

Together Counts™ Activity Sheet

School to Home - Spring 2017

Create a New Normal

No matter your age, it can be easy to get stuck in the same routine. We eat the same breakfast, play the same games, and talk to the same people day after day. And while routines *are* a good thing, it becomes too much when you're always doing the same physical activity or eating the same foods. This spring, work with your students to examine which parts of your school routine you could change to get more variety in your day. Then set goals to bring this new-ness to all sides of your Wellness Triangle. Before long, trying new things will become routine!

At School Activity 1: What's Our Normal?

Every day, your students make decisions that affect all sides of their Wellness Triangle. As a quick review, your Wellness Triangle consists of physical wellness (my body), mental/emotional wellness (my mind and feelings) and social wellness (my relationships with family and friends). *See the Together Counts [curriculum](#) for additional help in introducing the concept of the Wellness Triangle to your students.*

Before your students can even try to add variety to their everyday habits, they first must identify *what* they do at school that has become routine. Encourage students to think about their days at school from the moment they enter the school grounds to the moment they leave. To help students brainstorm, divide your class into small groups and give each group three pieces of blank paper. Have a group leader label the sheets: Mental/Emotional Wellness, Social Wellness and Physical Wellness. Set a timer and for five minutes each, instruct the groups to brainstorm what they regularly do at school that affects each of these wellness categories. Remind students that one routine could go on multiple sheets of paper. For instance, do students always sit and read at recess? This should go on the Physical Wellness page because they are sitting when they could be moving, as well as the Mental/Emotional Wellness page because they are using their minds!

If any groups are stuck, suggest that a team member visit another group to see what they have come up with so far and report back to their team members to kick start their own brainstorming! If time allows, have the groups quickly share and encourage students to add new and applicable ideas to their own sheets as they are presented.

At School Activity 2: Mixing It Up

Lead your students in a discussion around routines and variety. Why are routines healthy? How can habits be both good and bad? Explain to students that no matter what, it's always good to try to add variety to your everyday routine. For instance, while jogging is great for you because it strengthens your legs and your heart, what about your arms? It might be good to jog one day and throw a ball the next day so you add variety to your physical wellness!

After your discussion, instruct your students to get back in their small groups. On the back of the Wellness brainstorming sheets from Activity 1, instruct students to write: "Instead of _____, try _____!" For each item that they've written down because it is part of their routine, encourage your students to come up with a new "try" activity that mixes it up! For instance: *Instead of eating an apple*

for snack, try a vegetable!" Or: Instead of reading during free choice, try drawing a picture! Before you have students begin, reiterate the importance of making these swaps realistic. Though they're coming up with new ideas, they should all still be achievable in school!

At School Activity 3: Keeping Things Fresh

Now that your class has lists of new activities that will add variety to their daily routines and strengthen their Wellness Triangle, it's time to set some goals to make sure these new activities actually happen!

Distribute the Wellness Bingo Board on the following page to your students--or have them draw a similar one on a blank piece of paper. Instruct every student to choose three "Try this" activities from each category and write them down in the Bingo squares. When the students are done, their Wellness Bingo cards will be filled with three new Mental/Emotional Wellness activities, three new Physical Wellness activities and three new Social Wellness activities.

Explain that as students try a new activity from their Wellness Bingo boards, they should color the square. Together, set a class goal for everyone to get a *Bingo!* by the end of the week. You and your class can decide whether a *Bingo!* is a colored line across, two lines across, four corners or the entire card. To make it trickier, you could even decide that students can only color in half a square each time an activity is completed, so each activity must be done more than once to count towards a *Bingo!*

Every week, your students can set up a new card with different "Try this" activities and choose the new *Bingo!* As each week comes to an end, try to set aside a little time for reflection. It's important for students to realize that their weekly goal is about more than just filling in a Bingo board...It's about setting real, tangible goals that introduce variety to their everyday lives!

Student's signature _____

Parent's signature _____

Coach's signature _____

My Wellness Bingo

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Families often find a routine that works and stick with it. It makes sense because it's comfortable and easy--but it can also get us stuck in a rut. Trying new foods and activities is important for all sides of our Wellness Triangle. Use the activities below to examine what habits your family has developed and how you can mix them up. As you work together, you'll find that it's fun and exciting to add variety and newness to your day-to-day lives!

At Home Activity 1: Take an Audit

In school, you child has been learning about how to add variety to their Wellness Triangle. They've been investigating whether they frequently strengthen their body the same way, challenge their mind the same way or do the same things with their friends and family. To help your family start to mix things up, you first need to understand *what* needs to be mixed up!

Use the chart below as a model to keep track of your family's activities at home for one week. Or better yet: Put your child in charge of the record keeping! You can record every family member's activities in one place, or you can make a different chart for each family member. How you record it is up to you; the important thing is that someone writes down every way that your family strengthens their body, their mind, and their relationships with others while you are at home. (For more information about the Wellness Triangle, click [here](#).) No activity is too big or too small to record!

Activity Tracker Sample

Activity	Mental/ Emotional Wellness?	Social Wellness?	Physical Wellness?
Example: <i>Dad and Drew walked the dog</i>		X	X

At Home Activity 2: Check Out the Results!

Once your family has recorded their activities for one week, now it's time for the most important part: Analyze the results!

Choose a time to have a family meeting. To make it more official, assign family meeting roles. Group Leader, Time Keeper, Secretary, and Mediator are all possible jobs that family members could take on.

Once your roles are established, make sure you have your Activity Tracker from Part 1. Then hold a discussion around the following questions:

- Are there any activities that your family does often that don't really strengthen any sides of your Wellness Triangle?
- What side of your Wellness Triangle has the **most** variety?
 - Why do you think it is easy for your family to do many kinds of activities that strengthen this side of the Wellness Triangle?
- Which side of your Wellness Triangle has the **least** variety?
 - Why do you think it may be harder for your family to do a variety of activities that strengthen this side of the Wellness Triangle?

At Home Activity 3: Goal Time!

Now that you've had a chance to review your Wellness Triangle, it's time to take charge! With your child, brainstorm NEW actions that your family can take to strengthen each side of their Wellness Triangle. You can brainstorm several together -- or, for older children, it may be more fun to brainstorm independently. Challenge each family member to think of at least 5 realistic activities for each side and write them down on small slips of paper. Be sure to keep each category separate!

Once your family has written down their ideas, you need to find a place to put them. Search around your home for three different small containers. Jars, bowls, or shoeboxes could all do the trick! Once you've found them, label the three containers for each side of the Wellness Triangle. One container should be labeled *Physical Wellness*, another should be labeled *Mental/Emotional Wellness* and the third should be labeled *Social Wellness*. Then stick your new ideas in the correct containers!

Now make it your family goal to select one idea from every container each week. Choose a day of the week when your family is usually home and make that day your starting point. Have your child pick one activity from each container and read them to your family. Then put them on your fridge, family bulletin board or another prominent location. For one week, try to do these three activities as many times as you can. Draw a tally mark on the activity slip every time the activity is completed by someone in your family.

The following week, sit down again together and look at what your family accomplished. If you had trouble completing one of the activities, discuss why. Was it unrealistic? Is there something you could do or change to make it easier to achieve? Decide together whether you should draw new activities from the containers or keep the same goals for another week. Your specific goals are up to you; the important thing is that your goals slowly encourage your family to work together as you add more variety to your Wellness Triangle!

The _____ family completed the following Together Counts™ activities:

_____ **Take an Audit**

_____ **Check out the Results**

_____ **Goal Time!**