**Unit 2: Lesson 8**

**Stop and Go**

**Goal: To learn that the *physical* positive actions of getting enough exercise and getting enough sleep and rest help us to be healthy and feel good about ourselves.**

Story:

*Picture this. After hitting the snooze button five times, Mom finally gets up at 7:00 A.M., groggy because the whole family stayed up too late streaming a movie. She scurries around making sure everybody is up and dressed. Her daughter, Janie, scrambles all over the house trying to find where she put her shoes this time. Brent hauls milk and cereal to the breakfast table, and Jaret, the youngest boy, tries to get the sleep out of his eyes. He needs an extra hug. Mom sets Jaret on the counter as she prepares four lunches and writes a permission slip for Janie to go on a field trip. Then it’s off to one daycare center, two different schools, and one demanding job.*

*After school Mom picks up Brent and Jaret, but she has to stop by the daycare office with Jaret. He said a word she didn’t know that he knew. Then she rushes off to get Janie from basketball practice. Everybody’s cranky and late for dinner.*

*After dinner Brent and Janie plow through their homework, and Mom reads a story to Jaret. After that, Mom does a load of laundry, picks up a few things in the living room, and helps Janie and Brent get the dishes done. She finally collapses on the couch about 9:00 P.M. Then Brent, fresh from a half hour in front of the tv, watching his favorite sports team and favorite cheerleaders, has the nerve to suggest that Mom should really be getting more exercise. What Mom sees, besides red, is 19 – year – old bodies wearing exercise clothes in sizes she outgrew 10 years ago. And all she thought she needed was a nap.*

**Getting enough exercise** and **getting enough sleep and rest** are positive actions that help us feel good about ourselves. They seem to be opposites of one another: we “go” for one and “stop” for the other. Healthy bodies require that we do both, so we’ll look at exercise first and then consider sleep and rest.

**Getting Enough Exercise.**  Getting enough exercise is a positive action that keeps our bodies healthy and physically fit. It gives our bodies strength to get through the day. It tones our muscles, gives us energy and keeps our bodies flexible so we can do the things we need and like to do. And it helps us control our weight. It can also be something we can do for fun, either by ourselves or with others. When we give our bodies the exercise they need, we feel good about ourselves.



The amount of exercise we need depends on our age and our health. Before starting an exercise program, it’s best to check with a doctor. Some experts are recommending twenty to thirty minutes of moderate exercise, three to five times a week for able-bodied adults. They also recommend daily exercise for children. Children need the right amount of exercise to strengthen their growing muscles.

Our bodies thrive on all kinds of exercise, from running and walking to lifting weights and dancing, from stretching to playing team sports. It’s important that we take time to exercise all our muscles. A variety of exercise is good for us. It’s also important to do the right amount – not too much and not too little. We can experiment to find out what kinds and amount of exercise are right for us.

Even if we don’t have time for a regular exercise program, we still need to exercise our bodies. We can get exercise by walking faster than normal or by walking up and down flights of stairs. Stretching or speeding up our regular activities is another way to exercise when our time is limited. **Our bodies sleep and rest better when they get the exercise they need.**



**Getting Enough Sleep and Rest.** Getting enough sleep and rest is a positive action that restores our bodies. The amount of sleep and rest we get affects how we think, act, and feel about ourselves and our lives. When we are well rested, life looks more positive to us because we have energy to deal with its challenges.

Our individual needs for sleep and rest vary according to our daily activities and our age. When we are sick or overworked, more sleep is often necessary. But too much sleep leaves us feeling dull. Children need adequate sleep and rest for healthy growth. Here are some general recommendations for the amount of sleep needed according to age:

* New Babies: 14 to 18 hours, including naps
* 6-year-old children: up to 11 hours a night
* 12-year-old children: up to 9 hours a night
* Adults: an average of 6 to 8 hours a night

Our bodies rest better if we go to bed about the same time each night. Listening to quiet music, reading something soothing (not a mystery thriller!), expressing positive thoughts to one another, or relaxing can help us fall asleep quickly. Having a place free from loud noise or interruptions can help us sleep and rest better.

When we feel our energy drooping during the day, a short nap, a few minutes to catch our breath, or a change in activity can perk us up. How we feel physically is a good way to tell if we are getting enough sleep and rest.

