



Children'sSM
Healthcare of Atlanta



STRONG⁴LIFESM

Activity Guide and Talking Points

Drink More Water and Limit Sugary Drinks

Talking Points

Your body, like every other living thing, needs water to stay strong:

- Staying hydrated with water helps you perform your best at school, during sports, and your other favorite activities.
- Every cell and organ in your body needs water to do its job.
- Your body needs water for healthy-looking skin and hair.
- Drinking water throughout the day helps you read your body's signals when it's telling you it's hungry, thirsty or full.
- When you don't get enough water, you can feel tired and have a headache.

Fun Fact: You are what you drink—a healthy body is about 60 percent water, so drink up!

Tips for drinking more water:

- Keep a refillable water bottle with you wherever you go.
- Make water fun by adding fruit, like lemon slices or berries; or herbs, like fresh mint.
- Hydrate with water before, during and after physical activity to perform at your best.

What other drinks are good for my body?

- Plain low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) milk is also a healthy choice.
- Milk has calcium and vitamin D to keep your bones and teeth strong.
- Have three cups of milk or other dairy products each day.

Limit sugary drinks:

- Soda, sweet tea, sports drinks, energy drinks, fruit drinks, smoothies and juices are all sugary drinks.
- Juice has as much sugar as other sugary drinks. Whole fruit is a better choice.
- Diet drinks and sugar-free powders contain things your body doesn't need, like artificial sweeteners, colorings, or other additives.
- Energy drinks contain unsafe amounts of caffeine and other ingredients that can harm your body.
- Sugary and diet drinks replace the water and low-fat milk your growing body needs to stay strong, active and healthy.

Fun Quiz: How much is enough? There's no set amount everyone needs each day. Drink water with meals and snacks. If you feel thirsty in between, your body is asking for water, and you should drink some. When you are active and when it's hot outside, you need more water.



Activities

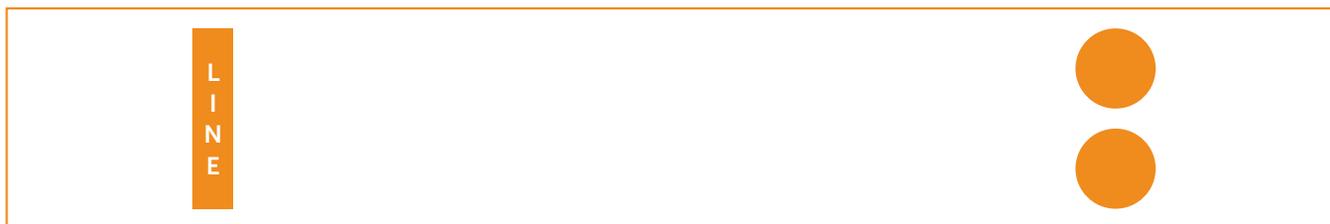
Strong4Life Water Relay

MATERIALS:

- 2 empty water bottles
- Variety of empty sugary drink bottles (soda, sports drinks, fruit drinks, sweet tea, etc.)
- 2 large bins
- Open space
- Empty soda bottle filled with 16 teaspoons of sugar
- Water Warrior poster

TIME: About 10-15 minutes

SET UP:



1. Set the play space up like a relay. Use a line, cones or another marker to designate the “start.”
2. Fill two bins with empty sugary drink bottles. Hide one water bottle in each bin. Make sure the path between the start line and bins is clear.

DISCUSSION:

Every living thing needs water—people, animals and plants. **Can anyone guess how much of our bodies are made up of water?** 60 percent, or more than one-half, of our bodies is water! When we are active and it is hot outside, our bodies need even more water. We should get in the habit of drinking water with meals, snacks and throughout the day.

Sodas, sports drinks, fruit drinks and juice have water, but they also have a lot of sugar and other ingredients. **Can anyone guess how much sugar is in a 20-oz. bottle of soda?** (*Hold up the empty bottle filled with sugar.*) One 20-oz. soda has about 16 teaspoons of sugar. Water keeps us better hydrated and is better for our bodies than sugary drinks, like sodas, sports drinks, fruit drinks or juice.

