to see a doctor—I finally did. And when I did tell her about my body image and eating problems, it was such a relief. I started therapy. It was hard work, but the changes helped get me to the places I wanted to go.
Do you love every single part of your body? Do you dance around in front of the mirror, shakin’ what your maker gave you, admiring your perfect legs, arms, butt, tummy, chest, face and hair? If you do, you know what’s up. Most girls don’t do that. Not only because they think dancing in front of the mirror is weird, but also because they don’t feel totally happy with the way they look. They compare themselves to the prettiest girl in the class and to celebrities and see themselves as unattractive.

Why wouldn’t girls think like that? Every single day, we are all brainwashed by a million messages to be skinny, zit-less and perfect. How many plump, frizzy-haired gals do you see chillin’ in Hollywood, playing lead roles? Not many. The same goes for almost every face you see in a video, on TV or on the pages of a magazine. Paris Hilton, Hilary Duff, Beyoncé—they all seem flawless.

Comparing yourself to perfection can really wear on a girl, especially when 99 percent of us will never look like supermodels, no matter what we do. For thousands of girls, the constant urge to change who they are goes beyond a little diet and stressing about what clothes to wear. Some girls actually start hating themselves. One way poor body image shows its ugly face is with eating disorders—anorexia, bulimia and binge eating.

Anorexia is a disease where someone really limits what they eat to lose a lot of weight. While losing pounds, anorexics also lose a normal perspective on their bodies. They see themselves as fat even as they get thinner and thinner. Eventually, their bodies stop working properly and even shut down from starvation. Bulimia is another disease of messed-up self-image. Bulimic people get rid of food they put in their body before it has a chance to get into their system—usually by throwing up or using laxatives. Binge eating is losing control of how much you eat. Binge eaters eat even if they are not hungry. Girls with eating disorders are often really secretive about it. Down deep they’re unhappy, disgusted and depressed; deep down they know it’s unhealthy.

Do you have a friend who might have an eating disorder? Someone who is losing weight fast? Feels guilty when she eats certain foods? Refuses to eat in front of others? Weighs herself constantly? Disappears to the bathroom after she eats? If you do, that someone might need help. Be a true friend and ask her about it. Tell her you’re concerned. Offer to go with her to talk to someone who knows about this stuff (counselor, doctor, nurse, parent).

Athletes especially need to watch out for fad diets and sketchy body image issues. We focus a lot on our bodies—in good ways and in not-so-good ways. Some athletes get so wrapped up in being fatless that they develop eating disorders. The catch is that athletes need food and its energy to kick butt at our sports. Eat lots of the stuff that is low in fat and high in vitamins, like veggies, fruit, lean meat, pastas and breads. Stay away from stuff that is super greasy, salty or fatty. Learn how to balance your diet; don’t eat constantly or starve yourself. Give your body just what it needs—no more, no less.
Leaders’ Tip:
Be Honest

“How does someone earn trust? By being honest. It’s much easier to stick to the truth than to cover your fibs. Admit when you are wrong and forgive mistakes. You’ll get respect. Worst part of having an eating disorder was the stress I felt about being so secretive—nobody knew about it. I had to hide it from my family, friends, coaches and teammates. It wasn’t easy. I would worry all the time. What a relief when I was honest.” — Dara Torres

Journal Ideas:
Just be you! Instead of trying to be like someone else, make a list of all the things that make you special. Is it your eyes, your laugh, your muscular legs, your sense of humor, your artistic talents?

A start to feeling good about who you are and how you look is understanding that everyone is different. Some folks are tall, others short; some are stocky, others lean; some folks have blue eyes, others don’t. Feel confident about who we are and how we look. If you hate your legs, how do you expect them to run for you? If you are embarrassed about your strong back, how can you expect it to help you swim fast? Appreciate what you got and learn to recognize the beauty that makes you unique, whether it’s your big feet, bouncy curls, bushy eyebrows or bulky shoulders. You wouldn’t be you without ’em!

Activities:

Individual—Honesty Survey

Have a chat session with your buddy. Ask the following questions about honesty and both of you answer them:

- Are most people honest or dishonest?
- At school?
- At work?
- In families?
- In relationships?
- What are some reasons people lie?
- What makes someone fake?
- Is it ever okay to tell a white lie?
- What makes someone tell the truth?

Group—“Honesty-Dishonesty” Journal

Ask each of the girls in your group to keep an “Honesty-Dishonesty” journal for one week.

Tell them: “In this journal, to write down examples of honesty and dishonesty in everyday life. Keep track of all the times you hear or tell ‘white lies.’ Watch television. See what role honesty plays in stories covered in the news. How often is dishonesty part of a TV show’s story?”

At the end of a week, encourage them to write their conclusions.

Ask the girls: “What have you learned? Share it with the group.”
When I was in the fifth grade, a friend of mine wanted to try smoking, so she borrowed her dad’s pipe. We put some tobacco in it and tried smoking it out of the pipe. We were experimenting. We thought it would be so cool to smoke. I wanted so much to look cool with my friends. I especially didn’t want this friend to think that I was chicken, so I couldn’t be afraid when she asked me to smoke.

It went on for a short while. I never had to deal with my parents finding out because they never knew. I never got addicted because, thank goodness, I stopped before that happened.

But I did have an experience that convinced me that I did not need tobacco in my life. It was pretty awful. I tried playing soccer one afternoon after we had been smoking. I thought that I was going to die during the game. I couldn’t breathe. I couldn’t run. It was as if I had a big hole in my heart. It was so painful.

I was pretty disgusted with myself right away. I knew that I did not want to feel like that ever again. Soccer and sports were just too awesome to give up for a stupid smoke. It was easy to give it up. Soccer was just too important in my life.

What was hard, though, was telling my friend. I was worried about her reaction. I decided to be honest and really tell her my feelings. It was the easiest way. I told her that smoking was disgusting, it made it hard to play sports and that it was a mistake if she continued. She tried to tell me that I was just afraid. I told her, no, I wasn’t, and I was through with smoking. She kept trying to make fun of me! I didn’t hang out with her after that. Besides, I had a soccer game to play.
There is no way to put it gently—smoking’s not only gross but it can kill you! It’s understandable, if your friends are into it, to impulsively think smoking is kinda cool. Maybe you’re thinking a butt hanging between your fingers will make you look tough or rebellious. You know what? All it takes is two seconds of your brain’s time to realize how silly smoking really is.

Check this out. If you smoke, you will totally and absolutely: have nasty breath, stink, get yellow teeth, annoy people around you and waste money, as well as risk getting asthma, cancer and a lovely array of other deadly diseases. Smoking is dangerous for everyone, but can be especially harmful to girls and women. As if that’s not enough, if you’re into sports, smoking cigarettes will destroy your lungs, make it tough to breathe and stop you from becoming the great athlete you’ve always dreamed of being.

Maybe you think you can smoke a few butts when you’re hanging out with your buddies and quit whenever the urge hits you with no problem at all. Whatever! Tobacco is one of the most addictive substances you can put into your body. Smoking one or two cigarettes on the weekends turns into one or two a day, which turns into a pack a day. Before you know it, you are the hacking, yellow-toothed smoke bomb who doesn’t have the lungs to play sports and always ducks outside to secretly feed her habit. Sounds real cool, huh?

Right now, you have an important choice to make. Are you going to be good to your body and true to your teammates and make the choice not to spark that first butt, or are you willing to risk your health and your sports dreams for a sick habit? More than five million kids living today will die too young because they made the wrong choice. Don’t let yourself be one of them. Choose fresh breath, white teeth and a butt-less life!

**Deal With It!**

* Think about all the money you save!
* Use sports as your excuse to say no (“No thanks. I have a game tomorrow.”)
* Breathe—like the way it feels? Imagine not being able to!
* Remember that most athletes and girls choose NOT to smoke—you’re not alone.
Activities:

1. Advertising Company:
   Designing the Best Anti-Smoking Ad
   You’ll need: large paper, markers, pictures of healthy lungs versus smoking lungs, or the big lump of tar. (optional)
   Break up girls into teams of five.
   Have pictures of healthy lungs versus smoking lungs, or the big lump of tar available.
   Pass out large paper and markers.
   Tell the girls: “Imagine what the best anti-smoking ad would look like. Think of it on a giant billboard or in your favorite magazine.”
   1. “What would it have to look like to catch your eye?”
   2. “What would it have to say to make you think?”
   3. “What message, pictures, words would have the most impact on your friends? Draw some ideas.”

2. Kick Butts Day
   You’ll need: large paper or poster board, markers, glue, any other poster making materials you can stir up.
   Break the girls into small groups—four to six girls.
   Pass out poster board, magazines, markers, glue and any other materials.
   Have each group make a poster for Kick Butts Day.
   (Although the official day is on April 2, it’s never too early or too late.)
   Encourage kids to get creative—depict scenarios, show images of strong athletes, find yellow teeth in magazines, make a mockery of the implications of tobacco ads, write words of strength and anti-smoking affirmation, etc.
   Have the groups vote on awards—most creative, most realistic, funniest, most powerful or whatever else seems fit.
   Find a visible place to hang the posters where they can be seen by other kids.

3. How Much Could You Save?
   You’ll need: paper and pens or pencils or calculators.
   Calculate:
   1. How much is a pack of cigarettes? [average = $4.00]
   2. How many cigarettes do your friends smoke in a day? [average = 1 pack]
   3. How much would you spend in a year? [average =$1,460]
   4. Imagine what you could do with that money.
   5. How much would you spend in a lifetime?
      [smoking from 14-64—a smoker lives fewer years]
   6. Imagine what you could do with all that money!
      [average =$75,000]
**Hooking Up**

Lots of my friends started dating and hooking up before I did. With four girls in my family, Dad was determined to protect us from the raging hormones of teenage boys. In high school, I didn’t think that much about it. I was totally focused on sports and pretty much thought that guys were a waste of my time.

In 10th grade I realized just how crazy strict my parents were. I had a guy friend who wanted me to go to a dance, and my parents busted out with their rules against dating. I tried to question Dad, but he wasn’t really into negotiations. So, I came to just accept it.

The idea of being with guys hit me when I left home for college. I realized what I had been missing and started dating like it was my job. Of course, I was a rookie in that area. I knew that I wanted to take it slow. But the guys I was hanging out with must not have had strict fathers like mine. There was tons of pressure on me all the time to go further than I wanted to. Everyone just expected me to give it up.

One guy I had been hanging out with for a while asked me to go back to his apartment. He seemed like a nice guy, but when he started trying to hook up with me, he acted differently. I told him, “I can’t do it. It just doesn’t feel right for me, now.” But he wouldn’t listen to me. He ignored my “No.” This guy was big—6’7” tall—and he was trying to force himself on me. No one else was around, and I was totally freaked out.

I just stood up, got my things and said, “I am ready to go home.” He finally did take me home and never called me again. I was hurt that he judged me by what I wouldn’t do. I was pretty stressed out about it. My friends kept saying, “What’s wrong? He’s such a great guy.”

I have no regrets about going with my instincts. I am so glad that I stayed tough that night. The right time and the right person eventually came along. You have to make a decision to trust yourself. Being a secure and confident person was the best protection I could ever have against giving into negative pressure. Respecting yourself is the only way to make other people respect you.

**Discussion Questions**

1. What did Benishe mean that feeling confident really helped her?
2. What’s it like in your home—are there strict rules? Do you wish it were different?
Picture this. You flirt with this crush of yours in class and can’t tell if it is working. One day before practice, your crush comes up to you, starts small talking and miraculously asks you to a party at a friend’s house on Friday… and the friend’s parents won’t be home. Some how the word “sure” falls out of your stuttering lips, and before you know it, the two of you are at the party dancing closer and closer. You start dancing up on each other, and pretty soon you go from kissing to straight-up making out. Suddenly, the person of your dreams is pushing things further while your mind and body duke it out to decide how far it will go.

Time out. What do you do?

Before you get all embarrassed and tune out, know that this is not another sex ed lesson. No one is going to tell you hooking up will land you a place in hell. Girls say that they want the truth about dating and sex—so here it goes. Straight up.

You fall in love. You fall out of love. Your heart is broken, and then miraculously it’s fixed. Your body and your emotions are on a wild ride together. Dating. Guys. Girls. Handholding, first kisses and the rest of it are the fireworks in your day-to-day. That’s totally cool.

But there is a flip side. Hooking up with someone puts your body and mind at risk. The further you go, the greater the risk. Swapping spit with a French kiss or exploring bodies with your hands doesn’t put your body at a tremendous risk, but it can definitely affect you emotionally. Oral sex opens the doors to all kinds of scary sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) like AIDS, herpes and nasty genital warts—not to mention serious guilt and emotional confusion. Some times kids think that oral sex is safe sex. It isn’t. Diseases can be spread without having full-on intercourse. If you do actually have sex, you totally increase the chance for disease AND take the risk of getting pregnant—even when you’re using a condom. Here’s the down-and-dirty on getting down and dirty: one in five Americans carries an STD, and teenagers are at the highest risk for getting them. It takes just seconds to get pregnant or pick up a disease, but you’ll pay the price for the rest of your life.

All this assumes that you made the choice to get down with someone. What if you’re out with someone and the guy starts getting on you without your permission? Date rape is the most common type of rape. If a dude is taking things too far, and you say no, he needs to stop. Trust your instincts about someone who makes you feel uncomfortable. If you find yourself in a situation where someone is pressuring you, be clear about saying “NO,” and leave immediately.

Good relationships should make you feel respected and secure. When you find yourself in that steamy situation, make sure you are prepared to take the risks.
Hooking Up

If you can’t talk to the person you’re with openly about what you’re about to do, then you’re probably not ready to be doing it. And never do anything that makes you uncomfortable, no matter how nice and trusting you think that person is. Sex should never be about bending to pressure from someone else. It’s your body and your heart. Be true to you, and don’t compromise anything. After all, hooking up doesn’t make you mature or sexy—knowing who you are and what you want does.

Think you’re ready to have sex? Think about this first:

* Are you feeling pressured? Are you doing it to please someone else?
* Will you be cool with this decision 10 hours from now? Ten days from now?
* Imagine sharing every inch of your body with someone, then getting dumped in a week or two—will you still think it was a good idea?
* Do you know how to be safe, how to protect yourself from STDs and pregnancy?

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Leaders’ Tip: Encourage Decision-Making

“Get everyone involved in the challenges ahead. Let others know that you value their opinions and trust them to help make decisions. Everyone has the ability to make good choices. One time this guy was expecting me to give it up and I was not ready. I have no regrets about going with my instincts. I am so glad that I stayed tough that night. The right time and the right person eventually came along. You have to learn to trust your decisions.”

— Benishe Roberts
ARE YOU READY QUIZ

1. Which of the following is NOT true about having sex for the first time?
   A. You will never forget it.
   B. You don’t need to use protection.
   C. It won’t feel as good as you think it will.
   D. You can get pregnant or catch an STD.

