Lesson Eight  
Influences on Nutrition and Physical Activity

Objectives

After participating in this lesson students will

- Identify positive and negative influences in their lives.
- Identify positive and negative influences on nutrition and physical activity.
- Identify ways they can overcome negative influences in their lives.

Time

50 minutes          Prep Time: 20 minutes

Activities

8.1 Review and Plan for the Day       3 minutes
8.2 What Influences You?     15 minutes
8.3 Influences                        10 minutes
8.4 Goals/Influences/Ways to Overcome  18 minutes
8.5 Closure                          4 minutes

Key Terms

- Influences

Materials

- 4 pieces of chart paper labeled Media, Society, Family, Friends
- Influences poster (“What Helps” and “What Doesn’t Help”)
- Influence Cards (Activity Sheet 8.3)
- Goals/Influences/Ways to Overcome (Activity Sheet 8.4)
- Index cards

Teacher Preparation

- Write Plan for the Day and Objectives on chart paper or board.
- Make 4 posters labeled Media, Society, Family and Friends, with columns “What Helps” and “What Doesn’t Help” written underneath each title.
- Make poster with Influences written at top with columns, “What Helps” and “What Doesn’t Help” written underneath.
- Make 1 copy and cut apart Influences Cards (Activity Sheet 8.3).
- Make copies of Goals/Influences/Ways to Overcome (Activity Sheet 8.4), 1 per student, and place in portfolios.
8.1 Review and Plan for the Day          3 minutes

Materials: Plan for the Day and Objectives

Write the Plan for the Day and Objectives on the board before class, listing all of the activities students will be doing.

Plan for the Day:
• What Influences You?
• Influences
• Goals/Influences/Ways to Overcome
• Closure

Review briefly what students have been learning in this class thus far.

• Explain that the previous lessons have given them information about the foundations of healthy eating and physical activity. Then they came up with goals based on what they had learned.

• Tell students that today they will be learning about influences, specifically what influences are whether they help us or not. The lesson will end with learning about ways to overcome negative influences.

Review the Objectives with students.

8.2 What Influences You?           15 minutes

Materials: 4 pieces of chart paper labeled Family, Friends, Media, Society; markers for each student; chart paper or access to dry erase/chalkboard

Explain that the next few lessons are going to be about influences (the action or process of producing effects on the actions, behavior, opinions, etc., of another or others) and making choices in what they eat and how they exercise.

• Open with asking the question, “What are things that influence you? What are the factors or people in your life that have some effect on your actions or choices?” Ask students to give examples and write these on chart paper or the board.

Some examples:

| Family | Friends | Media | Society |

• Explain that sometimes these things influence us in a way that is beneficial to our well-being and other times in a way that is not helpful, particularly when we are working toward a goal.

• Direct students’ attention to the 4 pieces of chart paper around the room, with the words Family, Friends, Media and Society written on them. On each poster are two columns, one labeled “What Helps” and the other labeled “What Doesn’t Help.”
Explain that you would like them to think about how these four influences help or
don’t help them with the choices they have in their lives. Give an example: “Having
a friend who likes to go running with me” could go on the Friends chart under What Helps.

- Explain that you would like each of them to write examples on two of the pieces of
chart paper. They can come up with examples from their own lives or they can make
up an example. Pass out markers to each student and give them 5 minutes to write 2
examples.

- Have a couple of students volunteer to read one of their examples and explain why
they put it there. If no one volunteers, pick an example that you like.

- Tell students that now they are going to look at influences around Healthy Eating and
Physical Activity.

## 8.3 Influences  10 minutes

**Materials:** Influences poster, Influences Cards (Activity Sheet 8.3), tape

Explain that you have a list of influences and you would like them to decide whether these
are influences that help or don’t help in supporting healthy eating and getting enough
physical activity.

- Hand out a few Influences Cards to each student. (See list below.)

- Give them a chance to look at the cards, then tell them to place each influence on the
Influences poster under the appropriate column, “What Helps” or “What Doesn’t Help.”

- Once all of the influences are posted, ask students if they have any other influences,
positive or negative, that they want to put on the poster. Discuss with students why
they placed the influences where they did.

Examples of influences: (You may add others that pertain to your group.)

