

Together Counts™ Activity Sheet

Home to School

Fall 2016

P-A-T-T-E-R-N-S... P-A-T-T-E-R-N-S...

Your child has been investigating how patterns influence their daily lives and how to make sure that these routines enhance their personal wellness. As you adapt to the new school year, connect what your child is learning in school to your life at home by using the activities below to incorporate positive patterns into your family's busy schedule. Then set goals to help your child — and your family — achieve an active, healthy lifestyle!

At Home Activity 1: Mealtime Patterns

In school, your child investigated patterns in their school lunches and brainstormed ideas to make their lunches balanced on a regular basis. Continue this at home by focusing on introducing new patterns into the family meals that you eat together. Incorporating more fruits and vegetables into every meal is a great place to start.

Before you shop for groceries, work with your child to select a few key fruits and vegetables for the week. They can be frozen or fresh depending on your preference. When buying fresh produce, seasonal fruits and vegetables tend to be the least expensive and will also taste the best! ([Here](#) is a helpful chart that outlines seasonal produce.)

Once you have chosen your fruits and vegetables, make it your family goal to include at least one fruit and one vegetable into every meal. Don't be afraid to search online or in cookbooks for simple recipes. Did you know that zucchini, for example, can be stir-fried, put into tacos, turned into oven-baked fries, hidden in brownies or made into pasta? Fruits and vegetables are more versatile than you think!

Each week, try to incorporate one new fruit or vegetable into the mix—but don't go overboard! Focusing on just a few different kinds of produce each week will be less overwhelming and will allow you to try preparing them in many different ways!

At Home Activity 2: Our Family Wellness Triangle

Setting wellness goals and establishing healthy, active patterns now will help your children throughout their entire lives. It is therefore important to have routines in place that help your physical wellness (such as a full night's sleep, physical activity, and eating a balanced diet), your mental/emotional wellness (such as talking about our feelings, trying our best in school, and participating in varied activities) and your social wellness (such as getting along with others, being able to say no to people, and spending time with your family). These three types of wellness make up the three sides of your Wellness Triangle.

togethercounts

HEALTHY DECISIONS. HEALTHY HABITS.

With your child, talk about your daily routine on a Saturday or Sunday, or whichever day you typically spend the most time together. Explain that you want to investigate which side(s) of your Family Wellness Triangle are the strongest and which need some work!

Use the chart below to record one day that you spend together. Then place a checkmark in each hour of time that was used to strengthen your physical, mental/emotional or social wellness. *Note:* You could also fill out this form in real-time throughout your day.

Time Block	During this time, we...	Did this time help our physical wellness?	Did this time help our mental/emotional wellness?	Did this time help our social wellness?
Sample	Cooked breakfast and ate together as a family	✓		✓
7am-8am				
8am-9am				
9am-10am				
10am-11am				
11am-12pm				
12pm-1pm				
1pm-2pm				
2pm-3pm				
3pm-4pm				
4pm-5pm				
5pm-6pm				
6pm-7pm				
7pm-8pm				

At Home Activity 3: All Sides Matter

You are your best self when your Wellness Triangle is balanced, which means that all sides of your Wellness Triangle are equally strong. With your child, count the number of checkmarks in each of the columns above and record their totals below:

Physical Wellness: _____ Mental/Emotional Wellness: _____ Social Wellness: _____

Identify which side of your Family Wellness Triangle needs the most work. Now make it your goal to develop a weekend pattern that strengthens this side! For example, if your social wellness side is the weakest, make it a goal to spend at least two hours together doing something as a family every Saturday. Develop a goal statement using the sentence starter below:



This week, we will work on the _____ wellness side of our Family Wellness Triangle. We will do this by _____
_____ for _____ hour(s) next week.



Cut out your goal statement and ask your child to put it in a place where your family will always see it. After a couple of weeks have passed, re-do Activities 2 and 3 to see if your Family Wellness Triangle is stronger. Once you've strengthened one side of the triangle, continue developing new goals and routines to make sure your Family Wellness Triangle is as strong as it can possibly be!