2. Which of the following is a bad reason to have sex?
   A. The person might break up with you if you don’t.
   B. All your friends have done it.
   C. You like this person and want them to like you back.
   D. ALL of the above.

3. If you decide to stop things in the middle of messing around with someone, which of the following is TRUE?
   A. You are a tease.
   B. The other person has a right to make you keep going further.
   C. It will be harmful to the other person's body to stop.
   D. You’ve made a decision about your body and used your absolute right to control what happens with it.

4. Which of the following is NOT true about HIV, the virus that causes AIDS?
   A. Only gay people and druggies get that.
   B. You can get it through tainted blood transfusions.
   C. You can get it through unprotected sex with an infected partner.
   D. You can get it through protected sex with an infected partner.

5. Which of the following is TRUE about the first time you have sex?
   A. You can get pregnant.
   B. You can get HIV, the virus that leads to AIDS.
   C. You can get an STD.
   D. All of the above.

6. If you agree to have sex, it isn’t fair to change your mind later.
   □ True □ False

7. You should trust the person you are going to have sex with.
   □ True □ False

8. If you have been drinking or have taken drugs, you can NOT consent to sex under the law.
   □ True □ False

9. You should take time to think about whether or not you really want to have sex before doing it... it should not be an impulse.
   □ True □ False

10. If you are kissing somebody or making out with them, you OWE them sex if they want it.
    □ True □ False
Journal Ideas:
What image do you think your favorite singers/bands have? What messages do your favorite songs send? Do the words make you feel uncomfortable? Why/why not?

Group—Reality TV Decisions
Materials Needed: pencils/pens, paper

Have the group break into groups of two or three. Give out pencils and paper. Have each group write a scene together to act out in front of the whole group. Give them a few minutes to practice, then ask each group to act out its scene.

Here are some suggestions for scenarios:

Â A girl is trying to say “No” to going any further and the guy is trying to convince her to do more than she wants to. What are the possible outcomes? Think of reasons that can be used along with just saying no.

Â You have a crush on someone. This person is interested in another girl. You know that she has been bad-mouthing and cheating. You could tell the person or not. Decide what to do.

Â Everyone is heading over to Mikey’s house for a party. You don’t know him or the neighborhood. You feel a little funny about it—something’s just not sitting right in your mind. But everyone else is going. How could you check it out? What questions could you ask? What could you do and still seem “cool”?
I am Tina George, and I am a wrestler. What keeps me going? I always say it's the pursuit of the good. I pursue wrestling and my education because I believe that there’s a possibility of being a good person even if you fall short. When it comes to trying to do great things, even if you fall short, it's still a great thing. The pursuit of excellence makes me happy.

But somewhere along the way, I was overwhelmed with different feelings, not positive ones. I couldn’t explain it at first, but it was depression. I noticed it was getting to be really serious when going to practice felt like it was a punishment. I was sitting in my house for days at a time and not wanting to see anyone. I’d turn off my phone. My mom would get really worried, she’d just keep calling, and she’d call my friends to see what was going on. I just wanted to be left alone.

I knew when I didn’t want to train anymore in the sport I loved that it had become serious. I needed help.

After I got help finding out what was really going on with me, a lot of people came to talk to me because they’d had experiences with it in their own lives. Staying active in wrestling definitely helped me with the depression, but the most helpful was the support that I had from my friends and family and from some of the coaching staff.

It helped just realizing that I wasn’t the only one. I didn’t understand how common it was, even in sports, for people to feel different levels of depression until I experienced it myself. I realized that there are other people trying to do important things, with big dreams and big goals, who have the same type of problem, and they were able to work through it with support and therapy.

Being an athlete has brought me into contact with a large variety of people and has also taken me to different countries around the world. Staying involved and having these experiences helps make me think about what's really important. The issues that I have myself sometimes may not be important in the bigger context of life.

Throughout my battle with depression, I’ve clung to the most important thing my coach told me when I first started wrestling: “People are going to like you no matter who you are and what you do. Whether you're really, really built or really, really skinny; if you're fat or thin; if you're really social or you’re kinda quiet—people are going to like you, you just have to be who you are.” This has carried me through all the difficult times and it’s made all the difference in my personality. It's given me freedom to be the person who I want to be.
We all get bummed out. Let’s face it; it’s hard to be chipper when your parents are tripping on you, Coach is making you ride the bench and you get teased practically every day at school. Sadness is a normal reaction to the tough stuff that goes on in our lives.

If sadness becomes a rainy day that just won’t wash away—lasting for more than two weeks or so at a time—something more serious may be going on in your head. Depression is no joke, and it affects kids as well as adults. Sometimes sadness is unpredictable. It can come in waves—one day you feel like life stinks and the next you feel pretty okay. The bright side? Help is all over the place. There are doctors and counselors out there who are specially trained in treating the bad feelings that outstay their welcome.

You don’t have to be a sucker to your emotions—letting them rule your life and ruin your days. Your best defense against run-away anger or sadness is to find a positive way to express your feelings. Don’t bottle them up. Talk to a friend, family member, teacher or counselor that you trust. Spitting out your feelings helps you understand them better yourself. Expressing your feelings can also happen on the field, on a piece of paper or in a song. Whatever you do, don’t just sit up in your room and sulk. Getting involved and getting your booty in motion can make a big difference. Sweating and working your body naturally sends happy vibes to your brain. Going out and helping others can be soul food. Be creative and find your perfect emotional vent.

**RED FLAGS**

Are you...

* Having sleeping problems—too much or too little?
* Losing your appetite?
* Overeating?
* Feeling guilty or inadequate?
* Not motivated?
* Restless, angry or bummed?
* Angry or sad for no reason or out of proportion?

**YOU COULD BE HEADED FOR...**

* Self-destructive behavior, including relationships that bring you down or take more energy than they give
* Alcohol and drug use
* Suicidal feelings or actions

**DEAL WITH IT**

* Create a busy, positive schedule
* Move! Exercise can help lift your spirits.
* Stay away from drugs and alcohol—they only make it worse.
* Think positive—force yourself to turn negative situations around.
* Lighten up on life—learn to laugh at yourself. Smiling can immediately improve your mood.
* Try meditation or yoga
* Offer a listening ear and help to sad/depressed friends
* Pay attention to talk about suicide
* Call a hotline and talk to an expert
ACTIVITIES:

Individual—Practice Really Listening To Feelings

Providing an “ear” is a very important part of being a good leader. Everyone needs someone to talk to, someone who really hears their joys and sorrows. You just need to pay careful attention to the person’s feelings when she is talking.

With your buddy:

Listen to your favorite song. Don’t sing along. Just listen like you’ve never listened before.

Write down what you each think the singer is really feeling.
What is this song really about? Write down why you think this.
Talk about how your interpretations of the song are the same or different.

Group—Practice Attentive Listening

Ask everyone in your group to sit in a circle. Going around in no special order, ask each person to briefly describe how she got her first name. If someone doesn’t know, maybe she can describe how she got a nickname. Ask the girls to think about the following as each person speaks:

※ Pay attention to how she holds her body. Is she stiff or relaxed?
※ How quiet or loud is she speaking?
※ Where is she looking with her eyes?
※ What are her facial expressions?
※ Does she use her hands a lot to talk?
※ Do you think that she is happy with her name and where it came from?
※ Can you see how much more you can “hear” with attentive listening?
“Yes, I’ll do it.” My mind raced. I am just one person! Is this really going to make any difference anyways? Congress? Washington? I can’t affect it, I can’t touch it.

These are the thoughts that went through my head after the Joslin Diabetes Center asked ME to speak to Congress about the disease. I am only one of 17 million people in this country who have diabetes. I was diagnosed at the age of 4, and since then I’ve lost my sight, one of my kidneys, my ability to have children, and my oldest brother to the disease. So when I was asked to represent all 17 million of us in front of Congress, I was intimidated and I was scared, but I said yes. I felt a sense of duty. I took the responsibility to do what I could as one individual who is part of something bigger.

The diabetes community desperately needed more funding for research. Still, I had this attitude like, is this really going to make any difference? I felt like the government was this huge thing down in Washington, and who was I? Other years all the leading doctors in the field had spoken to them about the disease and research that needed to be done. I was just a patient. I was just one person.

What I learned is that Congresspeople are just that—people. I spoke, and they listened. People are busy, but if you talk, chances are your voice will be heard. Bottom line, we got an increase in funding that year. I know that it was not just me, it was the work of hundreds of others, it was all of us. But I know I played a part.

I’m just one, but I’ve used my power as one to do my part in this world. From collecting coins in a can for cancer research as a kid on Halloween to laying bricks to build a house with Habitat for Humanity, I’ve learned that I can be an important part of any process, even though I’m blind, because there’s a place for me.

I really think the world could be a much better place if we each took some time to think about our place in it. You have the power to be anything you want to be and to do anything you want to do. The power is in you, and if you decide that you want to change something, then you just go out and change it. In a little way, in a big way—it ALL makes a difference. We’re each busy with school, work, sports or our families, and sometimes it takes a minute to stop and do the right thing. Stop and help a blind person across the street or hold a door for an older person who’s carrying a bag of groceries. Even a smile goes a long way. You have a lot of potential and a lot of power. Take the responsibility to use it!
Whether you’re lobbying Congress or just trying to get through another day of high school, know that you have the power to affect the world around you—in big ways, small ways, bad ways and good ways. You may be one person, but you’re part of something larger than just you—a family, a school, a community, a country, this world! Like it or not, you have a role, and you have power. How are you using that power?

The more each player on a team cares about her role, the more successful the team will be. People have different roles in different things, but everyone is a citizen of a community and a citizen of this world. Communities are shaped by the people who live in them. The world of tomorrow will be shaped by your attitude today.

Hold up. You’ve heard this before. Haven’t seen a difference. Well, add it up. You make little decisions every day, but you’re on this planet for like 80 years or more! All those things you do—whether you choose to throw a little trash on the ground, volunteer an hour here and there, or stand up for something you believe in—shape this world. Having trouble picturing the difference? When you think of what kind of citizen you are, think of it like this:

What if everybody treated the environment like junk?
There’d be nothing left.

What if nobody bothered to vote?
We’d lose the right to choose our leaders.

What if everybody gave a dollar to a cause, or an hour of his or her time?

What if nobody ever stood up against things like slavery or the Holocaust?

What if everybody was into tagging and putting graffiti everywhere?
What would it look like?

What if nobody fought for Title IX? You might not have a place to play.

You get the point. Sounds like a lotta “what ifs.” Maybe it’s time to make those “what ifs” into “when I’s,” and make a choice about the kind of citizen you’re going to be.

Decide: Are you going to leave the world better than when you found it or worse? Are you going to make someone’s day or ruin it? Are you going to stand up for what’s right or wait for someone else to?

This world depends on people to take a kind of responsibility for themselves—the responsibility not to take more than they give and to give more than they take. What if everyone took and no one gave? What kind of world would it be?
ACTIVITIES: Changing the World, One Girl at a Time

Create small groups of 2 or 3 girls. Be sure to mix up girls to encourage cross-social group cooperation. Pass out paper and pens/markers/pencils. Ask each group to:

1. Write one issue affecting their community (local, national or global) that they are concerned about. Encourage them to be creative in thinking about the environmental, social, political, racial, economical issues that they face on a daily basis.

2. Write down the causes of the problem.

3. Now create a 3-5 step action plan for how the girls can help pitch in to solve the problem.

4. Share issues and action plans with the whole group.

5. Encourage girls to put their plans into action. If possible, give them the time and space to do it.

6. Report back to the group after the action plan has been executed to share how it went.
Barrett Christy
12-time X Games medalist
(Western State College)

When I was 15 years old, I was at that awkward point of going from junior high school to high school. It was intimidating—a bigger place, new kids, more work. I was lucky though, because I was playing varsity field hockey and lacrosse, and I felt cool to be hanging out with the older girls.

The first time I smoked marijuana, I didn’t think that it did anything special for me. So I didn’t try again for a while. But then, as I got into the intense schedule of high school sports and academics, I started smoking pot. I thought it was a good distraction from all the studying and demands. It became an escape for me from homework and chores. I didn’t think at the time that it was any big problem.

But looking back at it now, I can see how much it affected me. When I was smoking, I looked at things differently. Smoking pot altered my priorities at the time. I really became unmotivated. I found it very difficult, while being stoned, to finish any projects I started. I had no focus. I lost some friendships, too. And when my mom found out once, I got into so much trouble.

I liked the escape weed gave for me. But I also hated the way it made me feel so tired and burned out. In my early 20s, I decided to move on to healthier things. There didn’t seem any point to doing it anymore. I just found that I had better things to do with my time, even when I was bored. I made a decision to change, and I was lucky that it was not a difficult problem for me to quit. My life was filled with sports, work and school. I had goals and now I was able to follow through with them.

In a funny way, if it weren’t for smoking pot, I would have taken a different path in life. When I was smoking I was drawn to solo adventures. I ended up quitting team sports. Then I found snowboarding, mountain biking and rock climbing. And because of my involvement in those activities, I stopped smoking pot. So now, I have the focus and the energy and the motivation to fulfill my dreams.

Discussion Questions

1. Was it a good idea for Barrett to escape school and practice in this way? Why/why not?
2. What are the ways you use to “escape” schoolwork, stress, chores or tough situations?
You wake up one morning, and the whole world looks different. You’re not a kid anymore—life as a teenager is in full swing. Your perspective is changing and you’re ready to experiment with anything and everything. It’s time to turn the dials of your life and figure out how you want to be defined. Are you going to act like a tough girl or a girly girl? Friday night with the popular girls or your next-door neighbor? Who are you? What style are you down with? Where do you fit?

A choice you’ll probably have to make is whether or not you’re going to mess with drugs. The pressure is in your face—someone passed you a joint at a party or told you ecstasy is a harmless drug that’ll make you feel happy and alive. You’re curious about the buzz, and you don’t want to look prude and prissy. But, on the other hand, every adult in the world has told you to avoid drugs like the plague. Suddenly you’re freaking out about what to do.

Here’s some help: trust your instincts. You’re nervous because drugs can be dangerous. Choosing to do drugs is so much more than a style choice. It can ruin your health, your relationships and your drive to achieve your goals. Most drugs are addictive. You get high once and want to feel that buzz, so you do it again. Drugs can become a habit, an escape from reality that forces people to lie to their parents, lose interest in the important things in their lives and pretty much change from the people they once were.

One thing that all drugs have in common is risk. Messing with your body’s rhythm and balance is never safe. Even prescription drugs, if they aren’t intended for you, can be dangerous. Stuff like crystal meth and speed jack up your heart rate. Some folks’ bodies just can’t take it, and their heart just stops and they die. For real. Even weed has consequences. When you smoke, blood flow to your brain increases. When you come down an hour or so later, that flow drops super low. It does not take a brain surgeon to know that low blood to your brain isn’t cool! The more often you smoke, the harder it is for your brain’s blood supply to get normal. That means you spend more and more time in a stupid state of “duh” as your body recovers.