Positive:
- A friend who exercises with me.
- P.E. class
- Parents/guardians cook healthy meals.
- Like the taste of vegetables.
- Good organic food section in grocery store.
- Know that I will feel good after I exercise.
- Parents/guardians drive me to basketball court.
- Skateboard park right next to school.
- Health food store close to my home.

Negative:
- Convenience of fast food.
- Don’t have proper clothing.
- Don’t live close to a gym.
- Lazy.
- Crave sweets
- Hurts my body when I run.
- Media makes junk food look appealing.
- Too tired to prepare a good meal at home.

(Note: The lists above are categorized positive or negative. However, students may place
one of the influences in a different column or in the middle. This provides for good
discussion around how we all perceive influences.)
8.4 Goals/Influences/Ways to Overcome 18 minutes

Materials: Goals/Influences/Ways to Overcome (Activity Sheet 8.4), Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Goals (Activity Sheet 7.3), notebook paper

Explain that students will now be looking at the goals they created during the last class session and see what may influence achieving those goals. Have students find their Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Goals activity sheet in their student portfolios.

- Give students an opportunity to look over their goals and then direct their attention to the Goals/Influences/Ways to Overcome activity sheet in their portfolios. *(Note: For this activity to be successful, it’s imperative that students write goals before this class. See Lesson Seven.)*

- Tell students you would like them to write both their goals down on the new activity sheet under the section titled “Goals.”

- Once students have written their goals, direct their attention to the next part of the activity sheet: “Influences.”

- Explain that, just as earlier they were writing down influences that help or don’t help in their life, they should now think specifically about their Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Goals and the influences that help or don’t help in keeping those goals.

- Have students write down those influences under the appropriate column. Have them reference the Influences poster from the previous activity if they are having a difficult time coming up with influences around nutrition and physical activity.

- Have students share one of their goals and an influence that helps or doesn’t help.

Tell the students that they will now be looking at ways to overcome the influences that don’t help them in achieving their goals.

- Write across the top of the board or chart paper some of the negative influences students have shared.

- Tell students you’d like them to write the same influences across the top of a piece of notebook paper.

- Give some examples of ways to overcome negative influences. For example, if one of the influences is laziness, write down “Call a friend to exercise with you.”

- Have students work individually or in pairs to come up with some ways that they can overcome these negative influences. Then have them apply these strategies to the specific negative influences on their goal.

- Have students write down a couple of ways to overcome the negative influences on their Goals/Influences/Ways to Overcome activity sheet.
Explain that in our lives we are constantly being influenced by external factors, such as ones they noticed today, and internal influences that we impose on ourselves (for example, being aware of our internal influences and what they are saying; the importance of using positive self-talk; using visualization; viewing yourself as an active, healthy person, etc.). Often we make choices in our lives based on these influences. (Give an example from the lesson such as being influenced by a friend who likes to go running.) In the next class, they will talk more about choices that are based on these influences.

**8.5 Closure**

**Materials:** Index cards

Ask students to choose one positive example from the **Influences Cards** that they have in their lives at this time, or that they want to create in their lives. Have them write this positive influence on an index card to tape into the front of their portfolio (or take home) to remind them whenever they see it. Ask students to share what they have chosen.

**Resources**

- *HealthSmart High School Nutrition & Physical Activity*, Lesson 3, Activity 1:
  - Influences on My Diet and Physical Activity Worksheet
- Activity 8.4 Goals/Influences/Ways to Overcome: from *All 4 You 2!* curriculum, Lesson 11, Activity 3
Influences Cards

A friend who exercises with me.

P.E. class

Parents/guardians cook healthy meals.

Like the taste of vegetables.
Good organic food section in grocery store.

Know that I will feel good if I exercise.

Parents/guardians drive me to basketball court.

Skateboard park right next to school.

Health food store close to my home.
Convenience of fast food.

Don’t have proper clothing.

Don’t live close to a gym.

Lazy.

Crave sweets.

Hurts my body when I run.
Media makes junk food look appealing.

Too tired to prepare a good meal at home.
Healthy Eating Goal

______________________________

______________________________

Physical Activity Goal

______________________________

______________________________

What Helps?

Healthy Eating:


Physical Activity:


What Doesn’t Help?


Ways to Overcome

What are you going to do when someone or something is a negative influence to you achieving your goals?

Healthy Eating

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Physical Activity

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