

My Health My Choice My Responsibility

*A training program on
health self-advocacy*

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A collaborative project between the Westchester Institute for Human Development and Self-
Advocacy Association of New York State

Supported by the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council



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Westchester Institute for Human Development

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Preface

My Health, My Choice, My Responsibility is an eight-session program to train adults with developmental disabilities to become health self-advocates. Each session covers a health area with the focus on making healthy choices in daily life and speaking up for good health. **My Health, My Choice, My Responsibility** emphasizes the importance of self-advocacy in health and wellness areas. Both a trainer and a self-advocate trainer facilitate the program. Participants are those who have an interest in their own health and wellness and have the desire to speak up for themselves.

Topics covered in the seminar are keeping track of one's medical record, developing a health plan, self-advocating at the doctor's office, physical activity, nutrition, safety and cleanliness in the home, hygiene, and emotional health. Each session consists of written information on the topic, as well as "**Things to Remember**" sheets, activities, and a **Goal Form**. The session begins with a list of "**Things we'll do today**" and a list of "**After this session I will**" that states what participants will know by the end of the session. Participants set goals to work on for the next session. They are encouraged to identify the steps they need to take to reach their goals and to get support if they need it. Participants may decide to include these goals in a long-term health plan.

The program includes three tools to help participants take control of their health. **My Medical Appointment** is a form to help prepare for medical appointments and to help follow through with a doctor's instructions. It prompts the user to focus on the reason for the visit and to write down questions. The **Health Information Form** is a record of the person's health needs and medical history. **My Health Plan** contains health goals developed during the course of the seminar.

The curriculum provides participants with information on the various topics. Each session is based on material presented in the chapters of this written text. During sessions participants learn the material through discussions, activities, and visual aids. Collaboration with community resources, professionals, and agencies provide additional content and expertise to the seminar.

In addition to this curriculum, there is a **Trainer's Manual** that offers guidelines for each session, training techniques, suggestions for room layout and structure of the group, activities, and community and other resources.

Our work in this area was inspired in part by *Living Well with a Disability*, (1) from the Rural Institute on Disabilities, The University of Montana and Research and Training Center on Independent Living, University of Kansas. We received permission to adapt *Living Well with a Disability* to make it accessible to persons with developmental disabilities through a grant by the New York Department of Health Disability and Health Program in 2003. While we believe the current program has

developed to provide a consistent, but independent, message, we do wish to acknowledge their contributions to our efforts in this area.

Some information on physical fitness is based on articles by James H. Rimmer, Ph.D., the Department of Disability and Human Development at the University of Illinois at Chicago. (2, 3) Information on nutrition is based on the United States Department of Agriculture guidelines. (4) General information on food safety and hygiene is from the Centers for Disease Control. (5, 6)

Additional articles, websites, and other materials are listed under Resources.

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My Health, My Choice, My Responsibility is a health and wellness curriculum developed for adults with disabilities with support from the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. The program is the result of collaboration between the Westchester Institute for Human Development (WIHD) in Valhalla, New York and Self-advocacy Association of New York State (SANYS). The curriculum and trainer's manual were developed and the program was piloted at WIHD. We would like to thank all who contributed their time and expertise to the project:

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Session 1: Take Charge of Your Health

Things we'll do today

- Introduce ourselves
- Discuss what it means to be healthy
- Talk about all of the sessions in this seminar
- Review how we take responsibility for our health
- Review **Group Rules**
- Complete our first **Goal Form**
- Give feedback on our first session



After this session I will

- Name two things I do to be healthy
- Know more about ways to be healthy
- Learn what we will talk about in the coming sessions
- Know what questions to ask after each session
- Know who I will turn to if I need support
- Have a health goal to work on until the next session

This is a seminar on becoming a health self-advocate. We'll be meeting together for eight sessions. During each session we will focus on one topic. We will present information and then discuss what it means to you and the others in the group. We will encourage you to work on health goals between sessions. The program is called **My Health, My Choice, My Responsibility!** We hope that this seminar will be fun and interesting to you.

During and after each session you will think about the topic that we discussed. You can then make a choice to use this information in setting a health goal. As a self-advocate, it will be your *responsibility to follow through* on this goal. You may want to get support from someone to reach your goal.

Each of our sessions will be organized around these points – information, choice, responsibility, support and follow through. For each session, you will ask yourself questions like these.

1. Topic

What information did I learn?
Why is this important?

2. Choice

What is my goal for the week?
What are the steps I need to do?

3. Responsibility

What can I do myself?
What will I tell myself as a reminder?

4. Support

What do I need help to do and who can help me?
What do I need to say?

5. Follow Through

How will I know when I've reached my goal?
Do I want to add this goal to **My Health Plan**?



THINGS TO REMEMBER

Being Healthy

What does “being healthy” mean to you? Here are some things people mean when they say, “I am healthy.”

- I don't feel sick.
- I don't have any aches and pains.
- I feel energetic.
- I eat food that is good for me.
- I exercise often.
- I am able to talk to someone who can help me stay healthy.
- I am able to talk to my doctor and to do what the doctor wants me to do to stay healthy.
- I make sure my home is clean and safe.
- I take care of myself by bathing, brushing my teeth, and keeping clean.
- I have friends and interesting things to do.
- I feel happy.
- I know how to share my feelings with someone.

Seminar Topics

1. Take charge of your health

- Healthy lifestyles – Not being sick doesn't make you well
- Setting goals, getting support, following through

2. Develop a health plan

- Knowing your health history
- Understanding your own health and wellness needs

3. Be a health self-advocate

- Preparing for medical appointments
- Speaking up for good health

4. Get moving

- Physical activity as part of everyday life
- Variety, fun, and friends

5. Eat right

- Understanding nutrition
- The best choice is to stay away from bad choices

6. Be healthy at home

- Kitchen tips
- Keeping clean

7. Feel good about yourself and others

- Beating the blues
- Doing good can make you feel good

8. Stay on track

- Setting long-term health goals
- Goofing up and getting over it



THINGS TO REMEMBER

Group Rules

- Be on time.
- Call ahead if you cannot attend.
- Be part of the discussion.
- Do not talk about what we say here outside the group.
- Listen to each other.
- Do not talk when someone else is talking.
- Bring your book and a pen, pencil, or tape recorder to each session.
- You may want to use a tape recorder to record the main points; turn it off during group discussions.
- Remember to work on your goals in between sessions.



Goal Form - Session 1

Name

Date

Goal

To find out how much I already know about my health

Steps

Answer these questions for the next session.

1. Do you have any health information or medical history already written down that you usually bring to your Doctor's appointment?	Yes	No
--	-----	----

2. Do you have a list of all your medications written down that you usually bring to your Doctor's appointment?	Yes	No
---	-----	----

3. What is your height?	feet	inches
-------------------------	------	--------

4. What is your weight?	pounds
-------------------------	--------

Responsibility

Can I get this information on my own?	Yes	No
---------------------------------------	-----	----

Do I need help with this?	Yes	No
---------------------------	-----	----

Support

Who will help me?

What help do I need?

What do I need to say?

Follow Up for Next Session

Did I complete all the steps in my goal?	Yes	No
--	-----	----

Session 2: Develop a Health Plan

Things we'll do today

- Review last session's Goal Form
- Review **Health Information Form**
- Let's see how much you know about your own health
- Discuss developing a health plan
- Review **My Health Plan**
- Review Goal Form



After this session I will

- Know about a **Health Information Form**
- See how much I already know about being healthy
- Understand how my health goals can become a part of **My Health Plan**
- Have a health goal to work on for the next session
- Take responsibility for knowing about my own health!

We do many things each day to stay healthy. Sometimes we need to visit the doctor. If you are going to a new doctor, you must provide information about your health and medical history. It is helpful to have this information written down. You can use the **Health Information Form**. Have your support person help you fill it out. After you complete the form, make a copy of it and keep them both in a safe place. Bring it with you when you go to the doctor. Always write down any changes. The information on it should always be correct.

During this program you will learn about other ways to stay healthy. We will discuss speaking up for yourself when you go to the doctor, being active, eating right, having healthy habits in your home, and feeling good inside. You will learn what you are doing right. It is also important to see what else you may need to do in all of these areas so that you can feel even better. These are *Health Goals*.



Medications are listed on the Health Information Form.

It is helpful to write down your *Health Goals*. You can use the form called **My Health Plan** to help you follow through with your *Health Goals*.

After you learn about each of the health areas, you will work on a goal in that area. You will decide what activities to work on to help you reach that health goal. Then you will decide if you want to add these activities to your health plan. Your health plan will develop as you go through this program. At the end you will have a list of important Health Goals that you can continue to work on in order to stay healthy.

You can use **My Health Plan** to remind yourself what to do and to let other important people know what you are doing. Bring a copy of My Health Plan when you go for your annual physical exam so that the doctor will know how hard you are working to stay healthy.

My Health, My Choice, My Responsibility



You may already have a personal plan that includes life goals like getting a job or moving into your own home. Be sure to include **My Health Plan** in your personal plan. Remember that being healthy helps you to do all the things that you enjoy!

Example

Your **Health Information Form** might look something like this example after you've filled in all of the information.