As an athlete, you’ve got a whole bunch riding on your decision. You need your body and your brain on point to play your best. If you’re doing drugs, there is no way you’re at the top of your game. So, it’s up to you. Are drugs worth it? Is a quick high more important to you than your dreams? Who DO you want to be?
ACTIVITIES:

Individual—Dream a Little Dream

What do you want your future to look like? Want a job in sports? Want to live in a different country? Want 10 kids and a farm? It's up to YOU to make it happen. Sit down alone or with your buddy if you want. Determine each of these goals:

* What do I want my life to look like in 20 years?
* Where will I need to be in five years to get there?
* What can I do today to help make my dreams come true?  
  What about this year?

Group—Goal-Setting: Basics for Success

Goals can be short-term (for today, this week, this month) and long-term (this season, this year, next year, in five years, in 10 years).

Materials Needed: pencils/pens/markers, construction paper

Give out pencils, paper, markers and construction paper.
Have everyone work on her own goals for success staircase.

Give the following guidelines/instructions:

Draw a set of stairs

On each step write a goal (start with today's short-term goal) and what you need in order to achieve this goal. Set a target date.

Set goals that are believable (avoid the impossible)

Set goals that are positive (avoid “I won’t do…”)  

How will reaching your goals change your life?

Put your Stairs to Success where you will see it and check it often to see how you are doing.
Kathy Collins
Four-time world champion
(Suffolk County Community College, nursing major)

I grew up in a tough neighborhood down South. As a kid, I got into a lot of fights. It was a way to survive. I was athletic and played lots of sports—basketball, swimming, track—but I was more of a troublemaker at school than anything else. By the time I was 13, I was already smoking, skipping classes. I didn’t think that the rules applied to me. I believed I was bad, so I acted that way. And as I grew older, I drank too much, smoked two packs of cigarettes a day and ended up weighing 240 pounds.

One day I decided to start taking care of myself. So I looked for something that could be fun AND help change my life. I turned to boxing. It was a way to feel better, let out frustrations and get into amazing shape. I lost 100 pounds, stopped smoking, stopped drinking and started eating right. Who knew? I had the talent to become a great boxer.

The movie “Rocky” was a big reason I got into boxing. He fought and he survived—just like me. But there was something else that led me to boxing. I was beat up a lot as a kid. I was physically, mentally and sexually abused by my parents. I was constantly told that I was no good. I felt powerless and angry for most of my childhood. I didn’t understand that this was not normal. I had never known any other way. After all, these were my parents.

Everything changed one day at school. I had gotten into trouble, again. The school counselor, Mr. Wright, called me in. He told me that he was going to call my parents. I just broke down, right there in his office, out of fear of what my parents would do to me. Mr. Wright had never seen me like that. He kept asking what was wrong. I finally told him.

It was like letting the floodgates open. I had never told anyone about any of this; I didn’t think that they would believe me. Once I started talking, I couldn’t stop. And the whole time, I was sobbing. Mr. Wright kept assuring me that he would help. I was relieved and scared at the same time. As much as I hated them, I didn’t want anything bad to happen—they were still my family. But I had taken that first step, talking to someone; and now things were going to change, to protect me and my sisters.

My stepfather went to prison for a while for the sexual abuse. My sisters and I were in foster care for a time. When we were re-united, we had three years of family counseling. I learned that none of it was my fault. I learned how to ask for help—that it didn’t make me weaker, but stronger. I learned that I can survive. All it took was that first difficult step—opening up to someone.
Being young shouldn’t hurt. Home should be a place to chill, not a place to dread. Relationships should be about making you feel good, not making you feel bad. If you are being abused, your right to a carefree life is being snatched from you. Flat out: abuse is always wrong and illegal. Still, it happens to kids of all colors, in all states—kids living in mansions and kids living in shelters.

You’ve gotta understand abuse before you can do anything about it. So, what exactly is it? Heads up, abuse wears lots of different faces:

- **PHYSICAL ABUSE** is most obvious. That’s when someone hits, kicks, slaps, chokes, pushes, shakes or otherwise hurts another person. You don’t have to end up in the hospital with a broken leg, either. If a mark is left, it counts.

- Someone doesn’t have to beat on you for it to be abuse. Constant screaming, insults, intimidating or just making a person feel bad on purpose, that’s **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**. It can hurt just as bad as a slap across the face.

- **SEXUAL ABUSE** is America’s deep, dark secret. Girls (and boys) are often too embarrassed or ashamed to talk about it. Sexual abuse is any sexual contact between an adult and a kid, including touching private parts, playing sex games, penetration, oral sex, showing porn, or any unwanted sexual activity.

- Sometimes, abuse isn’t about what is happening, but what isn’t. **NEGLECT** is when a parent or guardian doesn’t take care of his or her kid’s basic needs—when there is no food in the house, when a kid doesn’t get to a doctor when he or she is sick—that kind of stuff.

- **SEXUAL HARASSMENT** is unwanted sexual comments, gestures, touching, pinching, grabbing and rude names.

One thing that all those kinds of mistreatment have in common is that they are NEVER the kid’s fault. People abuse others for many reasons. Sometimes, a parent was abused, never got help, and ends up doing the same thing to his or her kid. It’s a cycle. Other times, people’s view of themselves stinks, so they try to stand on someone else’s back to feel taller. It’s a power thing. Alcohol and drugs have a pretty chummy relationship with abuse, too. It’s not uncommon for abuse to surface when a person is drunk or high.
Eighty percent of abusers are people you know. Abusers are not always parents, either. They can be parents’ friends, coaches, strangers, girlfriends, boyfriends—just about anyone! Even the people you love can be abusive. Is the person you are dating or are the people you hang out with constantly criticizing you? Losing their temper a lot? Trying to control everything you do? Are they threatening to hurt you or actually hurting you? Forcing you to have sex? That’s abuse.

Being abused when you are young can leave scars that you’ll have for the rest of your life. Girls who’ve experienced it are more likely to have a hard time in school, use drugs, drink, have sex when they are young, get depressed, consider suicide, run away, develop eating disorders and a whole bunch of other stuff. The longer the abuse lasts and the more intense it is, the deeper the emotional and physical scars are. That’s why it’s so key to squash it immediately.

The best way to stop abuse is to call it out. If you (or someone you know) are being treated in any of the ways we just described, there is no time to waste. Even if it’s hard or embarrassing, you gotta tell an adult you can trust. Talk to an older friend, a neighbor, a rabbi, a coach—someone you feel safe with. Telling someone about the abuse doesn’t mean that you don’t love the person you’re telling on. It means you know something is wrong and you want help—for you and for them. You don’t need proof, just tell your story. If it’s a friend you are worried about, talk to that friend first and try to get him or her to speak up. Know that you’re not stuck in a life of pain. You have a choice. Be brave—choose you.
**Activities:**

**Individual—Optimism: The Glass Is Half Full!**

The best way to teach someone to be optimistic is to act optimistic yourself. It’s easy to catch your optimism. Optimists hang in there; they don’t give up. They bounce back. Optimists have “I can” attitudes.

**Part 1. Discovery—Explore the following with your buddy.**

Think about these questions and give an example from your own experience:

- Are you an optimist?
- Do you accept failures because you know that you can try again?
- Do you always look for the good in people?
- Do you enjoy a challenge?
- Do you look for something good in any bad situation? It’s called “making lemonade out of lemons.”

**Part 2. Staying optimistic.**

Plan out together how you could do the following tasks:

- Making a new friend
- Trying a new sport
- Speaking up in class
- Giving your opinion to a group

**Group—“I Can’t” Funeral**

**Materials Needed:** pencils, paper, large box with lid

Pass out pencils and small pieces of paper. Have everyone write down what she usually says “I can’t” about. Then have everyone crumple up the papers and place them in the box. Have each girl say “good-bye” and close the lid. Have a memorial service.

**Journal Ideas:**

Is there someone who makes you feel small, unimportant or stupid? What can you do to change that? Who makes you feel important and powerful?
We were best friends and teammates. She was someone I was very close with, and the summer after junior year I told her all about how I liked this guy. I’d tell her about everything. When we came back to school, I found out they were dating. It was devastating. I felt like we were really good friends, you know? I’d stay over at her house, and she’d come over to my house all the time. It was a really hard time for me, because it was like when it happened, she took a group of my friends. There had been like five of us girl friends, and all of a sudden in school there were girls who didn’t talk to me or guys who didn’t like me anymore. People were spreading rumors about me. I remember I’d cry all the time, and my younger sister was like, “It’s okay. It’s not the end of the world.” I’d talk to her a lot. She tried to keep me positive, and she was someone who had my best interests at heart. I even talked to my parents a lot.

To deal with things, I just worked hard on the track and became even more focused on my school work and that stuff. When I was feeling the saddest, I found myself really enjoying the things I was good at. I was coming off an injury and a so-so track season my junior year, but that senior season I decided I wasn’t going to worry about boys or trying to be everyone’s friend, but instead focus on me.

I would do all the ab workouts, I was eating right, and I started beating everybody by a mile! As soon as I did that, I saw the benefits, and it was very rewarding. I was just so motivated to focus on myself and being the best I could be. I had an amazing season, I broke all these records, and I got the best grades in school I’d ever had. I ended up getting a scholarship to a great university and even hoped I might one day go to the Olympic Games. It just made me so happy.

Even now, dealing with my feelings is definitely still a challenge because, hey, emotions are tough to deal with. During tough times, I try to be around my parents and friends. You have to find the people who are good for your heart. Whenever I feel down, I go for a run because it really clears my mind and encourages me. I learned it helps to focus on what you’re good at, or what you like to do, and put your heart into it. The more you see something about yourself grow, the more rewarding it is, and it makes you happy inside.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Have you ever had your feelings hurt by something that happened with your friends or at school?
2. What did Sanya do when her feelings were so hurt by her best friend and kids at school?
3. Who is a person in your life who cares about you very much?
Feelings happen. Sadness, anger, stress, worry, nervousness and all other emotions are as much of a part of being human as hiccups and hair on your legs. You score at the wrong basket in your game—you get embarrassed. Your parents are fighting all the time—you get worried. You can never understand what your math teacher is talking about—you get frustrated. Babies, kids, parents and grannies all have feelings; they are part of what makes life exciting.

The emotion commotion can hit girls hard at this time in life. Changing bodies, changing friends, changing schools and just growing up can make life confusing and hard. It’s totally normal. But being a kid is supposed to be fun. What happens when you’re sad, stressed or worried all the time? What's a girl supposed to do with a rainy day that just won’t wash away?

You might get butterflies in your stomach—normal! Your heart might pound—normal! You might sweat a little, turn red, want to run away and cry—totally normal! But if you are afraid and worried or sad and depressed for no reason—most of the time, most days—that’s not normal. If feeling sad or feeling nervous becomes too strong and overpowers your whole world, then something is wrong. Don’t ignore these feelings. Talk with someone you trust—a parent, coach or guidance counselor—about what’s bothering you. Sometimes just talking to someone is helpful.

Sometimes you need to learn how to handle yourself in tough situations. Find a way to express yourself. Write in a journal, sing at the top of your lungs, dance ‘til you drop.

For lots of athletes, sports are an escape from big-time emotions. When life gets wacky, sweating, running and throwing your body around the court, track, field or whatever feels good. No matter how you choose to deal, you deserve to be happy. Figure out what works for you and do whatever it takes to keep your cool through life’s heat.

**Resources:**
- www.girlsinc.org
- www.iemily.com
- www.melpomene.org
- www.self-esteem-nase.org
- www.teenvoices.com

**Leaders’ Tip:**
Most girls struggle with their emotional roller-coaster. Through the teen years, girls lose more and more self-confidence and self-esteem. Nearly 1 out of 3 girls experience anxiety and depression—twice as much as boys. There are a lot of stresses for girls—trying to fit in, bodily changes, making important decisions. Girls are more likely to consider suicide. Life is full of ups and downs—and it’s important to teach girls coping strategies.

**Journal Ideas:**
Keeping an emotion diary is a good way to find out what makes you feel good or bad in life and how you react. Take notes when something upsets you. How did you feel? What made you feel that way? Where were you? Who were you with? How did you react?

After a week, look back at your notes. What things, people or places showed up a lot? Make a plan for avoiding what makes you feel bad or dealing with them better.
Activities:

1. Yoga Stretching and Breathing

Tell the girls: “Stress can wear you out and suck up all your energy. Yoga, one of the world’s oldest (and coolest) forms of exercise, combines breathing, quiet meditation and poses. It can help to relax your muscles, chill your mind and even give you energy. The following are some basic yoga poses to try. (Note: a key to yoga is being able to laugh at yourself when you feel like a dork.)”

**The “Corpse Pose”**

- “Lie comfortably on your back on the floor with your legs slightly apart.”
- “Close your eyes.”
- “Place your arms so that each hand is a little bit away from your body with palms facing up.”
- “Roll your head from side to side, releasing tension in your neck.”
- “Roll your shoulders down and away from your ears.”
- “Relax your entire body. Breathe normally. Rest for at least a minute.”

**The “Cow Pose”**

- “Take off your shoes and place a towel or mat on the floor.”
- “Get down on your hands and knees. Your hands should be in line with your shoulders and your knees about hip width apart.”
- “Press your palms flat against the floor and tighten your stomach muscles.”
- “Inhale through your nose and slowly tilt your head back and look up at the ceiling.”
- “At the same time, press your shoulders down and away from your ears and arch your back.”

**The “Cat Pose”**

- “From Cow pose, exhale through your nose as you lower your head and tuck your chin toward your collarbone.”
- “At the same time, curl your back like a cat. Pull in your abdominal muscles and lift your middle back toward the ceiling.”
- “Go back and forth between the Cow and Cat poses. Remember to breathe evenly and comfortably. Your movements should be slow and smooth. Repeat these two poses several times. Then stretch out on your back with your hands at your side and your legs straight.”

2. Relaxing Breathing

Tell the girls: “This is one of the best techniques for relaxing. You can do this anytime, anywhere you are feeling worried or upset or stressed. Practicing makes it even better.”

- “Sit or lie comfortably.”
- “Keep your back straight.”
- “Exhale completely while making a ‘whoosh’ sound.”
- “Inhale through your nose while counting to 4.”
- “Hold your breath for the count of 5.”
- “Exhale through your mouth, be sure to make the ‘whoosh’ sound to the count of 6.”
- “Repeat three more times.”
- “Breathe normally and see how you feel.”

3. Imagery

Tell the girls: “Imagery can be a powerful way to reduce stress. You use your imagination to recreate a place or scene that is very relaxing.”