ACTIVITY:

1. Divide the kids into two or more equal groups. Have them form two lines on one end of the play space.
2. Assign one staff member or volunteer to each bin.
3. Say *"Let's practice choosing water instead of sugary drinks by playing a fun game. Each person will take a turn running down to the other end and searching through the bin to find the water bottle. Once you find the water bottle, hand it to the staff member and run back to your team. The staff member will hide it back in the bin while you are running. As you cross the line, tag the next person on your team so they may begin the relay."*
4. When the groups are ready, count down from three and say "Go!"

VARIATIONS:

- #1: Kids can skip, gallop, hop on one foot or do other movements to get to the bins and back.
- #2: Fill two large pillow cases with an equal number of water bottles and sugary drink bottles. Have a staff member hold onto each sack. Kids run down the path, reach into the sack without looking, and grab a bottle. If they grabbed water, they get to run back. If they grabbed a sugary drink, they have to walk, tiptoe, or crab-walk back (something that moves slow!). Explain that sugary drinks "slow us down," while water keeps us moving fast.

WRAP UP:

There may be a lot of sugary drinks at school, at restaurants or even at home. Just like during the relay, we need to look past the sugary drinks and choose water.

How many of you have had water at a restaurant with a lemon slice? You can add flavor to your water naturally using fresh or frozen sliced fruit like lemons, oranges, berries or watermelon; herbs like mint or basil; or even sliced cucumbers!

Who's ready for a water break?

Sugary Drink Demonstration

MATERIALS:

- 20-ounce bottles of fruit punch, soda, sweet tea, juice, sports drinks, water
- 12-ounce can of regular soda
- 30 pounds or 76 cups of sugar
- 3 large clear tubs
- Beverage dispenser filled with water flavored with fresh fruits, veggies and/or herbs (try mixed berries; lemon slices with basil; cucumber with mint; or more recipes at Strong4Life.com)
- Cups (one per participant)

TIME: About 10-15 minutes

SET UP:

- Stack three large tubs filled with 30 pounds of sugar with a can of soda on top.
- Place bottled drinks on the table in a random order.
- Set up beverage dispenser with cups.

Beverage	Teaspoons of Sugar
WATER	0
SPORTS DRINK	9
SWEET TEA	14
JUICE	16
SODA	16
FRUIT PUNCH	18

Sugary Drink Demonstration (cont'd)

ACTIVITY:

First, use the talking points for Drink More Water and Limit Sugary drinks. Tell the audience you are going to do demonstrations which show the amount of sugar in common beverages.

1. Least-to-greatest amount of sugar.

- Ask for one volunteer.
- Instruct the volunteer that he or she has one minute to organize the drinks in order from least amount of sugar to greatest amount of sugar in the drink bottles.
- Time the volunteer for one minute.
- After one minute, review the order of the drinks with the audience.
- Help the volunteer make any changes to line the drinks up in the correct order and share the amount of sugar in each drink with the group: water (0 tsp.), sports drink (9 tsp.), sweet tea (14 tsp.), juice (16 tsp.), soda (16 tsp.), fruit punch (18 tsp.).
- Congratulate the volunteer.

2. Sugar consumed in one year if you drink a 12-ounce can of soda each day.

- Ask for one volunteer.
- Instruct the volunteer that he or she has one minute to guess the amount of sugar they would consume in one year if they had a 12-ounce soda each day.
- Time the volunteer for one minute.
- After one minute, ask the volunteer to make a final guess.
- Show the group the three large tubs of sugar; this is equal to 30 pounds or 76 cups of sugar.
- Congratulate the volunteer.

3. Flavor your water, naturally.

- Encourage the group to replace sugary drinks with water.
- Explain that they can add flavor to their water naturally using fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs.
- Tell the group which type of flavored water you have made today.
- Invite participants to try naturally flavored water.

Water Bar

MATERIALS:

- Hand sanitizer or wipes
- Large plastic cups (one per person and at least one for demonstration)
- Plastic spoons or strong straws for crushing fruit in cup (one per person and one for demonstration)
- Cold drinking water (to add after water bar ingredients)
- Bowls or containers to set up veggies and fruits
- Tongs or spoons for each bowl of veggies and fruits
- Cut veggies and fruit for water bar (3-4 pieces for each person). Suggestions: *lemon slices, lime slices, pineapple chunks, cucumber slices, strawberry slices and other types of berries*

TIME: About 10 minutes

SET UP:

- Cut slices of veggies and fruits and separate into bowls; place bowls on a table.
- Place cups, containers with water, spoons/straws, hand sanitizer and tongs/spoons on table.