Health Information Form

NAME: Lee Smith

ADDRESS: 15 Oak Street, Valhalla, NY 10332

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 914-222-5555

D.O.B: 2/14/78

S.S.N.: 117-12-5555

MEDICAID#: AB12121212

PRIVATE MEDICAL INSURANCE: Oxford Premium

GUARDIAN or PROXY: Mary Jones

PRIMARY PHYSICIAN: Dr. Michael Brown

BLOOD TYPE: B Positive

MEDICARE#: CD222222

POLICY NO: DD12211111

Telephone#: 914-333-3333

Telephone#: 914-444-4444

ALLERGIES/REACTIONS:

Medications penicillin - causes rash

Food/Other milk and dairy products - causes wheezing

DIAGNOSIS/MEDICAL CONDITIONS/MEDICATIONS

Seizure disorder - Phenobarbital 90mg once a day

Asthma - Albuterol inhalator when needed

PAST IMMUNIZATIONS:

DTP 8/31/78, 10/20/78, 11/24/78, 1/12/78, 8/24/83

OPV 10/20/78, 11/24/78, 1/12/78, 8/24/83

Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) 10/13/79, 10/17/91

Tine 4/8/80, 12/3/80, 1/21/82, 12/83, 11/8/91 Negative

RECENT IMMUNIZATIONS:

PPD (Tuberculin test) 6/27/02, 6/25/03, 6/23/04, 6/29/05 Negative

FAMILY MEDICAL CONDITIONS:

Heart disease - maternal grandmother; Lung cancer - maternal grandfather

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS AND DIAGNOSTIC PROCEDURES:

Doctor/Hospital

Purpose of Visit/Procedure

Dr. Brown

Hurt ankle - took xray, was a sprain

Dr. Marie Sanchez (eye doctor)

Eye exam, need new glasses

Dr. Brown

Annual physical exam

HOSPITALIZATIONS AND SURGERIES:

Date

Hospital and Doctor

Description of Procedure/Reason

4/04/05

Hudson Hospital

Asthma attack, treated in ER

9/09/05

Hudson Hospital, Dr.
Pine (neurologist)

Increase in seizure activity, needed
adjustment of medication, Discharged
9/11/05

Example

The example of **My Health Plan** below shows how yours might look after you have chosen your health goals during each of the sessions.

My Health Plan

Name: Lee Smith

Date: April 5, 2006

Health Self-advocacy Goals

- | |
|---|
| 1. Use My Medical Appointment when I visit a doctor |
| 2. Keep a record of my doctor's appointments on My Health Information Form |
| 3. Ask the doctor questions when I want to know something |

Physical Activity Goals

- | |
|--|
| 1. Walk around my block three times a week |
| 2. Go to Special Olympics training |
| 3. Do daily exercises with my video |

Nutrition Goals

- | |
|---|
| 1. Make my own healthy lunch to bring with me every day |
| 2. Help plan the meals in my house |
| 3. Ask my housemates not to leave snacks on the kitchen counter |

Home Safety Goals

1. Clean the kitchen counters before and after I prepare food

2. Pick up clothes and stuff in my bedroom every day
--

3. Help vacuum and dust the house once a week

Hygiene Goals

1. Take a shower every day

2. Brush my teeth after meals and visit dentist twice a year for cleaning

3. Put my dirty clothes in the hamper and do my laundry once a week

Emotional/Social Goals

1. Call my friend Sam when I feel blue
--

2. Volunteer at the library

3. Speak to staff about getting a van to take me to my recreation program



THINGS TO REMEMBER

Health Information Form

- It contains written information about your health needs and medical history.
- Complete the form with help of a support person if needed.
- Keep it in a safe place.
- Make a copy to bring to the doctor.
- Make changes on it when needed – it must be up-to-date.

My Health Plan

- During each session you will learn ways to stay healthy.
- You will choose health goals in the different areas covered at each of the sessions.
- You can write down these goals on the form called **My Health Plan**.
- Use **My Health Plan** to remind yourself what to do and to let others know what you are doing to stay healthy.
- Bring a copy to your annual physical exam.
- Include it in your individualized service or personal plan.

Goal Form - Session 2

Name

Date

Goal

Have a completed **Health Information Form** and understand how to keep it updated

Steps

1. Find out where my medical information is located and who can help me get it.
2. Complete all the sections of form that I can.
3. Understand what parts I need to keep updated.

Responsibility

Do I do these on my own?

Yes

No

Do I need help with these?

Yes

No

Support

Who will help me?

What help do I need?

What do I need to say?

Follow Up for Next Session

Did I complete all the steps in my goal?

Yes

No

Do I want to add this goal to **My Health Plan**
under Health Self-advocacy Goals?

Yes

No

Session 3: Be a Health Self-advocate

Things we'll do today

- Review last session's Goal Form
- Discuss visits to the doctor
- Learn how to talk to doctors and other medical persons
- Discuss **My Medical Appointment** form
- Review Goal Form
- Give feedback on our third session



After this session I will

- Name two things that the doctor does during the annual exam
- State two things I can do to help me when I speak with my doctor
- Know how to use **My Medical Appointment** form
- Have a health goal to work on for the next session
- Speak with my doctor about my health!

Visiting the doctor for an annual check-up

An important part of staying healthy is visiting your doctor every year. This is often called your annual physical exam. The doctor wants to make sure that you are healthy and that the different parts of your body are working well. Here is what usually happens during your visit.

Before you see the doctor, a nurse will weigh you on a scale and measure your height. The nurse will take your pulse by holding your wrist and counting your heartbeats. The nurse will also take your blood pressure using a cuff over your arm and listening with a stethoscope. You may need to go into the bathroom and urinate into a cup in order to test for certain diseases. Blood may have to be taken from your arm. Although the needle may pinch at first, it is quick and doesn't hurt while the blood is coming out. It helps to look away! Remember, your blood gives the doctor important information about your health.



A doctor or nurse will take your blood pressure during your exam.

Then the doctor will begin the exam. The doctor will look into your eyes, ears, nose, and throat. The doctor will listen to your heart and lungs with a stethoscope. The doctor may also feel your stomach and look at how you stand and walk. The doctor will need to touch you in your private areas to make sure all your body parts are healthy. You may feel scared or uncomfortable, but this is an important part of the doctor's job.

The doctor will also ask you if anything hurts you. You should tell the doctor about any pain or problem you may have or if you are not feeling well. You can tell the doctor if you are worried or afraid about something. Remember, the doctor cannot tell anyone anything you say unless you say it is okay. The doctor may ask you about the work you do or what you do to have fun. The doctor may also ask how

much you exercise and what kind of foods you eat. Be honest! Remember the doctor's job is to help you stay as healthy as possible.

When the exam is over, the doctor may want to talk to you about your health. It is a good idea to have someone with you to listen to what the doctor says. Ask questions about anything you don't understand. Show the doctor your health plan and find out what else you need to do at home to stay healthy.



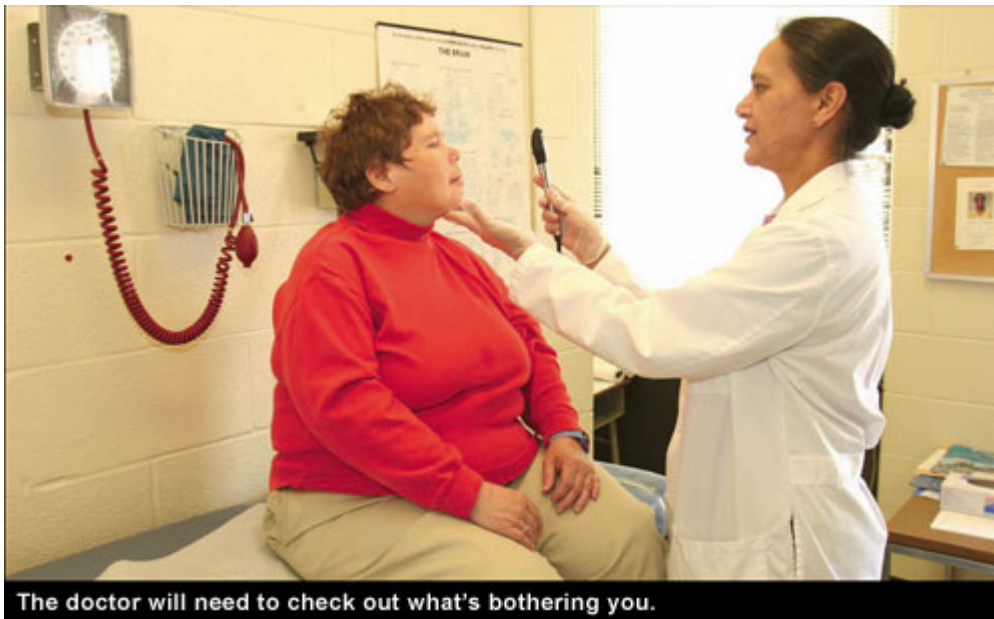
Visiting the doctor when you are sick

Sometimes you need to see the doctor because you are sick or hurt yourself. You need to tell the doctor what hurts and when it hurts. You can write down any questions you have before you go. The doctor may do some of the same things that were done during your annual exam. You may also need some special tests to help find out why you are sick or hurt. These are called diagnostic tests.