- “Sit in a comfortable position.”
- “Gently close your eyes, if you want.”
- “Take a few calming breaths.”

**Light as a Feather Imagery**

Read the following, SLOWLY and SOFTLY:

“Imagine you are a feather floating in the air high above the earth. You become more and more relaxed as you slowly float downward through the air. You finally glide to the ground...gently and softly touching down. Lying on the ground, you are totally and completely relaxed.” Give the girls a few moments to enjoy the relaxation and then say: “Wiggle your fingers and toes, and slowly open your eyes when you are ready.”

Ask the girls how they feel.
I came from a big, close family. We were all involved in lots of activities—sports, music and drama. With 30 cousins, there was always a game to attend, a play to watch or a concert to go to. One cousin got heavily into alcohol and drugs. It took over the whole family, and it was so sad to see someone we love fight the addiction. It was scary. So as a kid, I was pretty good about staying away from alcohol and drugs.

I didn’t have my first drink until I was 18 years old and a freshman in college. I was on a government scholarship, which had random drug testing attached to it, so the fear factor kept me from ever using any drugs. I sure didn’t want to risk losing my ticket to college.

I remember my first drink was a beer. I thought, “What could be more disgusting tasting?” It was so bitter. And anything that smelled of alcohol reminded me of all those trips to the hospital as a kid. So I decided to try something very sweet tasting, like sweet wine.

Well, my first experience with drinking sweet wine got me very drunk. Losing control of how well you can walk and talk was not the “free” feeling people told me it would be, but instead it was scary. My head started throbbing, and instead of being in the mood to party, I ached to go home. The next day, I woke to find a big bruise on my arm from falling down. Things were blurry from the night before. When friends reminded me of slurred speech and tripping on the sidewalk, I said, “I did that?” It terrified me.

For a while I did not drink again. Then I went to a fraternity party. One of the most popular girls on campus was trying to get me to participate in this drinking game. It was the first (and last) time I gave into peer pressure. They would take you to each room and make you quickly drink a shot of liquor. Each room had a different theme and different type of drink. The idea was to get completely drunk.

Everything was spinning while I tried to walk home. I threw up all night long. It was horrible. I am sure that I had alcohol poisoning. It took me days to recover. I was so sick. I missed classes. I couldn’t eat. I was so embarrassed.

It was easy not to drink anymore. It was clear that, while going out with friends, I enjoyed myself much more when I felt aware and in control of everything going on around me. One night of supposed “fun” was definitely NOT worth the days of pain and embarrassment afterwards.
What’s so great about drinking? There has to be something, because folks like to get down with their alcohol. Alcohol relaxes some people. When folks don’t like their reality, alcohol can be a temporary escape. Drinking can make some folks more rowdy, silly, social and comfortable. Often people use it for social events to make everyone looser, more at ease. True. True. True. All those things are true.

The tough part about boozing is that it can have a really bad aftertaste. Girls feel the effects of alcohol even faster than boys. With the first beer you drink, your brain gets groggy. When it seeps into your bloodstream, alcohol slows down your brain and all of your reactions (which is whack in the first place). It messes up your ability to control your muscles, mind, perceptions, emotions, senses, coordination and just about all the things you need to seem like a normal person.

The more you drink, the less control you’ll have over your mind and your body. At eight o’clock you might be the life of the party, and one hour later you could be making a stupid decision that puts your life at risk. When you are drunk, you kinda lose your mind. It can make you do things you regret, like saying things you don’t mean, getting into trouble, even sleeping with someone you hardly know. It happens all the time. The situation can get especially dangerous when you play drinking games—drinking as much as you can in a short time.

Alcohol is sneaky, too. It’s really addictive stuff. For lots of people, booze becomes a way of life—part of your day-to-day habits, part of your body’s needs. Ever heard the term “alcoholism”? Alcoholism is a disease that makes your body and mind constantly crave booze. Even if you don’t become dependent on it, alcohol messes up your game.

If you’re an athlete, there is a lot riding on whether or not you drink. Aside from making you hung over, vulnerable to colds, dehydrated and bloated because of the empty calories, alcohol is a depressant. It might make you giggly at first, but eventually it has a slow-down effect. To play hard, you need to be pumped up, not bummed out. You can’t slump your way across the pool. You need energy to land a 360 on your snowboard. And let us not forget the fact that it’s illegal and against most school rules for kids under 21 to drink. Getting wasted and getting caught can easily lead to getting booted off your team, kicked out of school or worse. Not cool. Not cool at all.

You have a choice to make. How are you going to deal with the pressure to drink? Know that it’s OK not to drink. Being cool is NOT about whether or not you party, it’s about whether or not you’re an individual who chooses to lead instead of follow. There are tons of awesome people (especially athletes) who choose not to drink. Be responsible for yourself and help your friends understand the risks of drinking or getting in a car with someone who’s been drinking. Use your head. It’s your life after all.
Get a Handle on Booze:

※ If you don’t want to drink but do want to hang out at a party, practice how you’re going to say no.
※ Don’t be dumb—NEVER get into a car with a driver who’s been drinking.
※ Take care of yourself and your friends—agree that to come home from a party with the same buddy you went with.
※ Be creative; life is full of natural highs. Hike, bike, go to concerts, make CDs.
※ Be strong—athletes make choices for themselves. Don’t be a puppet to peer pressure.
※ Be honest with a friend who has been getting down with booze; tell them you’re concerned and find help if they need it.
※ Consider your goals—school, athletic and life. Getting drunk and being hung over won’t help you reach them.

ACTIVITIES:

Individual—Interview Real Role Models

Some people who are famous celebrities are not very good role models. There are some people who we never think of as role models. They are part of our lives and not so famous.

Make a list of the women in your life who you admire—your mom, grandmom, older sister, a favorite teacher, neighbor, etc.

Interview three, if you can. Then compare their answers to the following:

※ Who has been your role model in life? Why?
※ What are her/his characteristics? Achievements?
※ How have you tried to be like this person?

Group—Group Discussion: Who’s Your Hero?

Materials Needed: pencils/pens, paper

Give out pencils and paper. Have everyone write down answers to the following:

※ List a person in your life who is a role model to you.
※ List a famous person who is a hero and role model for you.
※ What qualities do these people have?
※ Who do you admire? Why?
※ Who do you want to be most like?
※ How could you be like this person?

Discuss in the group some common features.
Lisa Ervin-Baudo

Novice ladies national champion, junior ladies national champion
(Hamilton College, English degree, 1999)

SELF-HARM

It was purely by accident, in a dressing room at a skating competition. She didn’t know anyone else was there, and I remember her coming out of the stall. I saw that she was bleeding, and that she was holding something in her hand. I had no idea something was up; my first reaction was just to get her a band-aid. She replied with a flustered “Oh I’m fine, I’m fine. Not a big deal.”

I would see the same skater, and the same type of things, over the next two to three years at competitions. She’d push her sleeve up to tie her skates, and I’d see cuts on her arms. I did not know what was going on. From what I could tell, her personality seemed to change, too. She became very withdrawn, very secretive. She wasn’t even that close a friend of mine, but there were just little behaviors that were noticeably different.

The thing was, I was withdrawing and changing in a lot of the same ways. I was feeling a lot of pressure to stay so thin and perfect for skating, and was struggling with a bad eating disorder. The things I used to be interested in changed, and I stayed to myself a lot. I was so afraid that if I maintained the friendships I had that they would find out. My anorexia had now led into bulimia, and I was making myself very sick.

I knew that I was doing something bad to my body, but I didn’t make the connection at first. And then I started to get an idea after seeing some segment on TV about people who hurt themselves on purpose—including “cutting.” I thought, “Oh my gosh, this is what this girl is doing! Why would she do that to her body?” I should have asked myself the same question. I had the same answers.

Being young, I was told what to wear, what to eat, how to skate, how to act and how to live. I was so out of control in my own life. There was so much pressure—trying to please everyone, wanting to be the best, the expectations of coaches and parents—but I still wanted some control over my own life. I eventually got help for my disorder and learned that for some people, hurting themselves is a way of controlling something in their lives that no one else can. I think for some girls, self-harm like cutting, starving themselves, denying an injury or over-exercising is the only way they see of dealing with the pressure and stress they feel. Some girls were compulsively doing cardio for six hours straight! That’s hurting your body while it’s struggling to repair itself.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If the skater in Lisa’s story continued to hurt herself, what could happen?
2. What could you do in Lisa’s situation, if you think someone you know might be harming themselves?
All these behaviors—whether someone’s anorexic or over-exercising or cutting themselves—can all be related. Once someone does something like this to get a feeling of satisfaction, it’s easy to move on to other destructive behaviors. It’s all self-harm and self-abuse. And it all does serious damage.

When you think about your body being injured or harmed somehow, you probably don’t think of it being on purpose. There are things people do to themselves all the time that aren’t good for their bodies—eat unhealthily, smoke or drink too much. You probably also know about some other ways people harm themselves, like when they do damage to their bodies by being anorexic or bulimic to lose weight or by playing on a sports injury that needs rest to heal. But what about when people do things to actually try to hurt themselves?

Maybe you’ve heard of it, maybe you haven’t. Maybe you know someone who does it, maybe you’ve done it yourself. “Cutting” is when someone actually cuts their own skin with something sharp on purpose, and it’s one kind of self-injury. It might sound strange or scary, but there are other kinds of self-injury, too. Some people pull out their hair, bang their heads into walls, pick things to stop them from healing or burn themselves. Why? There are lots of different reasons. Some feel like it relieves tension or stress. Some feel a sense of control or power. Others do it to make scars or marks on their bodies—whether for themselves or to show to others. Some people are actually addicted to it.

It’s not fun to talk about, but it’s important to get why self-injury is so dangerous. Physically, this kind of stuff opens your body up to serious infection and sickness and can leave scars that never go away. But just as serious as weakening a person’s body physically is, when someone is hurting herself like this, it means there’s something intense going on inside, emotionally and mentally. Chances are these issues aren’t just going to go away, and taking it out on your body is a sign that serious help is needed.

Abusing your body—whether you’re overworking it, denying it food, using drugs or inflicting injuries on purpose—is self-harm. If you’re struggling with some tough stuff and have taken it out on your body, or if you think someone you know is hurting herself, talk to someone about it. You’ve got to find healthy ways to deal with stress, sadness and pressure. Luckily, there are tons of people out there who can help. More and more professionals like counselors, nurses and doctors understand what self-injurers are going through and how to help them through it. You’ve got to have this body the rest of your life. Don’t hurt it in the first quarter of the game.
ACTIVITIES:

Individual—Step One: Plan on Being Relaxed!

Try this relaxation breathing exercise before you have to do anything stressful.

Changing your breathing is one of the fastest ways to calm down and relax. Sit in a comfortable position, feet on the floor. Close your eyes if you want to (it makes it easier).

* Breathe through your nose; focus on your belly movement in and out.
* Fix your attention on the breath going in and out. Concentrate on the point just under your nose where the breath enters and leaves.
* With each inhale, count to four in your head
* With each exhale, count to four
* Each time you inhale, say to yourself “in” and as you exhale, “out”
* Pay attention to the rhythm of repeating the words. Whenever you notice your mind wandering, gently bring it back without effort.
* Enjoy the “quiet” time between the exhale and the inhale
* Imagine your breath flowing out in a cool stream of purple mist

Group—Learn to Organize Your Life.

Planning and organizing your time can help you to feel less stressed and sleep better at night! You may be surprised at all you can fit in and still have time to relax and have fun.

Materials Needed: pencils/pens, paper

Give out pencils and paper.

Have each person make a list of all the things that she must do in a week to stay healthy, fit, help out at home and do well at school.

Now ask them to add to their lists all the things they want to do.

Help them make a chart of their time schedule for each day.

Encourage the girls to get ideas from each other on ways they can save time and fit everything in. Be sure they make time for fun!

Journal Ideas:

Keep a daily journal for a couple of weeks and keep track of things that stress you out and how you react.
I skateboard. That’s all I’ve ever done and that’s what I love to do. As soon as I touched a skateboard, I knew that’s what I wanted to do with my life.

My sport has given me direction in my life, thankfully. I see people go through their lives and not know what they want to do. Life is really tough like that for everyone, and sometimes that makes it hard for the people around them, too. My parents got divorced when I was 7 years old. I lived with my mom, and my dad wasn’t around as much as he should have been.

I had a lot of negative energy after my parents divorced and lots of time that I could spend feeling upset. But I just focused on making myself better, and that took up a lot of my time and negative energy that I had and turned it into something positive. Skateboarding is like golf in the way that you’re really only playing yourself, you know? It’s something that you do, and you strive to get better at, but it’s just for yourself, and not anybody else.

I think our problems as a family, and then the divorce, drove me to become the best I could at whatever I tried. Maybe I wanted to be good at stuff to get attention from my parents, or maybe I just wanted to make myself better. Who knows?

When your family is split up or has any problems, it’s really hard. But you’ve got to realize that they’re the ones having problems; it has nothing to do with you. There are negative ways to deal with that, like doing drugs, drinking alcohol or smoking cigarettes even, and I’ve tried everything. You don’t want to be like that. It’s a no-brainer that if you’re on drugs, you can’t do what you want to do. You just have to decide what you like to do in life and go the positive route with your time and energy.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Who do you feel comfortable talking to when things in your life are tough?

2. What did Elissa do to help herself deal with her parents’ break up? What things can you do to make yourself feel better when family issues are stressing you out?
What is a perfect family? Sister, puhleeze! In real life, there is no such thing. Families are made up of humans, and humans aren’t perfect. Neither is the world we live in. No matter how much you look up to your parents or anyone else, they will all make mistakes at times. And no matter how much you protect the people you love, the world can get in the way. The bummer of it all is that family issues affect your life in big ways. That’s when your life can get tricky. What do you do when your parents get divorced? How are you supposed to feel when your dad goes to jail, when your mom is addicted to drugs, when your parents don’t have enough money to pay the bills? No one teaches kids what to do when family life gets hard.

Know This:
You’re not alone. Every kid in the United States will struggle with something at home at some point. Millions of kids’ folks get divorced every year, and millions more are dealing with addiction, abuse, money troubles and other emotional stuff this very instant. You may feel like the loneliest person on Earth, but know that someone somewhere is feeling the same way.

Talking Makes it Easier:
Find someone you can talk to about the hard stuff you are going through. Embarrassed to talk to your friends? Think they won’t understand? How about your coach? A teacher you like? Or how about talking directly to your parents? Let them know how their decisions are affecting your life. Whatever you do, get it off your chest.