ACTIVITY:

- First, use the talking points for Drink More Water and Limit Sugary Drinks.
- Tell the audience that they are going to each get to try water in a fun way.
- Show the group how to lightly twist or crush the fruits in the bottom of a cup to give water more flavor.
- Give examples of flavors to try, such as lemon-lime, strawberry-pineapple, strawberry-lemon or lemon-cucumber.
- Ask participants to use hand sanitizer before making their flavored water.
- Encourage participants to make their own flavors.
- Tell the group if they wait a few minutes before drinking the water, the flavors will have more time to infuse or become stronger.

Make Half Your Plate Veggies & Fruits

Talking Points

Veggies and fruits are packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients to keep your body strong.

- Veggies and fruits provide long-lasting energy so you can perform your best at school, during sports, and your other favorite activities.
- Veggies and fruits keep your immune system strong so you're less likely to get sick.
- The nutrients in veggies and fruits keep your hair and skin healthy.
- Your organs and muscles, especially your heart, need veggies and fruits to do their jobs.



Fun Fact: Different colored veggies and fruits help your body in different ways. For example, blue are good for your memory, orange are good for your eyes, and many more! Choose a variety of colors to get all the benefits veggies and fruits have to offer.

Tips for eating more:

- At breakfast top cereal, oatmeal or waffles with sliced bananas or berries.
- Dip bell peppers, cucumber, or cherry tomatoes in hummus for a tasty snack.
- Order veggie and fruit side dishes when eating at restaurants.
- Grab an apple or baby carrots for a quick and easy snack on-the-go.
- Encourage your group or club leader, coach, concession stand, camp counselor and others to serve more veggies and fruits at snacks, meals and events.

What other foods keep my body strong?

- Creating a balanced plate helps make sure your body gets the nutrition it needs to succeed:
 1. Make half your plate veggies and fruits.
 2. Fill the other half with whole grains (like whole wheat bread or pasta, or brown rice) and lean proteins (like beans, skinless poultry and eggs).
 3. Add a glass of water or low-fat milk to drink.

Fun Quiz: How many veggies and fruits can you name? There are hundreds of types to pick from, so try something new each week!

Activities

Balanced Plate

MATERIALS:

- [Balanced Plate place mats \(one per child\)](#)
- Construction paper, scissors, glue
- Variety of crayons, markers, colored pencils, etc.
- Balanced Plate poster
- Balanced Plate handout
- Optional: laminator or contact paper

TIME: About 30 minutes

SET UP:

1. Make a copy of the place mat and handout for each child.
2. Set out construction paper, glue, markers, etc. on each table for sharing.

DISCUSSION:

Our bodies need foods from all food groups to be healthy. **Can anyone name the five food groups?** (*Vegetables, fruits, grains, protein and dairy*) The balanced plate shows us how to build a healthy meal. (Show Balanced Plate poster.) We should fill half our plate with veggies and fruits. Have the group make a circle with their arms in the air, imagining these are their plates. "Karate-chop" the imaginary plate in half, making a "swoosh" sound. Now do this motion again and as they circle their arms, say "make half your plate," and as they karate-chop, say "veggies and fruits." Continue this chant a few times as a group.

Did anyone eat a vegetable or fruit today for breakfast/lunch? That's great! **What are some of your favorite veggies and fruits?** There are hundreds of veggies and fruits to pick from, and we should try to eat a variety each day.

Grains and protein foods make up the other half of our plates. **What are some foods in the grains group?** (*Bread, tortillas, cereal, oatmeal, rice, pasta and crackers*) Whole grains, like whole wheat bread, are good for us because they provide long-lasting energy. **What are some foods in the protein group?** (*Beef, pork, chicken, turkey, seafood, eggs, beans, nuts, seeds and soy foods*) Protein foods give us protein, which helps us build muscles and grow properly. **What are some dairy foods?** (*Milk, cheese, yogurt*) Dairy foods help keep our bones strong.