Diagnostic tests may be done in the doctor's office, at a clinic, or in a hospital. If your doctor says you need to have a test done, you can ask what the test is for and if you have to do anything special

before the test. For example, sometimes you can't eat before a medical test. Ask what exactly will be done to you and if it will hurt at all. The doctor or nurse should explain all of this ahead of time. If you don't understand something, ask questions. Find out if someone can be with you during the test. Then ask what will happen after the test.

Sometimes a machine is used to get information about you. You might hear the doctor or nurse say you need an X-ray, MRI, or CAT scan. These are different machines that are used to take pictures of the insides of your body. They don't hurt you, but they may make you feel uncomfortable because of the way you have to stand, sit, or lie on a table. You have to stay very still, which can be a hard thing to do. You usually have to undress and put on a special gown first. The person running the machine will give you directions on what to do. Ask questions if you do not understand what is happening. It is important to stay calm and relaxed. Try to think about something that you enjoy.



The doctor will need to check out what's bothering you.

Sometimes you need to take medicine to make you feel better. The doctor will give you a prescription that you have to bring to the pharmacy where you will get the medicine. It is important to take the medicine as often as the doctor says. You may already take other medications. Let the doctor know if you are taking medications that other doctors prescribed for you. You need to take all of them. Each one is helping you to be healthy. It may help to buy a "pill case" at the drugstore to help you remember when to take your medicine.

The doctor may also tell you to do certain things to help you feel better. For example, you may have to rest in bed or drink a lot of water. You should write down what the doctor tells you to do. The doctor will also tell you if you need to come back for a check-up. If so, you must make another appointment. Let the receptionist know your work, school, or day program schedule so you can make an appointment for a time that is good for you. Write down the date and time of the appointment.

You need to **follow through** with taking your medicine and doing whatever the doctor told you to do. This will help you to stay healthy!

Personal story: Donald followed through with what his doctor said and it really helped. He says, *“Every time I go to the doctor my blood work is good. One time I had high cholesterol. The doctor told me to exercise so I wouldn’t have to take medicine. I have been exercising and now my cholesterol is down and I don’t have to take medicine. The doctor is really good and talks to me.”*

Making medical decisions

Sometimes you need to have something done like an operation or a special test that is not a routine procedure. The doctor will explain why this will help you be healthier. These are called the **benefits**. The doctor should also tell you what possible problems could happen during or after the procedure. These are called the **risks**. The doctor needs to tell you all of this so that you or your support person can give **informed consent**. That means that you understand the benefits and risks and that you say it is okay to do it.

It is very important that you have someone to discuss these medical issues with you. A family member or trusted friend would be a good choice. You will need to sign a consent form. If you have a **guardian**, that person will be signing the consent form. In either case, you should discuss with your support person or guardian what will happen and how you feel about it. If you do not have a guardian, you should name someone as your **Health Care Agent** who can make decisions in case you are not able to do so. For example, while you are under anesthesia during surgery, the doctor may decide to do something different and will ask your Agent to consent. You need to complete a Health Care Proxy Form in order to name an agent. Your doctor, hospital, or health department should have these forms.

Before any procedure is done, make sure all of your questions are answered. If you feel strongly that you do not want to do it, let the doctor know how you feel. The doctor may try to help you understand why it should be done, or he or she may suggest doing something different. Do not be afraid to speak up!



THINGS TO REMEMBER

The Doctor's Visit

- Visiting the doctor is an important part of being healthy.
- During an annual exam, the doctor checks your height, weight, blood pressure, pulse, eyes, ears, nose, and throat; listens to heart and lungs, feels your stomach and private areas, and checks how you stand and walk. Blood and urine samples may be taken.
- The doctor may ask about your activities, how much you exercise, and what you eat. Show **My Health Plan** to the doctor.
- You may need some special tests called diagnostic tests. Sometimes machines such as X-Ray, MRI, or CAT scan are used to take pictures of the insides of your body. They don't hurt you, but you may feel uncomfortable because you have to sit, stand, or lie very still on a table, which can be hard to do. Stay calm and relaxed.
- The doctor should explain clearly why you need to have any tests or procedures done and what problems could happen. Make sure you understand before you consent.
- It is a good idea to bring someone with you for support.
- Listen carefully to what the doctor says. Ask questions when you don't understand.
- Ask the doctor to draw a picture if you don't understand.
- Sometimes you feel scared or uncomfortable when the doctor touches you and that is okay. Remember, it is part of the doctor's job to touch your body.
- Tell the doctor how you feel. The doctor cannot tell anyone anything you say unless you say it is okay.

Talking with your doctor

Sometimes it is hard to talk to doctors or nurses because they are very busy. That is why it is helpful to write down what you want to say and then read it or show it to the doctor. You can also ask questions that you think of during the visit. **It is important to know that the doctor cannot tell anyone anything you say unless you say it is okay.** So be honest.

It is okay to ask the doctor to speak directly to you. You may also ask the doctor to draw a picture to help explain anything that you do not understand. It may be helpful for you to tape record what the doctor says. Ask the doctor first if it is okay. Listen carefully to what the doctor says.

When the doctor finishes speaking, it is helpful for you to repeat what was said to make sure you understood everything. This is important if the doctor told you certain things that you have to do at home to stay healthy. It is a good idea to have someone with you who can also listen to what the doctor says. Then you can also talk with your support person about what you need to do.

Preparing for your medical appointment

Before you go to your doctor's appointment, it is helpful to think about what you need to bring to the doctor's office. Think about what you would like to tell the doctor and questions you would like to ask. To help you remember these things you can use the form called **My Medical Appointment**.

On this form you can check off what you should bring to the doctor's office. For example, it is important to have a list of your medications and your insurance card. You may also need a check, credit card, or money. You might want to bring your **Health Information Form** if the doctor doesn't have it already.

There is space on **My Medical Appointment** to write down why you are going to the doctor. You can write down what bothers you and when it bothers you. You may have questions to ask. You can write down everything you want to know.

There is also space for you to write down what the doctor tells you to do. It is a good idea for you or your support person to write this part down while you are still with the doctor to make sure you don't forget anything. See the example of My Medical Appointment on the next page.

Remember to bring **My Medical Appointment** with you to your appointment. It will help you to be better able to speak up about your health.

Speaking up for good health is an important Self-advocacy goal. You may want to include using **My Medical Appointment** as one of the steps you can take to reach your Health Self-advocacy Goal on **My Health Plan**.

Example

The example below shows how to use **My Medical Appointment** to help you advocate for yourself when you visit your doctor.

My Medical Appointment

Name: Lee Smith

Date: April 5, 2006

Doctor/Therapist: Dr. Brown

Phone Number: 914-444-4444

Bring to your appointment:

List of medications	X	Health Information Form	X
Insurance Card	X	Money, Credit card or Check	X

Fill in before your appointment:

Why am I going to see the doctor?

Is this an annual physical exam?	Yes		No	X
What bothers me?	I slipped and my ankle hurt			
When does it bother me?	When I walk or stand on it for a long time.			

What do I want to know?

Should I stay off my foot?
What else can I do to make it feel better?

Fill in after your appointment:

What do I need to do?

Go to the hospital to get an x-ray
Use crutches until I get an x-ray

Who will help me?

Jamie, my house manager

Steps to Help You Talk with Your Doctor

The following is a discussion between a doctor and a patient. It is based on the **My Medical Appointment form**. Try doing a role-play.

Doctor: What is bothering you?

Patient: I slipped and hurt my ankle.

Doctor: When does it bother you?

Patient: When I walk or stand on it for a long time.

(Doctor examines foot.)

Doctor: You may have a broken bone. You need to have an x-ray at the hospital.

Patient: Should I stay off my foot?

Doctor *(talking to support person)*: Yes, he must use crutches until the x-ray is done.

Patient: Can you tell me what you just said to Jamie?

Doctor *(addressing patient)*: Sorry, you must stay off your foot. Use crutches until the x-ray shows what is wrong.

Patient: So, you are saying I should use crutches until I have an x-ray, right?

Doctor: Yes, and the x-ray will tell us if you need a cast on it.

Patient: So, depending on the x-ray, I may need a cast.

Doctor: Yes, that's correct.

Discuss these steps:

- Tell the doctor what is bothering you.
- Ask questions that you have written down.
- Ask the doctor to speak directly to you, not someone else.
- Repeat back what the doctor has said to you.
- Keep listening and repeating.



THINGS TO REMEMBER

Talking With Your Doctor

- Sometimes it is hard to talk to doctors because they are so busy.
- It helps to write down questions and read or show them to the doctor.
- Use the form **My Medical Appointment** to help you remember what to bring and to write down your questions and what is bothering you.
- It is okay to ask the doctor to speak directly to you. Listen carefully.
- When the doctor finishes, repeat what was said to make sure you understood.
- Write down exactly what the doctor tells you to do on the bottom of the **My Medical Appointment** form.
- The doctor may give you a prescription for medicine, which you must get at a pharmacy.
- It is important to follow the doctor's directions for the medicine and anything else you need to do to feel better and to stay healthy.
- Speaking up for good health is an important goal. Include using **My Medical Appointment** as a Health Self-advocacy goal on **My Health Plan**.