You Choose Your Path:
Life’s struggles tend to do two things: make you or break you. When stuff goes sour at home, some kids react by messing up—getting into alcohol or drugs, skipping school, dropping out of sports, closing themselves off to the world. They let whatever their families are going through define them and destroy them. It doesn’t have to be that way. Plenty of other kids use the tough stuff in life as a way to become stronger. Have to move to a new town? Use it as a chance to make new friends. Is someone you know sad all the time? Use it as a way to learn how to reach out for help. Hate seeing your uncle drunk all the time? Learn that that is not the way you want to live.

Families can be our biggest support and our biggest struggle. We can’t choose our families, but we can choose what we learn from them. Teach yourself to sponge all the love and good qualities from your family. When your folks mess up, learn from their mistakes. If your family loses a loved one, stick together and lean on each other’s love. Keep talking and sharing. Be tough, but not too tough. And know in the end that only you have the power to decide how life’s bumps will affect your life.
Activities:

1. TEAM PLAY—BUILD A TOWER OF POWER

You'll need: cardboard, tape, paper, markers. Divide up the girls into two teams. Pass out cardboard, tape, paper, markers. Have each girl make a “building block” out of cardboard and tape.

Instruct them to:

★ Write on one side a difficult family situation they’ve endured (divorce, parents addiction, abuse, money problems or otherwise) and write on all other sides positive things they’ve learned/gained from that experience.
★ Then come together and assemble “power blocks” with their team Compare the teams’ constructions—discussing family issues as appropriate.

2. CLOWNING AROUND

★ Clowning and charades are excellent and safe mediums for the expression of emotions caused by anything—including family trauma.
★ Have girls get into small groups
★ Have them self-select who is “up” first to act
★ The girl who is up must come up with an emotion and act it out, without using any words or sounds. Other girls must guess what emotion she is trying to convey.
★ Now have girls act out the opposite emotion
★ If you sense that girls need resolution after the game, lead a discussion about what led to the emotions being acted out. Encourage girls to share other positive methods for expression of emotion.

Journal Ideas:

Think about the good and bad things about your family. What will you do the same or differently when you’re grown up?

Quick Points:

Be a role model for your family:

★ Exercise regularly—maybe set up a buddy routine with mom or dad
★ Take care of yourself: eat right, get enough sleep
★ Talk about ideas and feelings
★ Don’t ignore uncomfy situations
★ Get help when you need it

Remember: A great athlete doesn’t win every game. She learns from every game, whether she wins or loses. When life is tough, athletes focus on the positive and gain strength from working through heavy hearts and difficult circumstances. Choose to come out on top.
From the time I was 10 years old, I would wake up at 4:30 in the morning and go to the gym. Practice was from 6 to 8 a.m. Then it was off to school from 9 to 3. I would have a quick stop at home, and then back to gymnastics practice from 4 to 9 p.m.

Then I would eat dinner and go to bed. After six hours of precious sleep, I was at it again.

So I learned the importance of sleep at a very early age. And not just for staying happy, healthy and able to think at school. I had to be really awake and alert for gymnastics. Think about gymnastics—the vault, the uneven bars, the balance beam and the floor exercise. There's a lot going on there. Every day, I needed to have all my speed, coordination, strength and flexibility. In addition, I always needed my mental game. I needed full concentration, split-second timing and complete memory ability—and above all, I needed courage. If all of these things were not “on,” then gymnastics could be pretty dangerous.

Without enough sleep, things were really off. I would be sluggish and lose my enthusiasm. I would be paying attention to the wrong things. When my body did not have enough rest, I would be concentrating on aches and pains. It would take even more effort and energy. You have to work a lot harder because you know you are worn out.

Most importantly, I would lose my self-confidence. I would be unwilling to try new things and take new risks. I would keep telling myself, “I’m not good enough.” I became a lot more fearful. I would lose focus of my goals.

Fortunately for me, I had a wonderful coach who really understood the value of sleep. She would always say to us, “I want you all bright-eyed and bushy-tailed out there.” And she meant it.

When my Coach, Kelli Hill, would see me with bags under my half-open eyes and my posture down, she knew something had to be done. She would tell me to take small “power naps” during the practice days. And at international and Olympic competitions she always scheduled a good seven hours of sleep and a one-hour nap during the day. Getting enough sleep just became part of my training routine.
Sleep is a beautiful thing. At the end of a long day filled with back-to-back school, sports, homework and friends, you get to curl up in a comfy bed and let your mind and body chill. It’s a time to dream big, lose all your worries and drool all you want.

Girls your age need about nine hours of the sleep each night. During that time, your body and mind have a chance to heal, reenergize and balance for the day ahead. Your breathing slows down, your muscles relax, and the little cells that make up your body have a chance to grow. When you wake up from a good night sleep, you feel alive—you’re ready to school someone on the field, ace a test and charge full force into anything and everything.

As beautiful as sleep is, getting enough of it is an issue for lots of kids. Wake up early, go through your daily routine, eat dinner, study, e-mail your friends and, before you know it, it’s way late and you’re only looking at seven hours of sleep before you have to get up and do it all again. Makes sense that on average, kids get two hours less sleep than they should each night.

The costs of not giving your body enough down time can go way beyond ugly bags under your eyes. Not getting enough sleep can make it difficult for your body to fight illness, make you bail in the classroom, drag during practice and games and generally have a hard time performing your best. Not to mention, tired people are no fun to be around—spacey, cranky, moody and lazy.

If you want to rise to the top of your game and keep your body and mind in kick-butt condition, make sure you’re getting ample Z’s each and every night. If you have a hard time falling asleep, try emptying your mind before you go to bed—relax, clear your thoughts. Use the snooze!

Resources:
www.sleepforkids.org
www.sleepfoundation.org:

Journal Ideas:
Keep a sleep diary for the next week. What time did you go to bed? What time did you wake up? How hard or easy was it to fall asleep? Did you feel rested in the morning? Did you dream? What were your dreams?
EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS
USING THE SNOOZE

ACTIVITIES:

1. QUIZ: ARE YOU GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP?
*L Leaders: this is NOT intended to be a medical test. Always, always encourage a visit to the doctor for any health concerns. Distribute this quiz. Emphasize honesty—there are no right or wrong answers.

You’ll need: photocopies of this quiz and pens or pencils. You can also print copies of this quiz from www.GoGirlGo.com.

Circle Y (yes) or N (no) for each question:
1. Do you often sleep through your alarm? Y N
2. Does it take a lot of effort to wake you? Y N
3. Are you frequently late for school? Y N
4. Do you feel like you could easily fall asleep in the middle of the day? Y N
5. Are you always talking about how little sleep you got? Y N
6. Do friends/family complain that you are often grumpy? Y N
7. Do you have trouble concentrating? Y N
8. Do you often feel like you are in a daze? Y N
9. Do you often wish you had more energy? Y N
10. Do you have worries that keep you from falling asleep? Y N

Discuss answers and concerns.

Go over suggestions for a better night’s sleep. What are some ideas that the girls have for falling asleep?

2. PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION
If you are looking for something to calm your nerves—try this exercise.

Have all the girls lie down or sit, get quiet and comfortable. Dim the lights.

Do some deep breathing with the girls first.
Tell the girls:
* “Close your eyes.”
* “Place your arms a few inches from your body.”
* “Breathe deeply. Let your weight sink downward. Just be loose.”

Read these instructions:
* “Slowly stiffen the muscles in both arms. Hold for 10 seconds; stiffen a little more and hold for 10 seconds. Think about how your arms are feeling during those 10 seconds. Are they sore or tender?”
* “Allow your arms to relax gradually. Notice how the stiffness becomes less intense. Rest in this relaxed state for a minute or two.”

Repeat the exercise—tighten and hold, then relax gradually with:
* The legs
* The chest
* The abdomen
* The facial muscles

3. DREAMS
Tell the girls:
“We typically spend about two hours dreaming each night. Scientists now believe that babies and even other mammals dream. Sometimes dreams are weird and funny—sometimes they are frightening. Sometimes we have recurring dreams—the same ones over and over.”
* “Keep a pen and paper near your bed.”
* “As soon as you awaken, write as much detail from a dream as you can remember.”
* “Draw a picture of what you think you saw.”
* “What do you think the parts of this dream mean?”

GoGirlGo! LEADERS’ GUIDE
WOMEN’S SPORTS FOUNDATION’S GOGIRLGO! EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM
Tania Satchwell
Women’s pro national motocross champion,
seven-time New Zealand women’s national champion

In America, so many people base their happiness on money. I grew up in New Zealand. Over there, a good life is not about how rich you are; it’s about appreciating the non-material things—a sunny day, good friends, riding bikes.

I don’t mean to act like money doesn’t matter at all. Motocross is an expensive sport. Bikes, parts, gas, travel, gear—all this stuff costs money. I am fortunate to be sponsored by Kawasaki. They hook me up with a bike and a parts allowance. But, the life of a pro female motocross rider isn’t all that glamorous. Let’s just say I’m never going to be a millionaire doing this. I have to find the money to travel to races, eat and pay for my gym membership so I can train.

I think growing up on the farm taught me how to work hard to achieve my dreams. There was always work to be done. My parents didn’t just give me bikes to ride. I earned them by doing stuff like feeding the cows or weighing the sheep. I would even rear my own livestock and sell them to make money. I never sat around playing PlayStation or watching TV. I was outside either helping my parents or riding my bike.

There is nothing like the feeling of getting something you worked hard for. I remember my first motocross bike that I got on my 11th birthday. It cost $800, which is nothing for a motocross bike. It was used and supposed to be white, but it had turned yellow from the sun. I didn’t care at all. I put new stickers all over it and a cool new blue seat. As far as bikes go, it was a piece of junk. In my eyes it was the best thing ever.

These days, I live in California, far away from the family farm in New Zealand. But, I still have to work hard and save to live my dream as a pro motocross rider. I work a full-time job, testing bikes every day. I have to get up before the sun to work out. I spend my weekends racing and training. I have to be disciplined with my time and my money. I can’t just go out to dinner or buy new clothes whenever I feel like it. I have to save up to make it to races and put gas in my bike.

You know, nothing in life is free. You can’t expect Mom and Dad to just dish out. As athletes, we make our dreams happen. Sometimes that means saving money to buy a new bike or whatever. Decide what you’re really passionate about and figure out how you can raise the money to do it. Can you baby-sit or get a part-time job? Remember, good things come to those who work hard.

Discussion Questions

1. Tania talks about the feeling of getting something she worked hard for. Was there a time you worked hard or saved up to get something you really wanted? How did it feel?

2. Even if you have parents or a loved one who buys you things, how does making your own money give you more freedom?
Tips for being a financially independent woman:

* Educate yourself. Start by taking our “Know Your Dough” quiz.
* Set goals for the things you want. Save $ and start a budget to make it happen. Need a guide? Download our sports budget.
* There’s no such thing as free money, and when someone gives you money to spend (“credit”), they’re going to charge you for every day it takes you to pay it back (“interest”).
* The cost of cool: Add up what you’ve spent on stuff you wanted ‘cause it’s “cool.” Are those things you really need?
* Re-use vs. Retail: Instead of always buying something new, look to older siblings, friends and second-hand stores. (Be very careful when it comes to sports and safety equipment, however.)

As if we need to tell you, everyone’s money situation is not created equal. Money isn’t fair, and we weren’t all born into equal wealth. But guess what? Getting hung up on that is not going to help your situation one penny.

No matter how old you are, whether you’re getting an allowance or you’re pitching in part of the family income to help make ends meet, YOU have the power to control your own financial future. Don’t really care about money? Come from a family with no money? Don’t have to worry about it ‘cause your parents got it more than covered? No excuses—we each have the power to earn, save or spend, so we each have the responsibility to KNOW OUR DOUGH.

You’ve heard that “knowledge is power.” Well, when it comes to money, this couldn’t be more true. “Interest,” “assets,” “credit,” “disposable income,” “mortgage,” “financing,”—ugh! Suddenly feel like you know NOTHING about money and don’t really care to? Exactly. That’s what happens, and that’s what money-makers depend on. When you stay in the dark about how money works, money works against you.

Not understanding and controlling your own money is the quickest way to end up with none—or worse than none, debt. The temptation to spend is everywhere you look, and it’s one of the easiest traps you can fall into. Everything is telling you to buy NOW. Get the newest, hottest, “before anyone else has ’em” clothes, kicks, jewelry, cell phones, whatever. They’ll even try to get you to spend what you DON’T have—open a line of credit with a store today to get 10% off, or here’s a credit card with your name on it since you’ve been pre-approved to spend $5,000.

There’s a reason everyone wants you to spend now and pay later. Don’t be a sucker; when you spend now instead of saving for later, somebody’s making a lot of money off of you. Did you know Americans have accumulated $1.7 trillion in credit card debt?

Okay, so if you can get wise with your Washingtons and steer clear of the spending trap, there’s another big thing to knowing your dough: Make it YOUR dough. We hate to say it, ladies, but as women we are traditionally at a greater risk for becoming financially dependent on others. Why? Way back when, women weren’t allowed to earn money the way we are today. So by doing the unpaid work of childcare and housework, women were often kept out of the money loop when it came to power or a paycheck.

It’s easy to say yes when your honey wants to grab the check for a meal or your parents pay for everything you want. But just remember, always depending on others for money is the best way to lose the freedom to do what you want with your life. Remember the Of Destiny’s Child beat, “Independent Woman”? Beyoncé said it best: “Depend on no one else to give you what you want.” Depend on your friends and loved ones for fun, support, a shoulder to cry on or an ear to listen; just don’t always depend on them for dough.
ACTIVITIES:

NEEDS VS. WANTS

Tell the girls to imagine this:

“Good news. You’ve grown 3 inches since last year and decided to join the school basketball team! You’ve outgrown some of your gear, but practice starts Monday and you’ve got to be ready to play!”

On a chalkboard or poster board, jot down the following items:

- Hottest new bball kicks on display at The Finish Line™
- Your sister’s mesh practice shorts from last year
- A case of sports drinks to bring to practices
- New Tar Heel Blue North Carolina Basketball Shorts
- 5-pack of plain white sport socks from Target
- Last season’s women’s bball shoes on the sale rack
- Refillable sport water bottle
- 3-pack Nike™ No Show Socks

Draw the two columns below, and as a group discuss whether each item should go under “Needs” or “Wants”. Come up with a rough estimated cost (in $) for each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEEDS</th>
<th>WANTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3pk Nike socks - $10

When the girls are satisfied they’re ready for Monday’s practice, add up each of the totals for Needs and Wants.

Discussion questions:

- Why is there such a difference in the cost?
- Would you be more prepared for practice by spending more money?
- What are some ways you could earn money to pay for your needs?
Communication Skills

A very important part of being a good mentor is to listen well. Listening can reduce emotional tension. Nothing makes a person feel more cared about than to be listened to. Most adolescent girls will say that nobody listens to them.

Here are some guidelines to better listening skills:

Be interested and attentive. Maintain eye contact to show (through nodding, body language or a short neutral response like “uh-huh,” “I see,” or “yeah.”) that you really are paying attention.