**We make life better for ourselves, for our families, and for others around us when we are getting enough exercise and getting enough sleep and rest.** We are more even-tempered and better able to deal with situations and the people around us in positive ways when we take good care of our bodies. Accidents and violent behavior are less likely to occur in situations where people get enough sleep and rest. Taking responsibility for getting enough exercise and getting enough sleep and rest helps us become our best and give our best to others.

Following a schedule for exercise and for sleep and rest is a good way to make sure we get enough of each. Even small improvements in getting the amounts we need can make us healthier. Having physically fit and well-rested bodies helps us feel good about ourselves. Let’s get moving!

QUESTIONS:

* Why is getting enough exercise a positive action?
* Why should we get enough exercise?
* Why is getting enough sleep and rest a positive action?
* What are some ways to get enough sleep and rest?
* How does getting enough exercise and enough sleep and rest affect our self-concepts?
* How do you feel about yourself when you get enough exercise? When you don’t?
* If you need more exercise, what would you be willing to do to get it?
* How does the amount of sleep and rest you get affect how you feel physically?
* How would you adjust your schedule to give yourself the amount of sleep and rest you need?

Let’s make a plan!

**Exercise.** Think of the amount of exercise you are getting and determine if it’s enough to meet your needs. Decide what changes to make. Choose something enjoyable, if possible. Decide what you are willing to do and write down your plan. Start your exercise activities today or as soon as possible.

**Sleep and rest.** Now make a plan to practice the positive action of getting enough sleep. Think of the amount of rest you get over a week’s time and consider how it makes your feel physically.

If you feel tired or completely sluggish by the end of the day, you might not be getting the right amount of sleep. If you need more sleep, try getting to bed earlier this week. If you’re getting too much sleep, find new activities and interests that make you more active. Whatever you decide, promise yourself that you will make the necessary changes.

**FAMILY POSITIVE ACTIONS:**

*Parent positive actions*

**Ask Yourself:** How does the amount of exercise and the amount of sleep and rest you get affect your family? How could you encourage your family members to get the exercise and the sleep and rest they need to feel good about themselves?

**Plan and do:** If you need more exercise, find at least two ways to get it. Consider joining an exercise group or taking a walk several time a week. If possible, find a friend or ask a member of your family to join you. See if you can schedule a time to start your new exercise this week.

Look for ways to get additional sleep and rest if you need it. Find some quiet time before the children come home from school or after you get off work. Try taking a quick nap when you feel tired. Put your plan into action now.

FAMILY DISCUSSION:

* How does the amount of exercise and the amount of sleep and rest we get affect our family?
* What are some ways we could exercise together as a family?
* How can we create an environment to help one another get enough sleep and rest?
* What quiet activities can we do while others are sleeping or resting?

Let’s practice the positive action of getting enough exercise together. Let’s make a list of fun physical activities we like to do as a family. Then we’ll select an activity from our list and set a time to do it. We can also figure out how to make a fun family activity a weekly event.

Let’s also make a family plan to practice the positive action of getting enough sleep and rest. We should pay attention to how much sleep and rest we need based on how we feel physically from day to day. We can compare the amount of sleep we get with the general recommendations.

In order to make sure we all get the sleep and rest we need, let’s set up a sleep schedule. We’ll write down regular bedtimes and the times we get up. This week all of us will go to bed and get up at our scheduled time. At the end of the week we’ll discuss any changes that need to be made.

**COMMUNITY POSITIVE ACTIONS:**

This week let’s keep our neighbors’ need for exercise in mind. We might find out if an elderly neighbor would like to take a walk with us. Or we might consider taking neighborhood children to the park or organizing a neighborhood walk on the weekend.

Let’s remember to be quiet when our neighbors are resting. Helping others get exercise and sleep and rest will help us feel good about ourselves.

SUMMARY:

Keeping our bodies healthy requires that we get enough exercise and enough sleep and rest. We feel good about ourselves when we do. When we don’t’ get enough exercise or enough sleep and rest, like the family in the beginning of this lesson, our bodies tend to wear out before we get everything done that we need or want to do. Our feelings about ourselves tend to drag, too.

**Improving our feelings about ourselves can be as simple as getting enough exercise and enough sleep and rest.** Even small changes help us feel better about ourselves. As our bodies become healthier, it’s important that we continue taking the positive actions of getting enough exercise and enough sleep and rest, so we continue to feel good physically and improve our self-concept.

**Word of the Week: Wellness**

To be totally healthy in body, mind, and feelings.