Goal Form – Session 3

Name _____

Date _____

Goal

Be prepared to speak up about my health

Steps

1. Complete **My Medical Appointment** to be ready for next Doctor's appointment.
2. Practice asking questions with others using **My Medical Appointment**.

Responsibility

Can I do this on my own?

Yes

No

Do I need help with this?

Yes

No

Support

Who will help me?

What help do I need?

What do I need to say?

Follow Up for Next Session

Did I complete all the steps in my goal?

Yes

No

Do I want to add this goal to **My Health Plan**?

Yes

No

Session 4: Get Moving

Things we'll do today

- Review last session's **Goal Form**
- Learn how being more active will help me
- Talk about ways to become more active
- Discuss getting started when things get in my way
- Look at **Goal Form**
- Give feedback on our fourth session



After today's session I will

- Understand why it is important to be active
- Name two physical activities I can do in my home
- Select an activity I can do with friends in the community
- Have a health goal to work on until the next session
- Make a plan to get started and get moving!

Being Active

One important way of being healthy is to be active. That means doing things that get you moving around. There are activities you can do right in your home and in your community that will help you stay in shape. Why is it so important to be active?

When you are active, your body works better. Your heart pumps well and you breathe more easily. Your muscles get stronger and your bones stay healthy. You can stand up straighter. You can improve your balance. When you get moving you use energy, but you also have more energy to do other things.



Exercising at home can be easy and fun.

Physical activity also helps you to control your weight. But your weight is not the only way to know how fit you are. It is better to go by how you feel overall. Do you feel energetic and ready to do all the things you want to do? Being active will help you feel better and be healthier.

Ways to become more active

Now you must think about what you can do in your everyday life to become more active. You can be healthier by just spending more time moving around each day. For example, you can get exercise by just walking or wheeling yourself around the block! To be healthy you should do a physical activity for at least 30 minutes every day.

It is important that you plan physical activities into your daily life. Here are some ideas to get started:

- Go for a walk at lunchtime or before dinner.
- Walk instead of taking the bus or car.
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Take up a hobby like gardening, bike riding, or dancing.
- Do jobs around the house like cleaning or raking leaves.
- Join in fun activities like basketball, bowling, or swimming.
- Instead of TV, watch a dance or exercise video and get moving!

As part of your daily physical activities, you may want to try doing exercises. Exercises are planned and timed activities that help your body in a certain way. Some exercises make your heart beat faster. Some exercises make your muscles stronger and more able to move easily.

Before you start an exercise routine or use exercise machines, you should check with your doctor to make sure it is okay. Then have the physical therapist or teacher show you how to do the exercise correctly. You do not want to hurt yourself. You may want to take an exercise class. These classes are helpful because the teacher shows you how to warm-up before you exercise. You also learn the right way to move so you don't hurt yourself.

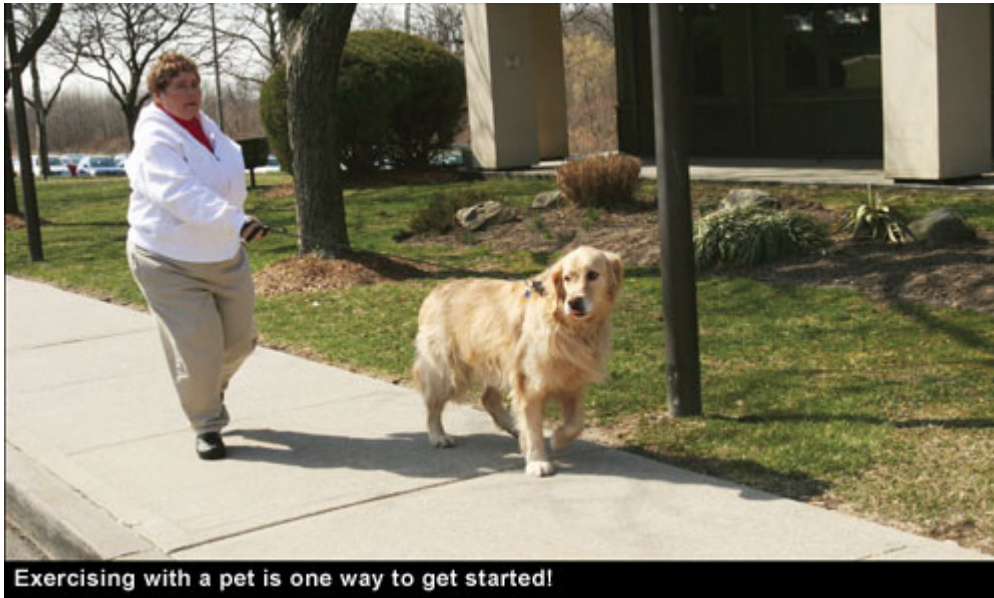
One of the best exercises to help you stay healthy is walking. It is easy to do and you can usually find a place to walk. If the weather is not good, you may want to go to the mall and walk there. There are lots of other things you can do also. Look at the Activities List and pick the ones you like to do. Whatever activity you decide to do, you have to get started!

Personal story: We each find different ways to be active. Delvalle says, *"I have gone to the doctor and he has told me that I have too much weight on me so I started to walk more...since then I lost fifteen pounds.* Scott says, *"I was interested in swimming at a very young age. I got a swimming coach through the BOCES program. My instructor helped me to learn. I am going now to the gym. I swim, workout, and exercise."* And Tammy says, *"I go to exercise at JCC."* JCC is a community center.

Getting Started

Sometimes you may not feel like being active. You just want to sit and watch TV! It helps if you can get a friend to be active with you. Maybe you can call a friend to walk to the park with you. Or perhaps you and a few of your friends can plan a trip to the swimming pool.

You may think exercise is boring. If so, try to do activities that you like best. You may also want to do different things on different days. One day you can ride a bike and another day you can dance to a video.



When the weather is bad, it is a good idea to have exercise machines in your home. You may already have some. If not, you can suggest getting something like an exercise bicycle or treadmill.

Maybe you want to go to the park or to a health club, but you have no transportation or no one available to take you. Perhaps you want to join a dance class, but you don't have enough money. Or maybe you have too many other activities during the day that you can't fit in physical activities. These are all reasons why it may be hard for you to get started.

If so, you need to talk with your support person to see how you can deal with these problems. You must say how important it is for you to be active. Let everyone know that being active is an important part of being healthy. Speak up for your good health!

You can get more information on physical activity from the website: The National Center on Physical Activity and Disability, www.ncpad.org.

Be sure to write down your Physical Activity Goals on **My Health Plan**. You can include these goals in your schedule every day by making them part of your individualized service plan or personal plan. Show **My Health Plan** to your service coordinator or support person so that the goals can be added to your personal plan.

The best way to get started is to do something right now. Take charge of your health and get moving!



THINGS TO REMEMBER

Activities List

In My Home:

- Gardening, yard work
- Household chores like sweeping floor or cleaning room
- Play ball or Frisbee in the yard
- Play basketball in driveway
- Carry groceries into house
- Use exercise machines
- Dance to CD's or videos
- Follow exercise video

In My Community:

- Go for a walk in my neighborhood
- Play ball or Frisbee at the park
- Plan a baseball or basketball game with friends
- Go horseback riding
- Play tennis or golf
- Go for a hike at a park
- Bike ride
- Run a track
- Go to exercise or dance class
- Go to gym or health club
- Go swimming, boating, or kayaking
- Join bowling group
- Join recreational group like Special Olympics
- Walk in the mall when the weather is bad



THINGS TO REMEMBER

Why I Can't Get Moving

- It's easier not to do it.
- It's boring.
- I don't know what to do.
- I don't have a way to get to the activities.
- There's never enough staff to take me.
- I'm doing too many things – I don't have enough time.
- I don't have enough money.
- I feel uncomfortable exercising.
- The weather is bad.

Ways to Get Moving

- Ask a friend to do something with you.
- Try doing something different and fun!
- Make a list of activities you might enjoy doing in your home and in the community and include them in your weekly schedule.
- Ask your support persons to help you deal with problems like transportation and money.
- Let support persons know how important being active is to you.
- Get a coach or trainer to help you.
- Include physical activity as a goal on **My Health Plan**.

Goal Form - Session 4

Name _____

Date _____

Goal

Try **two** new activities, one in my home and one in my community.

Choices

Choose one of these:

1. Two activities from **Activities List**.
2. Two activities not on the list that you would like to try.

Activity in Home _____

Activity in Community _____

Steps

1. What do I need to do before I start?
2. Schedule in time to do the activities.

Responsibility

Can I do this on my own?	Yes	No
--------------------------	-----	----

Do I need help with this?	Yes	No
---------------------------	-----	----

Support

Who will help me?

What help do I need?