Encourage talking. Some kids need an invitation to start talking. Kids are more likely to share their ideas and feelings when others think them important.

Avoid dead-end questions. Questions that require a yes or no or right answer lead a conversation to a dead end. Questions that ask kids (How, What) to describe, explain, or share ideas extend the conversation.

Listen patiently. People think faster than they speak. With limited vocabulary and experience in talking, kids often take longer than adults to find the right word. Listen as though you have plenty of time.

Listen to nonverbal messages. Many messages kids send are communicated nonverbally by their tone of voice, their facial expressions, their energy level, their posture, or changes in their behavior patterns. You can often tell more from the way a girl says something than from what is said.

Share your thoughts. Share what you are thinking. Reflect feelings. One of the most important skills good listeners have is the ability to put themselves in the shoes of others or empathize with the speaker by attempting to understand her thoughts and feelings.
Signals for Help

Pre-teen and teenage girls aren’t capable of making many of the decisions they have to make today without adult help. When they need help, they have ways of letting us know. Unfortunately, they often don’t ask for help with words, but sometimes send us messages for help by experimenting with risk-taking behaviors.

Get The Message

These are all signals for help. If you think a girl might be heading for trouble, seek help from a community counselor, a school nurse or a religious leader.

- Is she angry a lot?
- Is she getting in trouble at school?
- Is she very secretive and uncommunicative?
- Has she been involved in fights and disturbances in the community or at school?
- Does she use abusive language to you and others?
- Does she become belligerent when she does not get her own way?
- Does she self-mutilate or cut markings into her skin?
- Has she withdrawn from activities or friends?
- Have there been abrupt changes in her personality and behavior?
- Have her eating habits changed?
- Has she lost or gained more than 10 pounds?
- Has she been overly sleepy?
- Do you think that she has been sexually active?
- Do you suspect her of using drugs or alcohol?
- Is she very quiet and timid?
Helping Girls with Stress

Some girls become overloaded with stress. Girls react in different ways to stress. Some may withdraw, feel anxiety, get aggressive, have physical reactions (headaches, stomach aches), or even turn to poor coping skills, such as drug and/or alcohol use. Some sources of stress for teens might include:

- School demands and frustrations
- Negative thoughts and feelings about themselves
- Changes in their bodies
- Problems with friends
- Unsafe living environment/neighborhood
- Separation or divorce of parents
- Chronic illness or severe problems in the family
- Death of a loved one
- Moving or changing schools
- Taking on too many activities or having too high expectations
- Family financial problems

Girls who learn a “relaxation response” and other stress management skills feel less helpless and have more choices when responding to stress. You can help by encouraging girls to:

- Exercise and eat regularly
- Avoid excess caffeine intake
- Get involved in sports and other pro-social activities
- Not use illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Learn relaxation exercises (slow abdominal breathing)
- Rehearse and practice responses to situations that cause stress
- Decrease negative self-talk. Challenge negative thoughts about themselves with alternative neutral or positive thoughts. “My life will never get better” can be transformed into “I may feel hopeless now, but my life will probably get better if I work at it and get some help.”
- Learn to feel good about doing a competent job rather than demanding perfection from herself and others
- Take a break from stressful situations. Activities like listening to music, talking to a friend, drawing, writing, or spending time with a pet can reduce stress.
- Build a network of friends who help her cope in a positive way

If a girl talks about or shows signs of being overly stressed, ask for help from a qualified mental health professional.
Six Ways to Boost Girls’ Self-Esteem

By Catherine Dee, author of The Girls’ Guide to Life and The Girls’ Book of Success

According to groups such as the Commonwealth Fund and the American Association of University Women (AAUW), girls entering junior high school feel less self-confident than they do in elementary school, and they become less assured with each successive year of school. In contrast, boys become more confident with each passing year.

Parents, teachers, mentors, and other concerned adults can have a significant impact on how girls see themselves.

Here are six concrete things that an adult can do to help a girl:

1. Focus on the person she is instead of her appearance. Girls are harshly judged by other girls, as well as written off by boys, if they don’t fit within the bounds of our society’s narrow definition of beauty. As a result, a girl’s body becomes the focus of her attention and energies. This is borne out by two startling statistics: One out of every 5 girls between the ages of 12 and 19 has an eating disorder, and one-fifth of cosmetic surgery performed in the U.S. is on teens. To help a girl develop a healthier self-image, compliment her for her achievements, thoughts, and actions. Remind her in various ways that she is a smart, valuable person with great ideas and lots of potential.

2. Call her attention to media deception. One reason girls feel so negative about themselves is that they are continuously barraged by picture-perfect images of girls and women in magazines and on television. Teens compare themselves to these images, either consciously or unconsciously, and feel dissatisfied when they inevitably don’t “measure up.” One way to help a girl feel better is to expose unrealistic media images for what they are: retouched, computer-manipulated photos of models—a group that makes up only five percent of the population. As supermodel Cindy Crawford admits, “Even I don’t wake up looking like Cindy Crawford.” Once a girl knows that most people look like the ones she sees in her everyday life, she will likely feel more satisfied with her own looks.

3. Give her a journal. Girls experience many conflicting emotions during their preteen and adolescent years, and expressing their thoughts and feelings by writing in a diary or journal is a proven way for them to boost their self-esteem. According to Mary Pipher, (Reviving Ophelia), “In their writing, [girls] can clarify, conceptualize, and evaluate their experiences....and strengthen their sense of self.” You can simply give a girl a blank book—there are many decorative ones available—or present her with a more structured journal that asks her to answer open-ended questions.

4. Encourage her to share her thoughts and opinions. Studies show that girls are more frequently interrupted than boys. Over the course of many conversations, they also get the message that what they have to say is not necessarily as compelling or valued as what boys have to say. Compounding this subtle conditioning is the fact that boys often feel threatened by smart, outspoken girls. It’s no wonder some girls “go underground” and clam up when they enter their teens. However, adults can help girls move forward on this front by conveying that their thoughts are important and that their unique viewpoints should be shared. If a girl learns to use her voice confidently on a regular basis, and people listen and respect her, she starts charting a course for higher self-esteem.
5. Encourage her to take risks. Individuals develop self-reliance when they’re given the space to solve problems and make mistakes in the process. What happens with girls? Researchers have found that teachers are more likely to intervene and solve problems for girls who are stuck than they are for boys. In addition, girls are rewarded for being good and behaving well, as opposed to being adventurous in their thinking, as boys are. Girls need to be given time and permission to creatively complete what they start. We can praise them for considering new problem-solving options, allow them to make mistakes, and refrain from “rescuing” them.

6. Suggest that she get involved in a sport or physical activity. Research shows that female athletes are more self-reliant and get better grades and higher test scores than girls who don’t participate in sports. Being on a team or playing an individual sport is also a way for a girl to divert some of the energy focused on superficial concerns, such as appearance, toward healthy physical activity and personal achievement. With the right kind of support and encouragement from key adults, girls can potentially avoid many common problems (such as low motivation and underachievement) that are rooted in low self-esteem. Commenting on an accomplishment, making an observation about her skills, or giving her an opportunity to push through frustration and solve a problem on her own can start the ball rolling. In many everyday ways, we can help girls transform the ways they think about themselves so that they begin to think, feel, and act more confident.

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Complete list of sessions available online at www.GoGirlGo.com

*includes material for both age groups: 3rd to 8th grade and high school

**Accepting Difference**
- Self-Harm: Lisa Ervin-Baudo talks Self-Harm, Figure Skating
- Wrestling with Depression: Tina George on Depression, Wrestling
- Got the Blues: Missy Giove on Sadness, Mountain Biking
- The Anger Inside: Sharon Monplaisir on Anger Management, Fencing
- Emotion Commotion: Sarah Will on Managing Emotions, Skiing
- Feeling Blue: Wendy Williams on Depression, Diving

**Family Issues**
- Fumbling Families: Vonetta Flowers on Family Issues, Bobsled
- The Split: Mary Riddell talks Divorce, Skiing
- Fumbling Families: Elissa Steamer on Family Issues, Skateboarding

**Environmentalism**
- Earth Day Every Day: Gretchen Bleiler on Being Green, Snowboarding

**Financial Literacy and Independence**
- Know Your Dough: Tania Satchwell on Financial Independence, Motocross

**Harassment and Abuse**
- Miz-treated: Julie Chu on Abuse, Ice Hockey
- Beating Abuse: Kathy Collins on Abuse, Boxing
- Rosa Talks Harassment, Tennis

**Leadership**
- Leader for Life: Tori Allen on Leadership, Climbing
- Stand Up: Pam Fernandes talks Civic Duty, Cycling
- Doin’ the Right Thing: Natalie Williams on Playing Fair, Basketball

**Self-esteem**
- Feeling Fly: Lisa Fernandez talks Self-esteem, Softball
- Emotion Commotion: Mia Hamm on Self-esteem, Soccer

**Bullies**
- Bully Buster: Lindsay Benko on Bullying, Swimming
- The Buzz: Juli Furtado on Alcohol, Mountain Biking
- The Skinny Struggle: Seilala Sua on Body Image, Track and Field

**Drugs and Alcohol**
- Getting High: Cheri Becerra-Madsen talks Drugs, Track & Field
- Doing Drugs: Barrett Christy on Drug Abuse, Snowboarding
- Alcohol and Drugs: Aimee Mullins on Substance Abuse, Track & Field
- Using Performance Drugs: Tara Nott-Cunningham talks Steroid Use, Weightlifting

**Emotion Commotion**
- “High” School: Mimi Smith Deals with Drugs, Field Hockey

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## Resources

**Women’s Sports Foundation Sports information for women**

**WEB SITES**

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<tr>
<th>URL</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.aauw.org">www.aauw.org</a></td>
<td>Organization that promotes education and equality for women and girls.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.about-teen-depression.com">www.about-teen-depression.com</a></td>
<td>Information about teenage depression.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.adiosbarbie.com">www.adiosbarbie.com</a></td>
<td>A place for social commentary on body issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.afsp.org">www.afsp.org</a></td>
<td>American Foundation for Suicide Prevention</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.ashastd.org">www.ashastd.org</a></td>
<td>American Social Health Association</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.avert.org/ynindx.htm">www.avert.org/ynindx.htm</a></td>
<td>Web site that promotes positive body image for all.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.bodypositive.com">www.bodypositive.com</a></td>
<td>Organization that promotes peaceful coexistence between divorced or separated parents and their combined families.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.bullybeware.com">www.bullybeware.com</a></td>
<td>Information and resources about bully prevention.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.cdc.gov/powerfulbones">www.cdc.gov/powerfulbones</a></td>
<td>Information for girls on building strong bones.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco">www.cdc.gov/tobacco</a></td>
<td>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention information on smoking.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.cfchildren.org/">www.cfchildren.org/</a></td>
<td>Information about violence and bullying prevention and personal safety.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.childrenanddivorce.com">www.childrenanddivorce.com</a></td>
<td>Resource site for parents, kids and professionals addressing divorce-related issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.civicyouth.org">www.civicyouth.org</a></td>
<td>Information and research on civic learning and engagement.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.crf-usa.org">www.crf-usa.org</a></td>
<td>Constitutional Rights Foundation—educating youth to become active and responsible citizens.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.cshcn.org/resources/mentalhealthtoolkit.cfm">www.cshcn.org/resources/mentalhealthtoolkit.cfm</a></td>
<td>A “tool kit” including health information resources focused on anxiety and depression in children and adolescents.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.dosomething.org">www.dosomething.org</a></td>
<td>Organization that encourages teens to speak up and take action on pressing issues.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.drugfreesport.com">www.drugfreesport.com</a></td>
<td>National Center for Drug Free Sport, Inc.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.edap.org">www.edap.org</a></td>
<td>National Eating Disorders Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.endabuse.org">www.endabuse.org</a></td>
<td>Information on preventing violence and protecting victims of violence.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/kids">www.epa.gov/climatechange/kids</a></td>
<td>Global warming information for kids.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~pfi/pdfs/diversity_booklist.pdf">www.fpg.unc.edu/~pfi/pdfs/diversity_booklist.pdf</a></td>
<td>Reading list of books dealing with diversity for children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.girlsinc.org">www.girlsinc.org</a></td>
<td>Organization that inspires girls to be strong, smart and bold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://globalwarmingkids.net">http://globalwarmingkids.net</a></td>
<td>Games, books, videos, etc. to help kids learn about global warming.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.ific.org">www.ific.org</a></td>
<td>Science-based information on health, nutrition and food safety.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.ilitakesateam.org">www.ilitakesateam.org</a></td>
<td>Project to eliminate homophobia in sports.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.iwannaknow.org">www.iwannaknow.org</a></td>
<td>Answers questions about teen sexual health and STDs.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.kickbuttsday.org">www.kickbuttsday.org</a></td>
<td>Campaign to raise awareness about the harm of smoking cigarettes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.kidshealth.org">www.kidshealth.org</a></td>
<td>Wellness information for kids and parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/anger.html">www.kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/anger.html</a></td>
<td>The basics about anger and how to deal with it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/food/sports.html">www.kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/food/sports.html</a></td>
<td>Information on eating for sports.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/question/emotions/deal_with_anger.html">www.kidshealth.org/teen/question/emotions/deal_with_anger.html</a></td>
<td>Tips for teens on how to deal with anger.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.kidsinthemiddle.org/kidspage.htm">www.kidsinthemiddle.org/kidspage.htm</a></td>
<td>Resources for children of divorce.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.lovecourchildrenusa.org/bullying.php">www.lovecourchildrenusa.org/bullying.php</a></td>
<td>Information and advice about bullying and guns at school.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.melpomene.org">www.melpomene.org</a></td>
<td>Information on girls’ and women’s health.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.mirror-mirror.org/selfinj.htm">www.mirror-mirror.org/selfinj.htm</a></td>
<td>Eating disorder Web site with information about self-harm.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.mypyramid.gov/kids">www.mypyramid.gov/kids</a></td>
<td>Information on the food pyramid for kids ages 6-11.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.mami.org">www.mami.org</a></td>
<td>National Alliance on Mental Illness</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.nata.org">www.nata.org</a></td>
<td>National Athletic Trainers Association</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.nationalsave.org">www.nationalsave.org</a></td>
<td>Students Against Violence Everywhere</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/recycle.htm">www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/recycle.htm</a></td>
<td>Information on how to reduce, recycle, reuse.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.nutritionexplorations.org">www.nutritionexplorations.org</a></td>
<td>Information on building a healthy body.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.nwlc.org/display.cfm?section=sexual%20harassment">www.nwlc.org/display.cfm?section=sexual%20harassment</a></td>
<td>Information about sexual harassment in schools, colleges and the workplace</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.nyacyouth.org">www.nyacyouth.org</a></td>
<td>National Youth Advocacy Coalition for lesbian, gay, transgender, and questioning individuals.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.plannedparenthood.org">www.plannedparenthood.org</a></td>
<td>Provider of health information and services.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.rainn.org">www.rainn.org</a></td>
<td>The Rape, Abuse &amp; Incest National Network</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.safetyouth.org">www.safetyouth.org</a></td>
<td>National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.self-esteem-nase.org">www.self-esteem-nase.org</a></td>
<td>National Association for Self-Esteem</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.sleepforkids.org">www.sleepforkids.org</a></td>
<td>Information about dreams and the importance of sleep.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.sleepfoundation.org">www.sleepfoundation.org</a></td>
<td>Nonprofit organization supporting public education, research, and advocacy related to sleep.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.somethingfishy.org">www.somethingfishy.org</a></td>
<td>Information and support for people with eating disorders and their families.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.standupforkids.org">www.standupforkids.org</a></td>
<td>Organization helping homeless and street kids.</td>
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<td><a href="http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov">http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov</a></td>
<td>Kid-focused site about bullies from the Health Resources and Services Administration.</td>
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<td>Website</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.tarwars.org">www.tarwars.org</a></td>
<td>Tobacco-free program for kids from the American Academy of Family Physicians.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.teendepression.org">www.teendepression.org</a></td>
<td>Information for troubled teens and parents of teens.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.teensexuality.org">www.teensexuality.org</a></td>
<td>Sex education and advice to straight, gay, lesbian, and bisexual teens and college students.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.teenshealth.org">www.teenshealth.org</a></td>
<td>Information about puberty and sexual health.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.teenvoices.com">www.teenvoices.com</a></td>
<td>Magazine for young adult women.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.teenwire.com">www.teenwire.com</a></td>
<td>Sexuality and relationship information from Planned Parenthood.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.tobaccofreekids.org">www.tobaccofreekids.org</a></td>
<td>Campaign for tobacco-free kids.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.tolerance.org">www.tolerance.org</a></td>
<td>Information on eliminating bigotry and creating communities that value diversity.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.tpronline.org/">www.tpronline.org/</a></td>
<td>The Prevention Researcher: Journal focusing on adolescent health topics.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.whatsyourantidrug.com">www.whatsyourantidrug.com</a></td>
<td>Alternatives to drugs and alcohol.</td>
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**Hotlines**