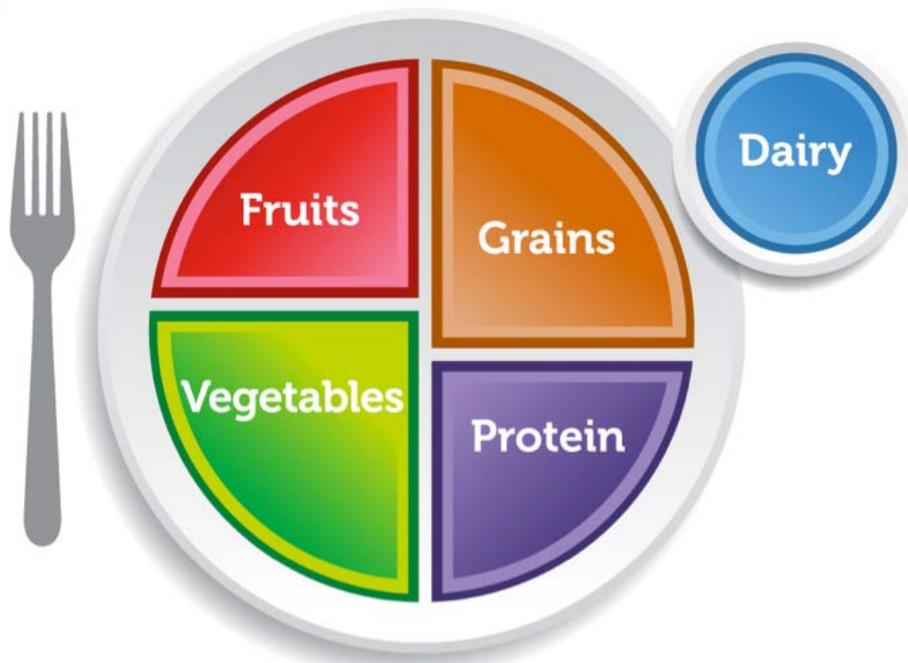
ACTIVITY:

1. Pass out a place mat and Balanced Plate handout for each child.
2. Say “Now we are going to make our own balanced plates. Use your handout to choose a food you like from each food group. Draw each food on your place mat, or draw foods on the construction paper, cut them out with scissors and glue them to your place mat. Remember to make half your plate veggies and fruits!”
3. Walk around and help kids as needed, encouraging them to make half their plate veggies and fruits.

WRAP UP:

The balanced plate shows us how to build a healthy meal. (Review poster.) A balanced plate has half the plate filled with veggies and fruits. **What makes up the other half of the plate?** (Grains and proteins) **What type of grain is healthier because it gives us long-lasting energy?** (Whole grains, such as those in whole-wheat bread, brown rice, whole grain pasta and oatmeal) **What does protein food do for our bodies?** (Helps build strong muscles and helps us grow properly) **What should we drink with our balanced plate?** (Water or low-fat milk) **Low-fat milk is a dairy food—what do dairy foods do for our bodies?** (Help keep our bones strong) Remember to follow the balanced plate to stay healthy and strong.

Does anyone want to share their art with the group?



Choose **MyPlate**.gov

Veggies and Fruits Challenge

MATERIALS:

- 2 large sheets of white paper or large white boards
- 2 packs of markers (variety of colors)

TIME: About 10-15 minutes

ACTIVITY:

- First, use the talking points for Make Half Your Plate Veggies and Fruits.
- Tell the group they are going to have a “minute to win it” type challenge with veggies and fruits.
- Ask for two volunteers to be team leaders.
- Divide the remaining group into Team 1 and Team 2 (one volunteer for each group).
- Instruct the teams to shout out as many vegetables and fruits as they can think of to their team leader in one minute.
- The team leader will be drawing what their team is shouting to them as fast as she can.
- The vegetables and fruits should be drawn in colors that represent the actual food.
- The team who gets the most drawn will be the winner.
- Allow both team leaders to show their pictures and name all the veggies and fruits they were able to draw.
- Congratulate the volunteers.

WRAP UP:

ENCOURAGE THE GROUP TO TRY A NEW FRUIT OR VEGETABLE THEY SEE ON THE DRAWINGS. FOCUS ON MAKING HALF YOUR PLATE VEGGIES AND FRUITS OF ALL COLORS AND VARIETIES.

Limit Screen Time

Talking Points

Too much time spent on a screen means not enough time spent doing other important things.