Follow Up for Next Session

Did I complete all the steps in my goal?	Yes	No
--	-----	----

Do I want to add this goal to My Health Plan ?	Yes	No
---	-----	----

Session 5: Eat Right

Things we'll do today

- Review last session's **Goal Form**
- Learn about why food is important
- Discuss different types of foods
- Learn good food choices
- Review tips on healthy eating
- Discuss speaking up for good nutrition
- Look at **Goal Form**
- Give feedback on our fifth session



After today's session I will

- Understand why good nutrition is important
- Name the five food groups
- List two things I can do to eat in a more healthy way
- Have a health goal to work on until the next session
- Speak up for good nutrition!

What are some of the reasons we eat? Here are some examples:

- Food tastes good and we enjoy it
- We are out with friends
- It's a special occasion like a birthday
- We're hungry!

But the most important reason we need to eat is because food gives the body what it needs to work – nutrients. This is how we get the word **nutrition**. We don't always think about good health when we eat. Yet it is important to understand that the food we eat and the amount we eat affect our health. In this session we will talk about what we should eat and how to improve our eating habits. These are the basics of good nutrition.

Why is food important?

The food we eat contains nutrients like proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals, fiber and water. Nutrients keep our bodies working so that we stay healthy. Different foods contain different nutrients. That is why it is important to eat different kinds of foods.

When we eat well, we have good nutrition. That means we need to eat the right foods in the right amounts. Good nutrition helps make a person feel healthy and energetic. Our bodies are more fit when we eat well. When we are fit, we have more energy to do the things we like to do!

What food should I eat?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture gives us guidelines to help us stay healthy now and in the future. The basic foods that you need to eat are **grains, vegetables, fruits, protein, and dairy products**. You should choose foods from each of these groups every day. The amount you need depends on your age, sex, and the amount of physical activity you do.

Grains include bread, bagels, muffins, cereals, rice, and pastas. Beans can count either as grains or as proteins. Grains give your body energy. Try to include whole grains such as whole wheat bread or brown rice. One ounce of grain means one slice of bread, half of a bagel, a half-cup of rice or pasta, or one cup of cold cereal. Eat six to eight ounces of grains.

Vegetables are among the most important foods to help you keep your body healthy and your weight down. Vegetables contain nutrients like vitamins and fiber to help prevent diseases and to help your body heal when you are sick or hurt. Fiber helps to keep you from getting constipated.

Since vegetables are low in calories and can fill you up, you can eat them as a snack to keep your weight down. For example, try eating carrot sticks or slices of green pepper instead of potato chips next time you want a snack!

Try to eat two to three cups of vegetables each day. Eat different types like carrots, broccoli, string beans, peas, or green pepper. Two cups of raw, leafy vegetables like spinach and lettuce are equal to one cup so you can eat more of those. A small can of vegetable juice is a good choice too.

Fruits are important because they also contain nutrients like vitamins and fiber, which help your body stay healthy and heal when you are sick or hurt. Fruits are very tasty so they make a good snack or dessert.

It is best to eat at least two cups of fruit each day. Fresh fruits such as apples, oranges, bananas, all kinds of berries and grapes are excellent choices. Dried fruits are also good for you. But dried fruit does have more calories than fresh fruit. One cup of fruit is the same as a half a banana, one peach, or one apple.

Proteins are important for building muscle, bone, skin, and blood. They also contain important vitamins that help your body work. Proteins include meat such as beef, pork, chicken, and turkey. Proteins also include fish, beans, cheese, eggs, tofu, and peanut butter. Eat five to six ounces of protein each day.

Dairy products include milk, cheese, and yogurt. Dairy products are important because they help you have strong bones and teeth. One slice or a one-ounce chunk of cheese is the same as one cup of skim or low-fat milk or one cup of yogurt. Have three cups of a dairy product each day.

When you eat well, you can have some extras. These extras are fats, oils, and sweets. You should eat only a little of these. Sweets like candy or cookies contain a lot of sugar and not too many nutrients. Try not to add sugar in drinks such as coffee or tea. There is a lot of sugar in soda and juice drinks. Try drinking water instead.

Fats include items such as margarine, butter, mayonnaise, salad dressing, and foods containing these items. Many snacks such as potato chips are made with fats. A body needs some fat to stay healthy, but most people eat much more fat than they need.

You can learn more about these food groups at www.mypyramid.gov.

What foods should I choose?

There are different reasons why we choose the food that we eat. Sometimes it's easy to get or to cook. We also choose food that tastes good or looks good. Finally, we may choose food because it is healthy. The best choice is food that tastes good and is good for you.

There are many times when you have a choice between items of food. It is a good idea to choose foods that are low in fat. Some examples of low-fat foods are lean meats, vegetables, and some fruits. Try eating raw vegetables like carrots for a snack. You can cut down on your fat by eating desserts that are low-fat or no-fat, such as low-fat ice cream.

Choose whole grains at least half of the time when you eat bread products. Read the label on breads, pastas, rice, and cereals, and look for the word "whole."

Try not to eat too much fried foods. The oil used to fry foods usually contains a lot of fat. Choose baked or grilled food instead. For example it is better to have a baked potato instead of French fries.



Healthy meals can include different kinds of foods.

Choose foods with less sugar. Sugar has a lot of calories but very little nutrition. Eat fresh fruit rather than canned fruit. Sugar listed on food labels can be written in different ways: brown sugar, corn sweetener or corn syrup, honey, molasses, raw sugar, and syrup.

Try to eat less of the "extras" group – fats and sweets. You don't have to cut them out of your diet entirely. Just eat less of them. It helps if you don't have too many sweets around where you can see them. Try not to buy packages of snacks. If a

housemate has some, ask if they can be kept out of sight, for example, in the kitchen cabinet.

Choose less salt. Salt is important, but most people eat too much salt. Most of our salt comes from foods prepared outside the home. Check canned vegetables, soups, frozen dinners and other packaged foods for salt. Another word for salt is sodium. It's a good idea to buy unsalted snacks.

What else can I do to help me eat healthier?

Many times we eat when we are not really hungry. We may be bored or upset so we eat something to help us feel better. Usually we eat something that is not that healthy too. The next time you eat a snack, think about whether you are really hungry. If not, wait until you are hungry and eat something that is healthy. It is a good idea to eat slowly. When you eat quickly, you will eat more food before your body feels "full."

Eat the right portion or amount of food. Try to stick to the serving size and not have second helpings. It is also helpful to fill your dish with different foods and bring the dish to the table. Leave the rest of the food on the stove or counter.

Another idea is to keep track of what you eat. It is helpful to write down the amount you ate and what you were doing when you ate. For example, you may eat a lot when you watch TV. You can also write down where you ate it, like McDonald's.

After a week, you can look back at what you ate. Are you eating the right food and the right amounts? Do you find that when you do certain activities, you eat more of the wrong food? For example, do you eat more high fat or salty foods when you watch TV? If so, plan ahead to have a healthy snack when you sit down to watch TV. If you understand what you are eating, you can make better choices.

If you cook your own food, trim fat off meat. Try baking or broiling meat and fish instead of frying.

Eat breakfast before you leave the house. This will give you energy. This way you will not feel like eating so many snacks. When you do want a snack, choose something with less fat. For example, popcorn without butter is a better choice than potato chips. Fruit is even better!

Pack a healthy lunch when you go out for the day. Then you can choose what you like to eat and the right amount. It is fine to eat lunch out once in a while, but try to choose healthy food.

When you eat out, choose small portions or share a meal with a friend. You can also bring some of your food home.



Learn to read the labels of food you buy. It will tell you if the food is salted or unsalted and how much sugar and fat is in it. Soon you will know which food items are the best to buy.

You may want to use a snack machine where you work or at your day program. Most foods in these machines are not that healthy. A better choice is to bring a snack from home. If you must use the snack machine, choose something like trail mix or unsalted nuts rather than a candy bar.

If you have a break time during the day, you don't always have to eat a snack. Eating just because it is break time is a bad habit. Try drinking water instead. You can also use the time to stretch your muscles instead of eating.

Speak up for good nutrition

Eating well isn't always easy. Most of us enjoy eating. But it is important to think about nutrition when you choose the foods you eat. You must also let those who live with you and your support persons know that it is important to you to eat healthy foods. If you feel that there are too many snacks at your home, ask to have a group discussion about it.

Be involved in buying the food in your home. Talk to your support persons about what you would like to eat. Plan your meals ahead of time and add healthy items to the shopping list. If possible go to the supermarket to buy the items.

Ask if you can help prepare the food in your home. This way you can see how much salt or oil is used. You can also suggest cutting fruit to make a fruit salad.

Personal story: Talking to a support person helps Jeffrey. He says, *"I am trying to be on a diet and it's hard. I talk to my therapist about it...I make lists of what I eat. I was taught about what were the right things to eat. My therapist is very helpful about talking about my eating habits."*

Another idea is to have vegetables cut up and kept in your refrigerator. Try to get others involved in healthy food preparation with you.

Share what you know about healthy food with those in your home and your support persons. Then suggest they join you in choosing a healthier life!

Remember, good nutrition means eating good food in the right amounts and having good eating habits. Be sure to include your Nutrition Goals on **My Health Plan**. Writing down these goals is the first step in getting started to healthier eating!



THINGS TO REMEMBER

Why is food important?

