

# Physical Activity is a Girls' Issue!

Empowering approaches to health promotion challenge gender stereotypes, encourage critical thinking, teach new skills, and provide girls with the knowledge and resources they need to make healthy changes in their lives. Facilitators of girls' programs can create safe spaces to discuss how physical activity is connected to play, community, culture, body image, media pressures, and more! Start a conversation:

## AWESOME WOMEN

Which women athletes inspire you? Why do you think they're successful? What challenges have they overcome?

## STRESS

Does going for a run or doing yoga help you deal with stress? How about spending time outside? How can we learn more about physical activity and mental wellness?

## GETTING MESSY

Does worrying about getting sweaty or messing up your hair or make-up prevent you from being more physically active? In what other ways do concerns about our body prevent us from doing the things we love?

## JOYFUL MOVEMENT

What physical activities are fun? Dancing? Swimming? Hula hooping? How can we find more joyful ways of moving our bodies and worry less about competition and what we look like?

## MOTIVATION

Why is it important to be physically active? Sometimes we can get focused on meeting health guidelines or losing weight or feeling more attractive. What other reasons are there? Fun? Spending time with friends? Learning a new skill? Getting outside?

## GIRLS CAN

What are the messages we hear from family, friends, teachers, media about girls and physical activity? Why are some sports for girls and others for boys? Why are girls less active than boys? What can we do to change things?

## DISCRIMINATION

Have you ever experienced sexism, racism, fatphobia, or other forms of discrimination while playing sports? Did this stop you from participating in sports afterwards?

## Facilitator's Tip: Work to Overcome Barriers

Lack of skill, lack of access to community facilities, and transportation challenges are just a few of the barriers to girls participating in sports and other physical activity. There also are some barriers that disproportionately affect girls such as neighborhood safety. Help girls to find ways to overcome these barriers and advocate to reduce these barriers in the community (e.g., increasing neighborhood safety for walking and cycling).

Download the *Take Care* curriculum guide and other resources on empowering approaches to health promotion for girls



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