- **AIDS National Hotline** 1-800-342-AIDS (2437)
- **Centers for Disease Control** 1-800-342-2437
- **Child Abuse Hotline** 1-800-4-A-CHILD (422-4453)
- **Children of the Night (Runaway Hotline)** 1-800-551-1300
- **Eating Disorders Awareness & Prevention** 1-800-931-2237
- **Focus Adolescent Services** 1-877-FOCUS-AS (362-8727)
- **Help Finding a Therapist** 1-800-THERAPIST (843-7274)
- **Marijuana Anonymous** 1-800-766-6779
- **Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD) Hotline** 1-800-438-MADD (6233)
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline** 1-800-799-7233
- **National Drug Abuse Hotline** 1-800-662-HELP (4357)
- **National Runaway Hotline** 1-800-621-4000
- **National Sexual Assault Hotline** 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)
- **National STD Hotline** 1-800-227-8922
- **National Youth Crisis Hotline** 1-800-448-4663
- **Pregnancy Hotline** 1-800-4-OPTIONS (1-800-467-8466)
- **SAFE-Self Abuse Finally Ends-Alternatives** 1-800-366-8288
- **Suicide & Crisis Hotline** 1-800-999-9999
- **Teen Helpline** 1-800-400-0900
- **TeenLine** 1-800-522-8336
- **National Mental Health Association** 1-800-969-6642
- **National Women’s Health Information** 1-800-994-WOMAN (9662)
- **United Way Crisis Help Line** 1-800-233-4357
- **Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program** 1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433)
- **The Youth Crisis Hotline** 1-800-HIT-HOME (448-4663)
Activity Handouts

The following pages are handouts meant to be copied and given to the girls in your program. These are activities that you can do as part of your program or have the girls do on their own.

On GoGirlWorld.org, in the Gym, the girls can also find a Latin dance video with music and moves to get them moving and having fun!
YOGA for ATHLETES® 20-minute Workout

By Kimberly Fowler, founder of YAS Yoga And Spinning Center located in Venice, Calif.

1. Standing Forward Bend Pose: Stand with your feet hip distance apart with toes pointed forward. Take a deep breath in and then slowly bend forward, hinging from your hips. Now once you are down, if your hamstrings or your lower back is tight, then bend you knees. As your hamstrings start to get more flexible, straighten your legs and then place your hands on the opposite elbows and just hang, trying to relax your neck. No bouncing!

2. Chair Pose: Slowly roll up, one vertebrae at a time, to standing. Once you are up, bring your legs together, feet touching, and then reach up as high as you can, your palms facing each other, shoulders relaxed. (If you want to you can reach up with one hand and then the other, just stretch out the sides of your body). You should feel a nice stretch all along your body. Take a deep breath in, keep your arms in the air, and squat down as if you are just about to sit in a chair. Keep your hips down and your chest up and look between your hands. As you get more flexible, you will be able to sink deeper into this pose. Try to keep your hips back and try to shift most of your weight onto your heels. If that's easy for you, lift your toes to challenge your balance a little.

3. Diamond Pose (advance variation: Hero): Drop down to your knees. (If you have a towel, grab it and put it on the ground). With your knees, legs and feet together, just sit back on your feet. This is a great pose for athletes because it opens your quads, hips, feet and ankles. Sit up straight, rest your hands on your thighs and remember to breathe. Now if this is easy for you, then you can take it to the next level and do Hero’s Pose: keep your knees together but bring your feet wide enough apart to allow your butt to hit the ground. If your butt is not hitting the ground, stay with Diamond pose.

4. Foot to Knee Pose: From Diamond (or Hero’s pose), roll onto your hip and swing your legs out in front of you and shake them out. Keeping your left leg straight, bring your right foot to the inside of your thigh, sit up straight with your arms reaching up and take a deep breath in. As you exhale lean forward from your hips, not from your lower back. Try to reach your foot; if you can’t reach your foot then grab your shin. If you can reach your foot, then try to bring your toes towards you; this will open up the whole back of your leg. Try to keep your back flat and your shoulders squared and make sure your hamstring (back of the leg) is on the ground. Switch legs.

After you stretch each leg, bring both legs out in front of you and shake them out. With your legs together, reach up, take a deep breath in and on your exhale hinge forward. See how deep into this pose you can go; try to grab your toes.
5. Cobbler Pose: Put the soles of your feet together, knees wide apart, bringing your feet close to your body. Sit up straight, take a deep breath in and slowly, on your exhale, bend forward from your hips. Now the great thing about this pose is you are opening up your lower back, your hips and your inner thighs. If your knees are way up in the air, either bring your feet a little further from your body or use your elbows to push your knees down (gently!). If this is fairly easy for you, then walk your hands out in front of you and let your head drop, using the weight of your head to sink you into the pose and stretch you out even more.

6. Reclining Pigeon: From Cobbler, sit up and bring your knees together, then roll down onto your back and hug your knees into your chest. Gently rock from side to side to release your lower back. Bring your feet to the ground with your knees bent, then bring your right foot on top of your left thigh, now grab the back of your right thigh by bringing your left hand through your leg and then pull your thigh towards you. Make sure your neck is relaxed. Now switch sides, your left foot comes on top of your right thigh and pull your thigh towards you. Notice if there was a difference between one side and the other; don't be surprised if there is a big difference.

7. Easy Spinal Twist: Keep your right knee into your chest and let the left leg go straight on the ground. Bring your right knee across your body, trying to keep your shoulder blades on the ground. Look over your right shoulder and try to relax. Switch sides, so your left knee comes in, the right leg goes straight, bring the right knee across your body, this time looking over your left shoulder.

8. Relaxation Pose: Bring your knees together and hug them in nice and tight to release your back one last time. From here take a deep breath in and, on your exhale, let everything go to the ground, lying on your back. Let your feet fall out to either side. Bring your arms alongside, but slightly away from your body, and turn the palms to face upwards. Relax your whole body, including your face. Let your body feel heavy. Take a deep breath in and just let it go. Stay here for a few minutes, so try not to fall asleep.

After 2 minutes, bend your knees slightly and roll onto your right side then push yourself up to a seated cross-leg position. Take one more deep breath in and let it go. Take a few seconds to feel any changes in your body before you “run” off.

Namaste! (Pronounced Na-Ma-Stay, this is commonly said after yoga and means “the light in me honors the light in you.”)
Get Stronger Using Only Your Body!

By Laura Darby McNally, ATC, LAT, CSCS; NATA Secondary School Committee
Courtesy of the National Athletic Trainers’ Association

Safety Workout Tips:

* Stand with your feet hip/shoulder width apart and your toes pointed straight ahead. Slightly bend your knees and keep your hips in line under your shoulders.

* Flex your stomach muscles before beginning the movements. This should feel like you’re pulling your belly button in towards your spine. Do NOT lean back and hyperextend your back!

* Always stare straight ahead so that you don’t hurt your neck

* When extending your legs and arms, keep them slightly bent at all times

Beginners: 10 of each (without stopping) and then work your way up to 20 over a few weeks.

Intermediate and Advanced: 20 repetitions of each exercise, 2 or 3 times. You can also do each exercise for 20 seconds at a time. See how many weeks it takes you to be able to do each exercise for a minute each!

ROUTINE #1

TUCK JUMPS

Start standing tall. Jump up and tuck feet and knees up and return with a soft landing.

PUSHUPS

Start in a plank position on toes and hands.
Lower body slowly toward the ground and return to the top.
Keep the body straight.

MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS

Start in the same position as a pushup. Bring one leg up under the chest and then back. The other leg does the same motion, similar to running with hands on the ground.
Keep the body straight.
BODY SQUATS

Start standing tall. Squat toward the ground until thighs are parallel to the floor and return.

ARM SPINS

Start standing tall. Extend arms out to the side and spin them in small circles, clockwise and then counterclockwise.

BENT-KNEE SIT UP

Start on floor with knees bent. Tighten abdomen and then sit up toward knees and return. Arms can go on the chest or behind the head, but do not pull the head up.

SUPERMANS

Lay flat on your stomach. Lift arms and legs up off the floor at the same time and hold, and then return to the floor.

CHAIR DIPS

Start with hands on a stable chair and with the body straight. Lower the body slowly down and then up to work the back of the arms.
Preparing For Your First 5K Race

By David Csillan, MS, ATC, ATL; NATA Secondary School Committee
Courtesy of the National Athletic Trainers’ Association

1. Set Some Goals!

Your first race time will serve as a goal-setting baseline for future 5K races. Simply crossing the finish line is a true accomplishment! Once you finish, ask yourself: “How do I feel, and did I achieve a personal record?” If you can answer “Yes,” then you have won.

2. Start Training!

What you need: At least 8 weeks to train.
Training key: It’s more important to run a lot, than to do it quickly.
Be sure to: Get your doctor’s approval before you begin your training.

Your Guide:

WEEK 1
Days 1-6, complete 1½ miles per day. Run as much as possible and when you cannot go any more, start walking. Either way, finish 1½ miles per day. Day 7, rest.

WEEKS 2-6
Days 1-6, add ½ mile per day to previous workout (total of 2 miles per day in week 2, 2½ miles per day in week 3, 3 miles per day during week 4, etc.) Continue running as much as possible and when you cannot go any more, start walking. Day 7, rest.

WEEK 7
Days 1-6, complete 4 miles per day. Run as much as possible and when you cannot go any more, start walking. Either way, finish 4 miles per day. Day 7, rest.

WEEK 8
Workout Tapering Week. Days 1-2 run/walk 4 miles. Days 3-4 run/walk 3 miles. Day 5 run/walk 1 mile. Day 6 no exercise. Your body needs to rest for tomorrow’s race. Day 7 run your best at the race!
Stretch and Flex!
Warm up 3-5 minutes before stretching.
1. Stretch for 15-20 minutes.
2. Hold the stretch for 8-10 seconds. Don’t bounce!
3. Do 3-5 sets of stretches for each muscle group.
4. Run immediately after you stretch.
5. Always stretch after your run.

Eat, Drink, and be HEALTHY!
When training, be sure to eat from the four major food groups: meat, breads, fruits and veggies. Your meals should be made up of mostly fruits and veggies with some protein and a little fat.

HYDRATE! HYDRATE! HYDRATE!
Always drink 16 oz (2 cups) of fluid two hours prior to the start of the race or workout and drink 5-10 oz of fluid every 15-20 minutes while running. Following the workout or race, for each pound lost, a runner should consume at least 20 oz of fluid. Some stuff to avoid before and during a race: fruit juice, milk, carbonated and caffeinated drinks, fried, greasy or spicy foods along with some vegetables that may upset your stomach.

What to Wear!
Be comfortable! Dress in loose fitting clothes when it’s warm and in layers when it’s cold. Your running shoes should be the most comfortable thing on your body. If it’s your first time buying a pair, go to a running store where the staff can tell you the type of shoe that would best fit your foot and body type.

Now, you should have all you need to rock that first 5K race. Train hard, eat and drink well, dress the part and run that race! It’s all about finishing. Remember, when you cross that line, it doesn’t matter what place you come in… you still win!
Tips to Get a Girl Active

You’ve heard many of the reasons girls should be active. We know that if a girl does not participate in sports by the age of 10, there is only a 10% likelihood she will be participating at age 25. (Bunker, 1988). Research suggests that physical activity is an effective tool for reducing the symptoms of stress and depression among girls. Sports help girls develop leadership and teamwork skills. Girls who participate in sports have higher self-esteem and pride in themselves.

So how do you get the girls in your life to get on the path to being physically active and reaping all of these rewards? These tips will give you all the information you need to introduce physical activity to a girl and make a critical difference in her life.

I. WHAT IT MEANS TO BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

Physical activity is anything that moves your body and gets your heart pumping. Working out on a regular basis (at least three days a week) will make you strong, increase energy and flexibility and turn you into a physically active person. You don’t have to run a marathon or swim the English Channel to be considered active. Whether you engage in light activity like throwing a Frisbee or more vigorous activity like running, you are still engaging your body in movement, and that’s what matters.

It’s important to also emphasize that being a physically active person means a lot more than the numbers on the scale. Here are some of the other benefits of being active:

- Strength is good for all sports as well as life. Getting stronger means your muscles are more capable of kicking a soccer ball far, lifting and carrying more or jumping higher.
- Stamina means more energy. You can keep going; you can run further, climb more stairs, keep working and playing longer—without feeling winded.
- Flexibility feels more graceful. You feel more elastic, have more bounce in your walk and are able to touch your toes or reach a high shelf.
- Improved self-esteem. This is probably one of the most important benefits for girls. When girls work out, they start to appreciate and respect their bodies for the awesome movement it’s capable of. This in turn will help them to have higher self-esteem than girls who aren’t physically active.
Techniques for introducing physical fitness to a girl will depend on what stage of life she’s in. Here are some tips for different age groups:

**Elementary School—ages 5 through 12.**

Every day, if possible, build to 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Allow for short periods of rest and recovery.