- Screen time includes time spent watching TV, playing video games, using a computer or cell phone, or any other screen.
- Spending too much time on a screen means you have less time to sleep, be active, and discover new hobbies.
- Seeing lots of TV and internet ads for junk food and sugary drinks make it harder to make smart eating choices.
- Kids who spend too much time on screens are more likely to feel anxious or depressed.



Fun Fact: Replacing just one hour of screen time every day adds up to 15 days of extra time each year. That's a lot of time to get extra sleep, play outside, or learn a new hobby!

Tips for limiting screen time:

- Keep screens, including the TV and cell phone, out of your bedroom. Turn off all screens at least 30 minutes before bed.
- Turn off the TV and other screens during meals and snacks. Instead, talk to your family or friends.
- Challenge your family to come up with other ways to spend time together, like taking a walk, playing a board game, or planning a fun weekend outing.
- Encourage your group or club leaders, camp counselors and others to replace screen time with other fun activities.

What can I do instead?

- Go to bed earlier. If it's hard to get up in the morning, you aren't getting enough sleep!
- Be active. Old-school activities like tag, hide and seek, capture the flag, hula hoop, hopscotch and jump rope are still fun at any age!
- Discover a new hobby, like drawing, painting, photography, playing a musical instrument, cooking, woodworking...develop your creativity!
- Get a jump on school work and study; or help out at home by cleaning your room, giving the dog a bath or doing the dishes.

Fun Quiz: How much is too much? Outside of time spent on screens in school and doing homework, aim to limit your extra screen time to one hour every day.

Activities

Turn Off the TV Tag

MATERIALS: Open play space with marked boundaries

TIME: 10-30 minutes

SET UP: Mark boundaries of play space

DISCUSSION:

We all use screens sometimes—whether it's watching your favorite show on TV, doing your homework on the computer, or using your phone to talk to or text your friends. It is important that we balance our screen time with other types of activities. When we limit our screen time, we have time to be physically active, read books, play board games and do other fun things.

ACTIVITY:

1. Say "today we are going to play a special version of freeze tag to help us remember to limit our screen time. When I say 'Go,' everyone gets to run around. If you are tagged by one of the kids who are "it," you need to freeze in a chair, sit with your arm out holding the remote control. You must stay in this position until one of your friends comes by and pushes your arm down and you drop the pretend remote out of your hand."
2. Review a proper chair sit: Stand with your feet hip-distance apart with toes, knees and hips facing forward. Slowly lower the body as if you are sitting down on a chair. Make sure you sit back far enough so that your knees do not go past your toes. Put one or both arms out in front, as if holding a remote. Demonstrate for the group, and have them practice with you.
3. Randomly select two participants to be "it." Never allow participants to be chosen as "it" for an activity based on their ability.
4. Emphasize "safe tagging" (a light touch on the shoulder); unsafe tagging includes hard contact that might cause the person being tagged to fall down.
5. Yell "Go," and let the game begin! Play as long as the kids are interested, or as time allows.

VARIATION:

Kids can be instructed to skip, gallop, hop on one foot or do other active movements instead of run.

WRAP UP:

It is important to limit our screen time each day so we have time for other activities. Just like in our game of tag, sometimes we need to help each other put down the screen to have some fun. Encourage your parents, siblings and friends to have some screen-free time with you. **What are some things you like to do with your parents, siblings or friends that do not require a screen?**



Screen Time Challenge

MATERIALS:

- Small goal/net or large paper with a circle cut out of the center
- 10 small Ping-Pong or wiffle balls

TIME: About 10-15 minutes

SET UP:

- Set up the goal/net.
- Mark a line the volunteer will stand behind when throwing into the goal (about 15 feet away).

ACTIVITY:

- First, use the talking points for Limit Screen Time.
- Ask for one volunteer.
- Explain to the group that the volunteer will play a “minute to win it” type challenge.
- Tell the group that the goal/net represents screens. Review what screens are: TV, computer, cell phone and video games.
- Tell the group the balls represent physical activities. Review physical activity examples, such as riding a bike, going for a walk, recess or dancing.
- Explain to the volunteer that he or she will have one minute to see how many activities (balls) he or she can get into the screen (goal).
- Time the volunteer for one minute.
- Have the group help count how many goals the volunteer makes by counting aloud.
- Congratulate the volunteer.