The _____ family completed the following Together Counts™ activities:

_____ Mealtime Patterns _____ Our Family Wellness Triangle _____ All Sides Matter

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P-A-T-T-E-R-N-S... P-A-T-T-E-R-N-S...

While math class may be the first thing that comes to mind, the reality is that patterns are all around us. Patterns can be found in the music we sing, the clothes we wear, and even our daily routines! In fact, patterns are essential to setting physical activity and nutrition goals—and ultimately leading an active, healthy lifestyle. From identifying (and then improving!) physical activity routines throughout the day to analyzing patterns in our family’s food intake, it is important to be aware of their existence. It’s then our job to ensure that these patterns are conducive to our wellness...and this resource will aim to do just that! This printable sheet outlines activity ideas to help students adopt healthy habits at school and at home.

At School Activity 1: Our Activity Patterns

In school, fall is symbolic of new beginnings and fresh starts. For this reason, it’s the ideal time to teach new routines.

For two weeks, work together to track your students’ school-day activity level. Copy the chart below on a white board or piece of chart paper and involve your students in the process. Try to include any activities that involve the majority of your class: recess, P.E., fall field days, etc.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Physical Activity (For example: Soccer: 10 min.)	Morning	Morning	Morning	Morning	Morning
	Afternoon	Afternoon	Afternoon	Afternoon	Afternoon

At the end of the two weeks, review the chart and discuss your students’ observations. Remind students that a pattern is something that repeats, and see if you can find patterns in your physical activity. For instance: Is your class always more active in the afternoon? Are students the least active on Tuesdays and Thursdays? Are students the most active on days they have P.E.?

Discuss how, as a class, you can introduce more physical activity into your day. Reiterate the importance of physical activity and connect it to the role it plays in helping your body on all sides of the Wellness Triangle. (See the Together Counts [curriculum](#) for help in introducing the concept of the Wellness Triangle to your students.) Together, brainstorm a list of ideas to help your class develop a pattern of physical activity. For example, could everyone do 10 jumping jacks in between subjects on Monday/Wednesday/Friday and then jog in place in between subjects on Tuesday/Thursday? Continue

to track your physical activity and use your class' ideas to introduce new movement patterns every week!

At School Activity 2: Mixing it up

Once your class is aware of how much they move, shift the focus to *how* they move. Start with an examination of recess. Do students always play the same sport or do the same activity? Do they always play with the same people? Ask student groups to brainstorm how moving in different ways and playing with different people can be good for all sides of the Wellness Triangle. Try to arrive at some variation of the following:

Physical Wellness (My Body): Varied movement strengthens different muscle groups and challenges your body in new ways.

Emotional Wellness (My Mind and Feelings): Different activities prevent boredom, allow you to think in a variety of ways, and make sure that everyone gets to try something they like to do.

Social Wellness (My Relationships with my Family and Friends): Playing with different people will help students make new friends and learn how to get along with others.

As a class, develop a goal to increase the variety of both *who* students play with and *what* students play at recess. Sometimes interrupting a pattern is a good thing when it means that students try new things!

At School Activity 3: Lunches have patterns too!

Patterns and consistency are often positive— especially if they are repeated healthy habits, encouraging behaviors variety. Examine the lunches that students eat at school. Have students discuss the following questions with a partner: Do you always bring the same thing from home? Do you always order the same thing at school? Are there certain foods you never eat? Are there certain foods you always eat? Are there any patterns in what you eat?

Display [MyPlate](#), and discuss the importance of making it a pattern to eat this variety (a combination of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein and dairy) every day. Explain that while not every meal needs to have this exact combination of food groups, it should be the students' goal to make it as close as possible.

In pairs or groups of three, have students design realistic lunches (from home or cooked in the school cafeteria) that meet the MyPlate criteria. You may need to review the definition of each food group with your students. When students have finished creating their new lunches, encourage groups to share. Then display them in the room as a reminder to use MyPlate to develop healthy lunch patterns.

Student's signature _____

Parent's signature _____

Coach's signature _____