- Food contains nutrients that keep our bodies running and healthy.
- Nutrients include proteins, vitamins, carbohydrates, minerals, and fats. Your body also needs water and fiber to help move food along.
- It is important to eat foods from the different food groups.

Food Groups:

Grains

- Give your body energy.
- Include bread, bagels, muffins, cereal, rice, pasta, and beans.
- Whole grains are best – like whole wheat or brown rice.

Vegetables

- Keep your body healthy and weight down.
- Contain nutrients like vitamins and fiber to help prevent diseases and help you heal; fiber keeps you from getting constipated.
- Low in calories and fill you up – good for snacks.

Fruits

- Contain nutrients like vitamins and fiber.
- Keep your body healthy and help you heal when you are hurt or sick.
- Are tasty so they make a good snack or dessert.

Proteins

- Are important for building muscle, bone, skin, and blood.
- Contain vitamins that help your body work.
- Include meats such as beef, pork, chicken, and turkey.
- Include fish, beans, cheese, eggs, tofu, and peanut butter.

Dairy products

- Include milk, cheese, and yogurt.
- Help you have strong bones and teeth.



THINGS TO REMEMBER

Tips for Healthy Eating

What to eat

- Choose a variety of food from the different food groups.
- Choose food that is low in fat like lean meat, vegetables, and fruit.
- Eat sugary sweets only once in a while.
- Drink water instead of soda or juice drinks.
- Try not to eat too many fats like butter, margarine, and mayonnaise.
- Choose less fried foods and more baked and grilled food.
- Choose healthy food whenever you can!

How to eat

- Eat only when you are hungry and eat slowly.
- Keep portions small - don't overload your dish!
- Eat breakfast every day.
- Make your own lunch instead of eating out.
- If you do eat out, share food with a friend or bring some food home.
- Read the labels of food you buy.
- Try not to use snack machines.
- Eat healthy snacks like nuts or apple slices when you watch TV.
- Help prepare menus, buy food, and fix meals in your home.
- Let others know how important healthy eating is to you – talk to your housemates if there are too many snacks around.

Goal Form - Session 5

Name _____

Date _____

Goal

Try **one** new healthy eating behavior

Choices

Choose one of these:	Check
1. Eat more fruits and vegetables.	
2. Pack a healthy lunch when I go out for the day.	
3. Eat more whole grains.	
4. Help decide what foods to buy and plan meals.	
5. Eat smaller portions.	
6. My own goal:	

Steps

What do I need to do before I start? _____

Responsibility

Can I do this on my own?

Yes

No

Do I need help with this?

Yes

No

Support

Who will help me?

What help do I need?

Follow Up for Next Session

Did I complete all the steps in my goal?

Yes

No

Do I want to add this goal to **My Health Plan**?

Yes

No

Session 6: Be Healthy at Home

Things we'll do today

- Review last session's **Goal Form**
- Learn about having a clean home
- Discuss tips to keep kitchen clean and safe
- Review safety in the home
- Discuss keeping our bodies clean
- Review **Goal Form**
- Give feedback on our sixth session



After today's session I will

- Understand why having a clean home is important
- Name two things I can do in the kitchen to stay healthy
- List two safety tips for my home
- Name two things I can do to keep my body clean and healthy
- Have a health goal to work on until the next session
- Keep my body and my home clean and safe!

An important part of being healthy is keeping your home and your body clean and safe. All the rooms in your home should be dusted, cleaned, and vacuumed regularly. This will help you to breathe better and not get sick. The kitchen needs extra special cleaning because germs there can get into your food and make you sick. We will discuss kitchen tips in more detail. It is also important to be safe in your home. We will look at things you can do to make sure you won't hurt yourself as you move about your home. You also must keep your body healthy and safe. We will discuss ways to do that.

Kitchen tips

If you use the kitchen, it is important to keep the counters and sink clean at all times. **WASH YOUR HANDS before and after** you prepare foods, especially after you touch raw meat. It is necessary to wash the cutting board and knife with soapy water after you cut raw meat or chicken. It is even better if you have two different cutting boards – one for raw meat and one for vegetables and fruits. Use hot soapy water to wash your cutting boards, knives, and counters after you prepare each food item.

It is best to use paper towels to clean the counters. If you use washcloths or towels, make sure you wash them often in the hot cycle of the washing machine. You can clean a sponge by putting it in the microwave on high for one minute.



Keep the inside of your refrigerator clean too. Put raw meat, chicken, or fish on the bottom shelf. Then if juice drips from the packages, it will only go on one shelf. Clean the juice right away.

Keeping safe in your home

Safety in the kitchen is very important. If you cook, do not wear long, loose sleeves that can catch on fire. Make sure you keep the handles of pots turned toward the back of the stove. Always use a potholder when you lift a pot. Make sure any potholders, towels, or washcloths are not close to the stove. They can catch on fire. If you use a microwave, be careful when you take the food out. Liquids like soup can be very hot. If you use a toaster, always use a wooden tong to remove food that is stuck. It is best to unplug the toaster first. Never use a metal fork inside a toaster. You can get a shock.

Remember to sweep up any food or liquid that spill on the kitchen floor. This way you will not slip on it and hurt yourself. Tile and wooden floors can get slippery if something is spilled on them. Keep floors clean.

One of the ways people hurt themselves in their homes is by tripping over something. Keep the path where you walk clear. Have furniture out of the way and remove clutter and boxes. Make sure rugs don't slide. If they do, remove them or put mats under them. Don't have any wires or telephone cords where you walk. Make sure you put the light on when you enter a room so you don't walk into something or trip.

My Health, My Choice, My Responsibility

In the bathroom have non-skid mats in the tub or shower so you don't slip. Bars that you can hold onto will help you get in and out of the tub or shower. If you don't have grab bars, ask your support person to get them. Always check the water temperature by hand before you enter the tub or shower.

Make sure that you have a smoke detector and a carbon monoxide detector in your home. If you are not sure, ask your support person to check. Also, plan with your support person, your family, or housemates how to leave your home in case of a fire. Remember, never smoke in your home!

There may be some things that you want to do to keep your home clean and safe. You can write these down under Home Safety Goals on **My Health Plan**.



Avoid tripping—move stuff out of your way.



ACTIVITY

Clean and Safe Home

What do these pictures show?

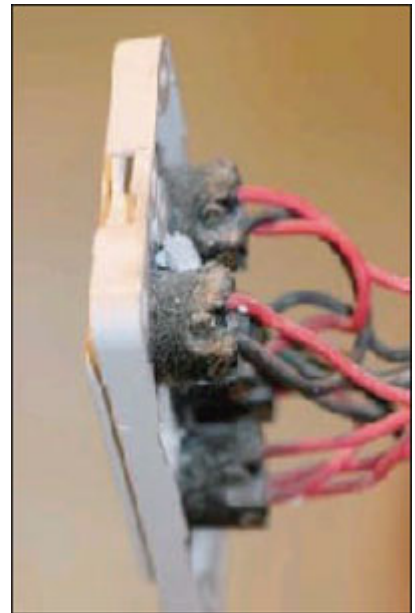




ACTIVITY

Clean and Safe Home

What's wrong with these pictures?



Keeping clean

One of the best ways of staying healthy is by washing your hands often. You can catch a cold or flu by touching something that has germs on it, for example, a doorknob or telephone. That is why it is so important to wash your hands before you eat. You should always wash your hands after you use the bathroom and after you touch your pets.

Make sure you use soap and warm water when you wash your hands. Wash for at least 15 to 20 seconds. To help you know how long that is, sing the “Happy Birthday” song two times!

It is also important to keep your body clean. You need to wash yourself every day. You can take a bath or a shower. Use deodorant. Wash your hair and make sure your nails are clean and short. It is very important to brush your teeth after meals. You should visit the dentist to have your teeth cleaned and checked. Find out from your dentist how often you need to go for a check-up. Make your next appointment each time you go.

It is important to take care of your clothes. Put dirty clothes in the hamper. Learn how to use the washing machine and dryer if you can. If you cannot, then help your support person do the laundry in any way you can. Perhaps you can load the washer or fold clothes.

A clean body and clean clothes help you to stay healthy. They also help you to look good. This is called good hygiene. This is important when you are out in the community. You always want to look your best!

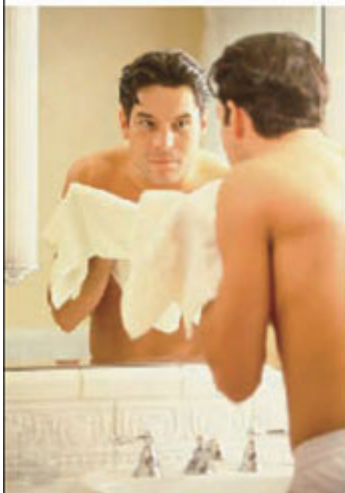
Be sure to include Hygiene Goals on **My Health Plan**.



ACTIVITY

Hygiene

What do these pictures show?

