

Strong Minds

FAMILY TIP SHEET



Physical fitness, mindfulness, creative self-expression, nutrition, and sleep are all components of good health and well-being. This resource provides tips and ideas about ways to destress, have fun, and integrate healthy living choices into day-to-day lives.

Special Olympics athletes and families can plan for and implement these activities independently, with one another, or as a group. Using the Strong Minds stickers, you can design your healthy living schedule to best meet the personal needs and interests of your family. Parents, caregivers, grandparents, siblings, and friends can all benefit from healthy living!

Every Sunday, plan a time that you can individually or as a family reflect on the week. Use these questions to guide your reflection.



1. What worked?
2. What didn't work?
3. What changes will we make for future weeks?

For planning and more information, the resource includes:

- Family Tip Sheet
- [Weekly Activity Calendar](#)
- [Strong Minds Calendar Stickers](#)

We would love your feedback on this resource. Please complete this quick survey to share your thoughts: <https://tinyurl.com/StrongMindsCalendar>



MINDFULNESS

Life can be so busy that sometimes we forget to stop and smell the roses! It is important for our physical and mental well-being that we remember to slow down and be present. This practice can help improve our focus, decrease stress, and assist in managing emotions.

Body Scan

Find a comfortable seated position and close your eyes if that feels comfortable to you. Slowly move your attention through each part of your body, just noticing how it

feels. How does your seat feel on the chair? How do the clothes feel touching your skin? For a guided body scan, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/bodyscan2021>

Exploration Walk

Head outside for a walk, but instead of focusing inward, notice the outside world around you! Try to find as many bugs, birds, or other animals as you can. See if there are any beautiful flowers beginning to bloom. For added fun, bring a camera along and snap a shot of your favorite discovery!

Gratitude Share

Each member of the group takes a turn to share a few things they are feeling thankful for at that moment. Maybe you are thankful for something someone did for you. Maybe you are thankful for the sunshine, or for a pet. Whatever it is you are grateful for, big or small, it is important to recognize and reflect!



HEALTHY EATING

Our bodies are powered by the foods that we eat! Certain foods have more nutrients and are better for our bodies. By eating healthy foods, we can make sure that our brain has the power to help us focus and learn and that our muscles have the fuel to help us run and play sports.

Try a new healthy food

While shopping for groceries, have a family member pick out one new healthy food that you have never tried before, such as a fruit or vegetable. Preparing a new food for the first time can be tricky. It might be helpful to use cookbooks or the internet to search for healthy recipes. You can repeat this challenge by having different family members pick a new food during each trip to the grocery store.

Find the hidden sugar

Go to your refrigerator or pantry and pick out three beverages or snacks that your family regularly eat or drinks. Have each member of the family guess which of the beverages or snacks has the least amount of sugar and which one has the most. Next, help each other read the nutrition labels to figure out which ones have the least and most amount of sugar. Discuss and plan healthy choices. Check out this resource for information on finding sugar on your food labels; <https://tinyurl.com/sugarnutritionlabel>

Prepare a picnic

Prepare a basket of healthy foods as a family and find an outdoor space to enjoy it! You can take the food to a nearby park or even just to your backyard.



SLEEP

It is time for a recharge! Just like our phones, we have to remember to charge ourselves up.

Catch some Z'sss

With your family, plan 8 hours of sleep time. Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time every day (even the weekends). Remember, the most important part of the sleep schedule is sticking with it. If you do not fall asleep in under 20 minutes, get up and do something that helps you relax.

Count it up

Go through the alphabet (A-Z) in order and name your favorite animals, sports teams, stores, foods, etc. For example: apples, bananas, carrots, etc. Hopefully you are asleep before you get to Z. If not, pick another category and try again.

Hide-and-Sleep

Getting ready for bed can be fun with this spin on hide-and-seek. Hide your child's favorite pajamas somewhere easy to find. When they find them, have them put them on right there. Then have them look for their toothpaste and toothbrush. When both are found, have them go straight to the bathroom to brush their teeth. Hide their favorite book or toy and when they find it have them get in bed with it. Anything else your child may need to go to sleep is fair game. Don't hide them too well though, the goal is to find them and get your child ready and in bed as quick as possible!



CREATIVE SELF-EXPRESSION

Art can be good for us; it allows us to share and connect with others. We do not need to have special art talents nor specific materials to produce great artwork. Exploring new materials and making something that is uniquely yours can be both fun and relaxing!

Family Portrait: Think about the people you love and appreciate. What do you love about them? What is their favorite color or something they enjoy doing? Create a portrait with these ideas - of one person or the whole family! To do this activity together, people draw names from a cup and then draw or paint a portrait of the person they have chosen.

Vision Board: We all have dreams and goals for the future. Choosing words/images to showcase achievable goals can keep us accountable and excited for the future.

Using newspapers, magazines, ticket stubs, flyers, or photographs, cut out images and words that best represent your vision and glue them on paper. Include things you want to do, places you'd like to go, or healthy lifestyle choices you would like to incorporate. Keep it for your own use, or share it with friends, caregivers, or family members so they can support you in reaching your goals.

Nature Art: Take a walk near your home or in a place that is meaningful to you. Find something in nature that you can take home with you (e.g.- a colorful leaf, a pretty flower, a rock, etc.). Use what you have found to create a unique piece of art. You can break apart what you have found to make something new. Or you can glue or draw the items or use the colors and texture to inspire your work. These creations help you keep memories of the places you have been and loved



PHYSICAL FITNESS

When you take care of your body, you take care of your mind too. Physical exercise helps keep us healthy, decreases stress, and can help improve our mood! Explore different activities that can be done individually, or could be fun for the whole family.

Take a Hike/walk: Go to your favorite hiking trail, walking area, park, or even your neighborhood. Bring the whole family along and encourage each other to maintain a brisk walking pace. Feel your heart beating faster and your breathing rate increase. Especially as the weather warms up, remember to drink plenty of water!

Family Sports Night: This idea is fun for the whole family. Compete against each other or just cheer each other on as you engage the family in a sports night. Try anything from a dance off in your living room to an obstacle course in your backyard to a basketball game at your local park. It may be fun for a different member of the family to come up with a new challenge, competition, or activity every time you have sports night. Have fun and get active!

Take a Field Trip: Get the family together and take a field trip to enjoy some fun physical activity. Go to a trampoline park, group exercise class, community swimming pool, roller skating rink, or even just the park and participate in some fun activities you may not normally get to do. Try something new and stay adventurous to keep physical fitness fun!

REFERENCES

1. specialolympics.org
2. vkc.vumc.org/vkc
3. [Helpguide.org](https://helpguide.org)
4. [FDA.gov](https://www.fda.gov)

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