WRAP UP:

ENCOURAGE THE GROUP TO LIMIT SCREEN TIME BY BALANCING IT WITH THEIR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TIME. FOCUS ON LIMITING SCREEN TIME TO ONE HOUR EACH DAY.

Be Active

Talking Points

Physical activity is good for your body, mind and overall well-being.

- Being active makes you feel energized, focused, and alert so you can do your best at school, sports, and your other favorite activities.
- Kids who are active get a better night's sleep, and feel better when they wake up.
- Physical activity boosts your fitness level, strength and endurance so you can compete at your highest level.
- Being active helps you feel happier, more confident and less stressed.



Fun Fact: Being active keeps your body strong now, but also in the future. Make it a habit to be active every day so your future self is healthy too!

Tips for Being More Active:

- Have fun! Do activities that you like. Dancing, swimming, walking on park trails, playing tag and other games are great ways to be active.
- Break it up. You might not be able to be active for 60 minutes in a row, so try shooting hoops for 20 minutes before school, riding your bike for 20 minutes after school, and taking a 20-minute walk with your family after dinner.
- Buddy up. Invite your friend, sibling or parent to be active with you. You will have more fun!
- Encourage your teachers, group or club leaders, camp counselors and others to add activity breaks into your class, meeting or event. Activity breaks could include standing, taking a minute to stretch, walking around the room or jogging in place.

Fun Quiz: How much is enough? Any amount of physical activity is good for your body. To be at your best, kids ages five to 18 should try for at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day, while younger kids need even more.

Activities

Dance, Dance!

MATERIALS: Music, music player and speakers

TIME: About 30 minutes

SET UP: Set up the music player.

DISCUSSION:

Dancing is a great way to be active—you can dance indoors or outdoors, alone or with a large group of people and with any type of music. No one is a bad dancer. Everyone dances differently, which is what makes it fun.

ACTIVITY:

1. Teach the group a line dance, like the **Cupid Shuffle**.
2. Break kids into groups of four to five.
3. Say “Now you are going to make up your own dance routine. Each group will work together to make a one-minute dance routine, then we will perform them for the group.”
4. Walk around and help participants with their dance routines.

VARIATIONS:

- For younger kids, play freeze dance. When the music plays, the group dances. When the music stops, the kids must freeze until the music starts again. Play until kids lose interest, or as long as time allows.
- If kids are having trouble making a dance routine, ask each group member to show the group one dance move (the twist, a spin, or moves like “the shopping cart”). Have the group members make up a dance routine that connects all of their moves.

WRAP UP:

Who had fun dancing? Do you think you could dance at home as a way to be active? Dancing is just one way to be active. What are some other ways you can be active for 60 minutes every day?

CUPID SHUFFLE DANCE STEPS

- Take four side steps to the right
- Take four side steps to the left
- Kick your right foot forward (heel to the ground)
- Kick your left foot forward (heel to the ground)
- Kick your right foot forward (heel to the ground)
- Kick your left foot forward (heel to the ground)
- Step in a circle for 8 steps
- Repeat
- Repeat and mix it up (add a spin, add arms, whatever you like!)