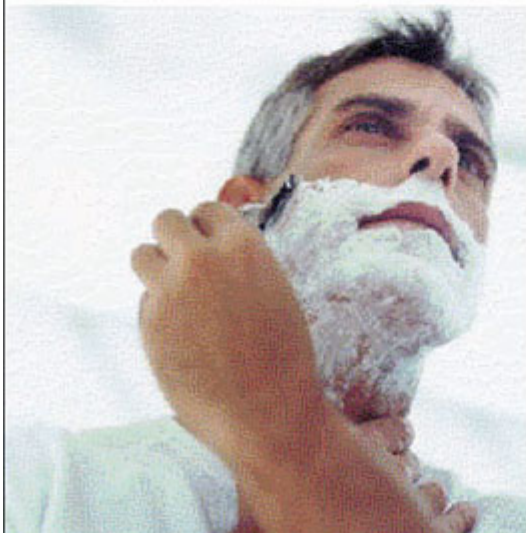




ACTIVITY

Hygiene

What do these pictures show?





THINGS TO REMEMBER

Being Healthy at Home

Clean Home:

- Keep your home cleaned, dusted, and vacuumed.
- Clean kitchen counters and sink with cleaner and paper towels, especially after you prepare raw meat or chicken.
- Wash your hands before and after you prepare food.
- Clean cutting boards and knives right after you cut raw meat or chicken - before you cut anything else.
- Clean spills in the refrigerator and on the floor.

Safe Home:

- Keep pot handles toward the back of the stove.
- Use a potholder to lift pots. Make sure potholders or towels are not placed near the flames.
- Remove clutter from floors; put a light on when you enter a room.
- Keep wires and cords away from where you walk.
- Use a non-skid mat and grab bars in the bathtub or shower.
- Make sure you have smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

Clean and Healthy Body:

- Wash your hands often, especially before you eat and after you use the bathroom or touch your pets.
- Shower or bathe every day.
- Wash your hair and keep your nails short and clean.
- Brush your teeth after meals and see your dentist for check-ups.

Goal Form - Session 6

Name _____

Date _____

Goal

Try **one** new cleaning, safety, or hygiene behavior

Choices

Choose one of these:	Check
1. Wash my hands before and after preparing food.	
2. Clean the kitchen counter after I prepare food.	
3. Remove clutter from my room.	
4. Brush my teeth after meals.	
5. Wash my hands before I eat and after I use the bathroom.	
6. My own goal:	

Steps

What do I need to do before I start? _____

Responsibility

Can I do this on my own?

Yes

No

Do I need help with this?

Yes

No

Support

Who will help me?

What help do I need?

Follow Up for Next Session

Did I complete all the steps in my goal?

Yes

No

Do I want to add this goal to **My Health Plan**?

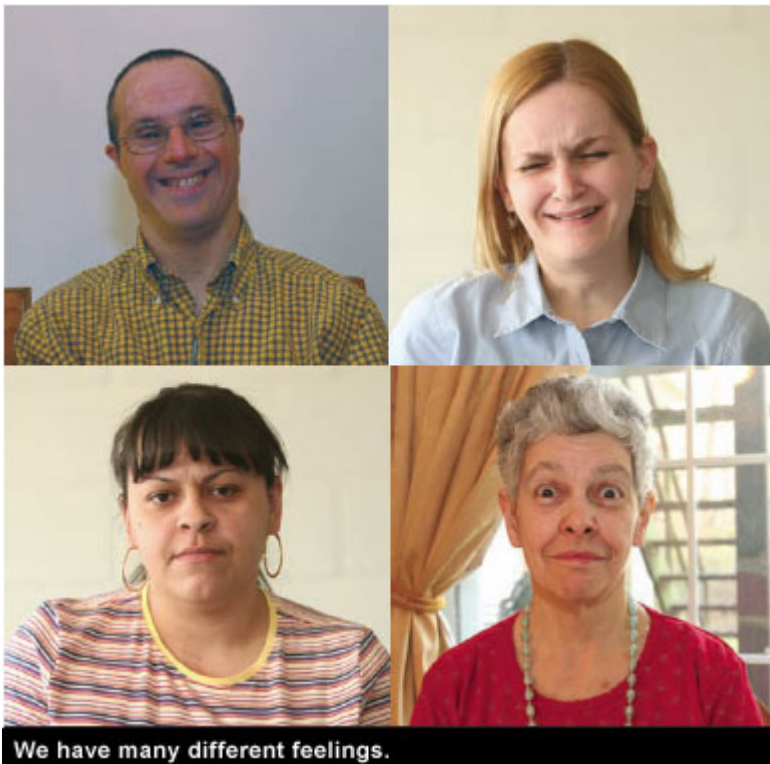
Yes

No

Session 7: Feel Good about Yourself and Others

Things we'll do today

- Review last session's Goal Form
- Discuss feelings
- Discuss how to feel better when you are sad
- Talk about how doing good makes you feel good
- Fill in **My Activities**
- Review **Goal Form**
- Give feedback on our seventh session



After today's session I will

- Name three different feelings I can have
- List three activities I can do when I feel sad
- Name one activity I can schedule to do on a regular basis
- Have a health goal to work on until the next session
- Do something that will make me feel good about myself when I feel blue!

We have many feelings. We can feel happy, excited, bored, nervous, calm, angry, or relaxed. Sometimes we feel sad. We may say we feel “down” or “blue.” If this happens some of the time, there are things we can do to feel better, which we will discuss in this session.

Sometimes people feel so sad that they do not want to do anything. This is called depression. It is different than feeling sad or blue once in a while. It is more serious. If you are depressed, you may have trouble thinking and making decisions. You may also have trouble sleeping. You may eat too much or too little. You may feel tired all the time or feel unable to sit still. Sometimes you may think about death. These are all signs of depression, which means that you feel sad or blue most of the time. If you feel this way, **it is important that you speak to someone about your feelings.** Someone in your home can arrange for you to speak to a health care person who can help you.

Most of us are not depressed or sad all of the time, but we do sometimes feel a little down or blue. When that happens, what can we do to feel better? Three things we can do are: **get going, plan regular activities, and do something good for others or for our community.**

Get going

Often when you feel sad or blue, you don't feel like doing anything. Yet you would feel a lot better if you get going and do something. We all have days when we don't feel like getting up in the morning. But as long as you stay in bed, you will most likely keep feeling blue. It is important that you push yourself to do something. Once you are up and moving, you will feel better.



Sometimes it helps to call a friend if you feel blue.

It is a good idea to think of different things you can do when you are feeling sad or blue. The following is a list of some things you can do. You might not feel like doing any of them. But once you start doing them, you will start to feel better.

Call a friend.	Read a book or magazine.
Listen to music.	Visit a park.
Watch a video.	Go to a movie.
Go for a walk.	Play a card or board game.
Go shopping.	Play a sport.
Work on your hobby.	Go to a museum.

Now think about making your own list of activities. Try to include ones that get you out into the community. You can write them down on the worksheet called **My Activities**. On days when you are feeling a little sad, take out your list. Choose one to do. Then get going!

Plan regular activities

The activities you wrote down may be ones that you do once in awhile. It is also helpful to make up another list for activities that you do on a regular or ongoing basis. These are activities that get you out even when you don't feel much like going anywhere. Once you are out, you will most likely feel better.

One regular activity many people do is go to work. Sometimes you might not feel like going to work, but you go because you have a job to do. Then once you start working, you feel better. A job gives you someplace to go and people to be with everyday. It may also give you a chance to be part of a team and to help someone. Other activities that you can do on a regular schedule might include learning something new like how to swim or how to play a musical instrument. Perhaps you want to learn to sew, knit, or quilt. You could also take a class or join an exercise club. There are lots of hobbies you can learn. Can you name some others?

Doing good can make you feel good

Another way to feel better when you feel blue is by doing something good for someone else or for the community. When you are scheduling an activity, think about ones that might help someone else. Some examples are:

- Join in church activities.
- Plant a community garden.
- Volunteer at the animal shelter.
- Help a neighbor with yard work.
- Volunteer at the library or museum.
- Work on community projects like clean-up days.
- Volunteer with a children's group.

Ask your support person about other volunteer opportunities that are available in your community.

In order to schedule these types of activities, you have to think of the steps you must do first. For example, if you want to plant a garden, you need to go to the store and buy seeds or plants. You may also want to get a book about plants so you need to go to a bookstore or library. For some activities like volunteer jobs or a class you might have to call somebody to sign up. You can use the **My Activities** worksheet to write down Ongoing Activities you would like to do and the steps you need to take.

Sometimes you may have a problem when you try to schedule an ongoing activity. You may have no transportation or no one to go with you. Maybe an activity costs too much money. Or perhaps the activity doesn't fit in with your schedule. You need to speak up about the problems. Talk to people who can help you. It can take a lot of effort, but it is worth it!

You have learned that it is important to talk to a support person if you are feeling sad a lot of the time. But if you feel sad or blue or down once in a while, then force yourself to get moving and do one of the activities on your list. Soon you'll feel better.

Personal story: Tonya tells how she spoke up about her transportation problem. She says, *"I just started working...I do the dishes and do the trays. I like my job. I didn't get picked up on time. I waited for an hour and then eventually had to call someone else. When I called the supportive employment office, they said I wasn't on the schedule. When I called my residence staff, they were angry. My resident assistant is planning to call and find out what I am supposed to do when this happens again."*

Write your regularly scheduled activities down under Emotional/Social Goals on **My Health Plan**. Include these goals in your personal plan. Ask your support person for help in taking the steps in order to do them. Try to choose some activities that help someone or your community. Remember, doing good can make you feel good!