Make those 60 minutes of activity feel effortless. If it feels like a chore or a scheduled nuisance, kids won’t be excited to participate. Examples of fun kids’ activities include what you would consider “party games,” like potato sack races or Red Rover, where kids run from one side to the other and break a chain of people.

Vary the activities. Getting girls this age active is all about fun energy release. Trying more things means finding more activities to like!

**Teens—ages 13-18.**

Every day, if possible, build to 60 minutes of moderate physical activity; and, when it gets easier, add at least three days per week vigorous sessions of 20 minutes or more. (Sallis and Patrick, 1994)

What do we mean by moderate or vigorous activity? Here’s a quick guide:

**Light Activity.** Playing catch, throwing a Frisbee, walking slowly, dancing slowly, horseshoes, ping pong and fishing

**Moderate Activity.** Walking briskly, hiking, leisurely inline skating, bicycling on level terrain, trampoline jumping, weight-training with free weights, dancing, doubles tennis, shooting baskets, recreational swimming, canoeing, skateboarding, surfing, snorkeling, t-ball, horseback riding, volleyball and playground activities

**Vigorous Activity.** Running, energetic aerobics or dancing, swimming continuous laps, bicycling uphill, climbing stairs, jump rope, jumping jacks, fast-paced inline skating, ice hockey, intensely training for competitive sports

Beginners, regardless of age, should start easy and build to regular, moderate activity. Regular means just about every day. Moderate exercise is when you are active enough to increase your heart rate and breathing for an hour. You should be able to talk to someone, but you shouldn’t be able to sing. With more skills and training, regular moderate and vigorous activities should be part of your routine.

**II. CHANGE ATTITUDES ABOUT PHYSICAL FITNESS**

At an early age, young women are programmed to shy away from sports and activity because they are afraid of being perceived as unfeminine or are afraid of failure or being teased. Here are some tips on how to turn those attitudes around:

“**I’m not an athlete.**”

Many inactive girls think that the world of physical activity is black and white: you are either a jock or not. Some girls believe that unless you are going to go all out or if you’re just not a “natural,” there is no use in being active. The label of jock can be perceived as unfeminine or possibly just a clique that they don’t want to belong to. Girls need to be reminded that it’s ok to work up a sweat, get their hearts pumping and challenge their bodies.
What you can do:

Encourage her. Tell her that you don’t have to be a hard-core athlete to get up and move (and follow this advice yourself!). There doesn’t have to be competition involved to be physically active. Also, reinforce that no one is ever born an athlete. Even champions had to start at the beginning and learn how to play their sports.

“I’m afraid of getting teased.”

This is such a vulnerable age, and girls are very sensitive to peer-group influence. “Fitting-in” becomes a primary goal so girls don’t want to try anything new that steps outside of the world they already know and are comfortable in. This is especially true of girls’ participation in sports or even just their school’s PE program. Girls fear that stepping into a game might make them a target of ridicule.

What you can do:

Understand and identify with her fears and talk to her about them. Girls want to fit in and be accepted. Sports can be all about belonging—being part of the group—with team names, uniforms and cheers. Most of us remember how nervous we were about our junior high and high school PE classes. Many of us also have funny stories to tell about embarrassing things that did happen and how we got over them. Ask her what her worst fear is. Maybe she’s nervous about wearing the gym uniform or having to climb ropes in front of her classmates. Once she identifies the worst-case scenario, you can discuss how you would deal with this and take away some of her fears. Or share something that happened to you and let her know it really wasn’t a big deal.

“I don’t know anything about sports.”

Girls may worry that their lack of knowledge about sports or physical fitness will make them look dumb when they attempt to play. They also may not know what sports are available to them. Even if they do know, they might not feel confident or capable enough to be proactive and sign up on their own.

What you can do:

Teach her the skills to be successful. Start to watch different sports together so she can understand the rules and how different games are played. Learn the sports lingo. Go to a local girls’ sporting match so she can see that girls just like her can master the skills needed to play the game. Experiment with different sports until she finds one that comes easily for her. If she has good hand-eye coordination, maybe softball or tennis is her game. In trying different sports, she may be surprised in how great she is at a sport she never thought she could master. You also don’t want to rule out sports just because she may not be the perfect physical match for it. For example, she could be on the shorter side and end up loving basketball.

For other activity suggestions, visit www.GoGirlGo.com/pickasport. There’s an interactive survey you can do together or she can do on her own that allows her to express her interests and preferences and gives suggestions for sport and activities that meet her profile.

Once she has chosen a few activities she’s interested in, call the office of that sport’s national governing body (for example: USA Basketball) to have them give you local program contact information. Many girls’ organizations have sports and physical activities—the YWCA, PAL, community recreation centers, local park and recreation departments, the Girl Scouts, etc. Ask the PE teacher or counselor at school. Look in the local papers, check the Internet at the library or look in the yellow pages of your phone book for specific activities. Check out local hospitals and rehabilitation centers for programs for disabled girls. These programs are usually affordable and some even offer scholarships for some girls.
As you investigate local programs together, consider these general tips in what you should look for in an activity program:

1. **Small group environment.** A group with 15-20 girls and two adult leaders is ideal for girls to learn together and develop a strong sense of belonging (Finn, 2002; Lou, et al, 2001; Ozerk, 2001). Look for programs that have at least one adult leader for every 10 girls to ensure each girl will get individual attention.

2. **Safe and nurturing all-girl environments.** Co-ed physical activity environments are problematic for inactive girls because they contain opposite sex and same sex teasing about the skill level and body of inactive girls and other pressures characteristic of co-ed group dynamics (Women’s Sports Foundation, 2004; Stabiner, 2002). When girls are concentrating on what boys think, a cultural requirement for teen girls, they don’t take care of themselves.

3. **Fun and supportive place.** Does it look like fun? Are the girls all participating? Is it a caring, supportive and positive environment? Are girls allowed to express themselves, participate in decision-making and develop relationships with other girls? (Ewing and Seefeldt, 1989; Women’s Sports Foundation, 1988). The program shouldn’t be about winning and losing. Beginners need a friendly social environment where they will learn skills together in a fun way.

### III. KEEP IT FUN!

Debby Burgard runs a nonprofit organization called The Body Positive based in Berkeley, Calif., that works to help teens and children with body image issues. She believes that fears about embarrassment (that we discussed above) can get in the way of embracing being active. “Most people have negative experiences in junior high PE class or at their gyms that get in the way of them believing they can have fun exercising,” Burgard said.

The best way to combat this is to move in ways your body and personality type enjoy. You may envision yourself as a hard-core athlete, but have a mellow personality more suited to yoga. Overall, it’s important to try to make every encounter that a girl has with activity a positive one. Here are some easy tips on keeping it fun:

1. **Take her to girls’ and women’s sports events.** Introduce her to a heroine! At the very least, she will see that girls who engage in sports and physical activity are applauded and admired. Look in the local papers, high school Web sites and community center bulletin boards.

2. **Take advantage of the seasons.** Each season try a weather-appropriate sport. For example, tackle snowboarding, snowshoeing or skiing in the winter, volleyball and swimming in the summer, softball and track in the spring and soccer, cross-country or basketball in the fall. This will also make certain sports feel routine and natural so that when next year rolls around, the girl equates the fall as soccer season and is anticipating signing up for a league.

3. **Rate the neighborhood!** Pick a different walking route each time. What’s the prettiest house, the best mailbox, the prettiest flowers? Include bouts of power walking (big steps, pumping your arms, going as fast as you can), go from phone pole to phone pole or hydrant to hydrant. And then slow down to laugh, rest and recover.
4. **Vary the environment.** Instead of running around a track or playing soccer on a soccer field, take your activities to the beach or a local park. Or take a local arts festival and take a couple laps around it, checking out the booths and talent. Go to a different park every week. Discover the public walking trails. Hike and explore.

5. **Get the scoop on women athletes.** There are plenty of biographies and films on women sports heroes like Billie Jean King, Mia Hamm and the Williams sisters. Check out the local bookstore or library and read these books together. Then discuss the obstacles these women had to overcome and how they did it. These inspirational stories will also show girls that even the most talented athletes had to start somewhere and learn from the bottom up. Check out the Girls’ Reading List and Girls’ Movie List on www.GoGirlGo.com.

6. **Make a sports scrapbook.** Collect pictures of females doing physical activities. Look for teen and women’s magazines. Make sure she is signed up to be a GoGirlGo! Club member so she gets GoGirl News (it’s free!—just sign up for your girl activation kit at www.pledge.kintera.org!).

7. **Give gifts of sports equipment and apparel.** Look for cool stuff in teen magazines and give her the gift with a copy of the magazine page. Gifts of sports equipment can tell her that you think she can.

8. **Try an activity that you aren’t equipped for.** Take advantage of local sports equipment rental outfits to help equip you for trying a new sport. Rent a canoe, skis, snowboards or bicycles and discover a sport you never tried before.

9. **Mandatory Daily Physical Education.** There is no better guarantee that a girl will be physically active every day than a mandatory daily physical education requirement in her school. School curriculum can be affected by the action of local school boards. Contact your school board and get others to do the same.

**IV. BUDDY UP: THE IMPORTANCE OF TEAMWORK**

The most important thing you can do to inspire a girl is to make everything a team effort. A girl is more likely to be active if her parent, guardian or other key adult in her life is active. Let her see you working out, sweating and making physical activity part of your life. Be a real-life hero as she sees you jogging that extra lap, attempting that 3-point shot, striking that yoga pose. There are a number of ways you can emphasize that you are in this together:

1. **Keep activity logs.** This is a great way to track progress. Have fun picking out a cool diary or journal and then keep track of your physical activity experiences: what you did, for how long and how intense it was. Also record your feelings about what you liked and didn’t like about the experience. This will help to plan and schedule the next activity and help you get to know one another.

2. **Create an activity bracelet.** Charm bracelets, whether they are the traditional ones with charms or the new “Italian” bracelets with tiles are hot right now. Start an activity bracelet that includes balls and activity charms that commemorate the activities you tried and did together.

3. **Take a class together.** Look for a class that interests both of you, like yoga, Pilates or tae kwon do. You can also do it at home by renting or buying a video.

4. **Show her your moves.** Teach her to enjoy the activities that you enjoy now or did as a child. Recruit some rope turners and try double-dutch. Or show her your old dance moves to some retro music. She’ll admire you for having the guts to try something you haven’t enjoyed in years.
V. STICK WITH IT: REINFORCING PARTICIPATION AND INTEREST

Once you have a girl involved with physical activity, it's important to maintain and develop her interests. As most of us know, pre-teens and teens can get easily bored and need some variation and incentive to stay engaged. Plus, it's important that girls develop a lifelong love of being active. Women who were active in sports and recreational activities as girls feel greater confidence in their physical and social selves than those who were sedentary as kids. For more of the benefits of girls playing sports see www.GoGirlGo.com/benefits.

Here are some tips for maintaining the momentum and providing motivation to stick with it:

1. **Track progress.** Ask her to keep a journal, write down what she's doing and how she feels to track her progress. If you're working out together, you should keep one too!

2. **Help her create a plan.** Keep a fitness calendar for each day, week and month to remind her of her commitment to being active. Pick a regular time and place to meet or go to for your activity. Keeping it consistent helps, especially in the beginning.

3. **Don't overdo it or the girl could get completely burnt out.** You want to make sure that you are pacing her and spreading out the physical activity over the week.

4. **Surprise her.** Sneak notes into her lunch or her clothes with words of inspiration or praise. Organize a trip to a WNBA game for her and her friends on a school night.

5. **Write down goals.** What does she want to be able to do? Get her to articulate and write down the sports she wants to tackle and how many push-ups she wants to be able to do. She'll be amazed when she looks back at these goals three months, six months and a year from now and sees how far she's come.

6. **Help her schedule the time to be active.** Turn off the television and the computer. Or be active during commercials—stretch, dance, lift some light weights. Make sure that she's not overbooked or activities can start to feel like chores, rather than fun and rewarding.

7. **Praise and reward.** It is very important to recognize any efforts. A smile, a nod of the head, and kind words are the reinforcement for her to continue. Rewards are great incentives as long as they are fun and reasonable. Try not to make food a reward. Maybe the reward is a movie, sports gear, matching workout shirts, stickers.

8. **www.GoGirlGo.com.** On www.GoGirlGo.com, you will find lots of information and things to do, both for adults and girls. A special section of www.GoGirlGo.com, GoGirl World, is for kids only, with athlete stories, e-mail shout-outs and tons of other fun stuff to keep her motivated to get out and play. Adults can check out all the information on the GoGirlGo! Initiative and girls’ and women's sports and physical activities.
VI. INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?

Check out the books, and resources on our Parents Resource List at www.WomensSportsFoundation.org (click Issues & Action, then Parents & Family)

Visit these Web sites for more information:

www.GoGirlGo.com  www.momsteam.com
www.4girls.gov/fitness  www.naspe.org
www.acefitness.org  www.nays.org
www.fitness.gov  www.sportsparenting.org

Order a free copy of the Parent’s Guide to Girls’ Sports, a guide for parents with information on sports in the family; parent-child-coach relationships; the physical, psychological and social needs of girls at different ages; and the value of sports for girls. This edition of the guide is bilingual, with all of the information in both English and Spanish. Call 1-800-227-3988 or visit the store on www.WomensSportsFoundation.org, where you may also download the guide for free.

ENDNOTES


The Women's Sports Foundation's GoGirlGo! Initiative is a national project with the goal of getting 1 million girls physically active and keeping another 1 million already active girls from dropping out of sports. Women's Sports Foundation research, in addition to numerous other studies, point to physical activity as a fundamental solution to the serious and unique health and social problems faced by young girls today.

This document was compiled by the Women's Sports Foundation with editorial assistance from Doreen Greenberg, Ph.D., and Beatrice Springborn.
For participating in the GoGirlGo! Educational Program, you and the girls in your program are entitled to a membership in the Women’s Sports Foundation!

Membership is free and includes a membership card and pin, and a one-year subscription to the *Women’s Sports Experience*, the Foundation’s quarterly newsletter for adults, or *GoGirl News*, our young athlete quarterly newsletter for the girls.

Online: Register and activate your membership online at www.GoGirlGo.com/signup with code: G3EPMDCM. Offline: Tear out and complete this registration form if anyone in your group doesn’t have access to the Internet. Return to: Women’s Sports Foundation, Eisenhower Park, 1899 Hempstead Turnpike, Suite 400, East Meadow, NY 11554.

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