Mission to Mars

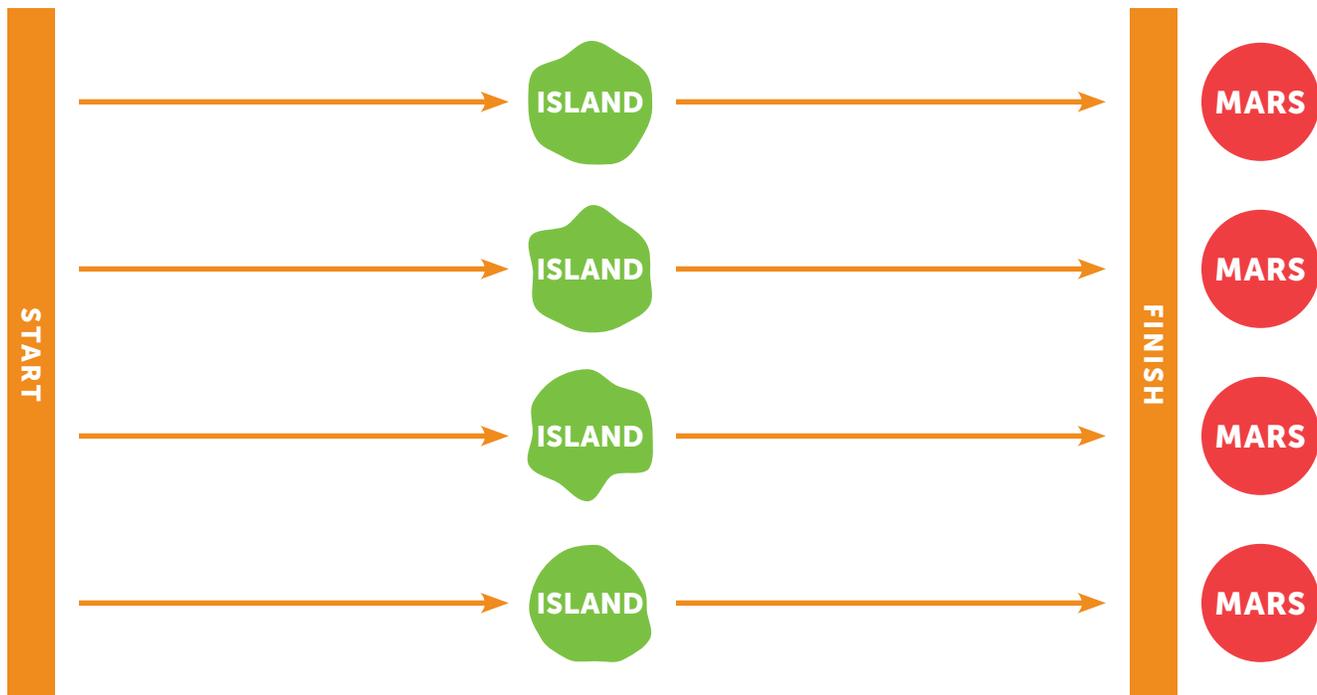
MATERIALS:

- Ball (one per team)
- Jump rope or long rope (one per team)
- Hula hoop or pool noodle (one per team)
- Gym scooter or small skateboard (one per team) — if you don't have a gym scooter or skateboard, you can substitute four to five poly spots (rubber circles) per group
- Pool kickboard or carpet square or cardboard square (one per team)
- Large play space

TIME: 10-30 minutes

SET UP:

1. Gather one set of equipment for each team.
2. Clearly mark the start line, the finish line ("Mars"), and a small island halfway in between.



DISCUSSION:

Can anyone remember the Strong4Life four Healthy Habits? (*Make half your plate veggies and fruits, drink more water and limit sugary drinks, be active, limit screen time*) If our family and friends follow Healthy Habits, it's easier for us to follow them too. When we work as a team, it is easier to accomplish our goals.

ACTIVITY:

1. Form four to five teams. All teams must have the same number of people.
2. Say, "Today we are going to do a fun activity called Mission to Mars. The object of the activity is to get your entire team to the finish line—Mars. You can use the equipment, but you cannot touch the ground because it is full of hot lava! If a team member touches the ground, the entire team is sent back to the start. You will need to work together as a team—you need to get each member of your team to Mars, so don't leave anyone behind! The first team to get to Mars wins the challenge."

VARIATIONS:

- For older kids, you can add challenges during the activity. For example, you can add a blindfold for one team member, make certain team members lose their voice, or require one team member to "lose" a leg or arm (identified by tying a bandana around it), or fuse a teammates' ankles together. You can use these challenges to limit more outspoken kids, forcing others to step up and participate more.
- You can also add barriers, like a cardboard box, that they have to go around (or over). During the wrap up, you can talk to the kids about how we sometimes encounter barriers to our goals, but with a good team, we can overcome our barriers.

WRAP UP:

Just like our Mission to Mars, we need to work together as a team to make healthy choices. Your family and friends can help you follow Healthy Habits, and YOU can help them too.

Does anyone know which Healthy Habit they want to work on? Think about who can help you practice that Healthy Habit. Maybe your mom can help you drink more water by bringing a water bottle when she picks you up from camp or school. Maybe you can help your friend be more active by suggesting active games when you are spending time together. **Do you have any ideas about how someone can join your "team" and help you follow Healthy Habits?**