ACTIVITY

Feelings

Can you guess what each person is feeling?





THINGS TO REMEMBER

Feelings

- We have many feelings – happy, excited, bored, nervous, angry, sad or “blue.”
- It is important to know the difference between being sad some of the time and feeling so sad all of the time that you do not want to do anything.
- If you feel so sad that you have trouble thinking, making decisions, sleeping, eating, or you feel tired all the time, you must speak to someone about your feelings – these can be signs of depression.
- If you are not sad all of the time, but sometimes feel “blue,” try to do things to “beat the blues.”

Beating the Blues

- Get moving – push yourself out of bed or off the couch and do something.
- Make a list of things you can do when you feel blue to get moving. Use the **My Activities** worksheet.
- Include ones that get you out of the house.
- List activities that you do once in a while and some that you do on a regular or ongoing basis.
- Think of the steps you need to do first in order to schedule an activity.
- Do something good for someone else or for the community.
- Include these activities under Social/Emotional Goals on **My Health Plan**.



WORKSHEET

My Activities

List **Activities** that will get you going when you feel sad or blue.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

List **Ongoing Activities** that you can plan ahead. Write down the Steps you need to do in order to schedule these activities.

1. _____
Steps _____

2. _____
Steps _____

3. _____
Steps _____

Goal Form - Session 7

Name _____

Date _____

Goal

Plan an activity that you can do on a regular basis

Choices

Choose one of these:	Check
1. Sign up to volunteer in my community.	
2. Register for a class.	
3. Learn a new hobby.	
4. My own goal:	

Steps

What do I need to do before I start? _____

Responsibility

Can I do this on my own?

Yes

No

Do I need help with this?

Yes

No

Support

Who will help me?

What help do I need?

Follow Up for Next Session

Did I complete all the steps in my goal?

Yes

No

Do I want to add this goal to **My Health Plan**?

Yes

No

Session 8: Stay on Track

Things we'll do today

- Review last session's **Goal Form**
- Review **My Health Plan**
- Discuss **Health Information Form** and **My Medical Appointment**
- Review what we learned in previous sessions
- Discuss what to do when we “goof up”
- Complete surveys
- Give feedback on seminar

After today's session I will

- Know how to use the **Health Information Form** and **My Medical Appointment**
- Know what to do when I “goof up”
- Know what Health Goals to work on
- Include Health Goals to **My Health Plan**
- Share **My Health Plan** with my support persons
- Commit to **My Health Plan** and speak up for health and wellness when I need to!



You have learned many things about being healthy. You learned how important it is to go to the doctor once a year for a physical exam. This way you can make sure your body is working well. You also need to go to the doctor when you feel sick. The **Health Information Form** will help you keep track of your medical history.

You also learned to eat the right foods and why you sometimes don't. We discussed how to get moving with physical activity. You learned how to keep your home and body clean. We talked about different feelings we have and what to do when we feel sad or blue.

Besides discussing all these things, we also talked about speaking up for good health. You learned how important it is to prepare for your doctor's visit by writing down questions you want to ask. You can use **My Medical Appointment** to help you. You learned how to speak to your support persons when you need help with your healthy activities. For example, you may need help in scheduling physical activities or planning meals.

At the end of each session, you set a *Health Goal* for the following session. You may have done all of these goals or just some of them. Now it's time to decide which goals you want to include on **My Health Plan**.

As we discussed in Session Two, **My Health Plan** is a form to remind you what you need to do to stay healthy. You are already doing some things. For example, maybe you exercise at the gym. Include the things you already do to stay healthy. Then add on any of your new Health Goals. Show **My Health Plan** to your support persons so they can include your goals in your schedule and in your personal plan. Bring My Health Plan to your annual physical exam so that the doctor can see what you are doing to stay healthy. The doctor may suggest other things you can do. **My Health Plan** should change as your needs change. The important thing is to have *Health Goals* that you enjoy and that will keep you healthy at the same time!

Goofing up and getting over it

When people learn new healthy habits, they are usually willing to try them. For example, they may eat healthy foods, be active, talk to people, make lists and plans, and follow through on other healthy behaviors. But sometimes the healthy habits don't seem so important. It seems easier not to do them. This happens to everyone. The important thing is to get back on track when it does.

For example, one day you may decide to eat a bag of potato chips and watch television instead of exercise. If this happens, it doesn't mean that you are a bad person and that you'll never exercise again. It just means that you had one bad day! You can begin to act more healthfully the next day. Each time this happens and you get back on track, you will feel better about yourself.

Here are some things you can do if you “goof up” and want to get going again:

- Look at all the healthy changes you’ve made so far. Take time to feel good about what you have done already.
- Decide to try for just one day. Don’t think too far ahead.
- Make a list of why these health goals are important to you.
- Try to decide what things are keeping you from your healthy behaviors. Can you change those things by speaking to someone?
- Try to complete just one healthy behavior today, and then take time to feel good about it!
- Call a friend for suggestions.
- Reward yourself when you do something healthy.

When you are healthy, you can do many of the things you want to do in your life. It is important to know what will keep you healthy and to speak up for good health. Good health is your choice and it is also your responsibility. Let’s get going!



THINGS TO REMEMBER

Things You Learned About Being Healthy

- To see the doctor once a year for an exam.
- To use the **Health Information Form** to keep track of your medical history.
- What are the best foods to eat and how to eat well.
- How to get moving with physical activity.
- How to keep your home and body clean and safe.
- What some of the different feelings are that you have, and what to do when you feel blue.
- To speak up for good health.
- How to prepare for your doctor's appointment by using **My Medical Appointment**.
- To use **My Health Plan** to write down your *Health Goals* and to share this plan with your doctor and others.
- That good health is your **choice** and also your **responsibility**!

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2. Rimmer, J. H. (1997). Aging, mental retardation and physical fitness. Retrieved from website:
http://www.uic.edu/orgs/rrtcamlr/500011_physicalfitness.htm
3. Rimmer J. H. (2004). Introduction to achieving a beneficial fitness for persons with developmental disabilities. Retrieved from website:
http://www.ncpad.org/disability/fact_sheet.php?sheet=117
4. <http://mypyramid.gov>
5. <http://www.cdc.gov>
6. http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/home_work_school.htm

Resources

Curricula

Heller, T., Marks, B., and Ailey, S.H. (2001). Exercise and Nutrition Health Education Curriculum for Adults with Developmental Disabilities. Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Aging with Developmental Disabilities. DHD, University of Illinois at Chicago.

Raveslout, C., et.al. *Living Well with a Disability*. Rural Institute on Disabilities, The University of Montana and Research and Training Center on Independent Living, University of Kansas.

Articles

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<http://www.thearc.org/faqs/whealth.html>

Kailes, J.I.. (2004). Can disability, chronic conditions, health and wellness coexist? Retrieved from website: http://www.ncpad.org/wellness/fact_sheet.php?sheet=106

Kailes, J. I. (2002). Helping people with disabilities take charge of their healthcare. In J.I. Kailes, *Be A Savvy Health Care Consumer, Your Life May Depend on It!* Edition 5. Retrieved from website: <http://www.jik.com/resouce.html>

Websites

General

American Association on Health and Disability, <http://www.aahd.us>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, General information on health and safety issues, downloadable posters, <http://www.cdc.gov>

Disability and Health Team, part of the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Focus is promoting the health of people who are living with disabilities. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/dh/default.htm>

U.S. Dept. of Human Services Office on Disability, <http://www.hhs.gov/od/>

Disability and health in New York State,
<http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/prevent/main.htm>

Information on health, wellness, and aging with a disability by June Isaacson Kailes, Disability Policy Consultant, <http://www.jik.com>

Disability links on the Web, <http://www/disabilityresources.org>.

Health Action Plans, Medical Care

Department of Health, United Kingdom,
<http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HealthAndSocialCareTopics/LearningDisabilities/fs/en>

Transitioning from pediatric to adult health care, booklet, Florida Dept. of Health,
<http://hctransitions.ichp.edu/resources.html>

Physical Activity and Nutrition

The National Center on Physical Activity and Disability, www.ncpad.org

The President's Challenge is an interactive lifestyle program to promote physical activity, <http://www.presidentschallenge.org/>

Nutrition and Food Pyramid information, <http://mypyramid.gov>

Nutrition, fitness, recipes, interactive games, <http://www.kidshealth.org>

Information on food safety, <http://www.fightbac.org>

Products

Cookbook, <http://www.lakemaryctr.org/LMC%20Cookbook.htm>

Food posters, <http://www.foodandhealth.com/products.php?pid=113>

Food posters and models, <http://nutritionexplorations.org/catalog/elementary.asp>

Newsletters

On Target, Disability and Health in New York State,
<http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/prevent/target.htm>

Self-Advocacy News, <http://www.sanys.org/newsltr.htm>
New Beginning, the self-determination newsletter
http://www.sanys.org/determination/sd_newsltr.htm