

Teacher Guide



DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

The Heart Smart Discussion Activity is designed to get students to think and talk about their health and to decide what they can do for a healthier heart. It addresses the following National Health Education Standards Performance Indicators:

- 1.12.1 Predict how healthy behaviors can affect health status.
- 1.12.7 Compare and contrast the benefits of and barriers to practicing a variety of healthy behaviors.
- 6.12.2 Develop a plan to attain a personal health goal that addresses strengths, needs, and risks.

After the teacher introduces the activity, students participate in small group discussions. They are asked to indicate whether they agree or disagree with a series of 12 statements related to nutrition, physical activity, stress or other heart health topics. Cards that support each side (agree/disagree) and related questions stimulate discussion. After the discussion of each statement, students use a heart token to indicate whether they agree or disagree. The numbers of students who agree and who disagree are recorded. The activity culminates with an opportunity for students to plan what they will do for a healthier heart.

Why should you think about your heart health?
Physical activity, nutrition, and stress affect your heart health.
Consider these surprising facts:

33% of all U.S. deaths each year are due to physical inactivity, poor eating habits, and tobacco use.

Eating fast food meals more than twice a week is associated with a 50% increase in the risk of obesity.

Too much stress can damage your heart and blood vessels over time.

Autopsies of healthy teenagers killed in accidents often show evidence of the early stages of heart disease.

Hispanic-American teenagers born outside the U.S. eat healthier diets than those born in the U.S.

A regular cheeseburger and a large order of fries have 750 calories. You have to walk for 3.5 hours to work off these calories.

Watching TV two hours or more per day is associated with weight gain.

For 5-7 Players
Ages 14 and up
Play Time: 45–60 minutes

SET UP

1. Unfold the activity board and place in the middle of the table.
2. Place the **DISCUSSION STATEMENTS** on the board.
3. Put the **AGREE**, **DISAGREE**, and **LET'S TALK** cards in order (# side up) from #1 (top card) to #12 (bottom card), and place each stack on the board.
4. Place the **OPINION RECORD PAD**, index cards and **STUDENT GUIDE** on the table.
5. Divide students into groups of 5-7 and seat them around each activity board.
6. Make sure each group selects students for the following roles:
 - ▶ **Record keeper**, who uses the **OPINION RECORD PAD** to record the final numbers of students who agree and who disagree with each **DISCUSSION STATEMENT**.
 - ▶ **Facilitator**, who will keep the group on track and promote discussion.
7. Give each student a **HEART** token, two index cards and a pencil.

PROCEDURE

- ♥ Introduce the Heart Smart Discussion Activity.
Use downloadable Heart Smart PowerPoint presentation to review surprising facts, or read them aloud from the back of this page.
- ♥ State the **Heart Smart Discussion Activity** goals:
“Think and talk about your health.”
“Decide what you can do for a healthier heart.”
- ♥ Review the rules of the activity:
 1. A student reads aloud the **DISCUSSION STATEMENT**. (Students take turns reading the other discussion statements.)
 2. Students place their **HEART** on the **AGREE** or **DISAGREE** side of the board and state why they made that choice.
 3. Students take turns reading aloud the **AGREE** card and the **DISAGREE** card and discuss them.
 4. The **facilitator** encourages further discussion by reading the **LET'S TALK** card.
 5. After the discussion, the **facilitator** asks if anyone has had a change of heart (change of opinion). If so, these students then move their hearts to the other side.
 6. **Record keeper** records on the **OPINION RECORD** sheet how many students agree or disagree with each statement by counting the number of **HEARTS** on each side.
 7. Students retrieve a **HEART** for the next round.
 8. Place all used cards at the bottom of each stack, and go to the next **DISCUSSION STATEMENT** to start a new round.
 9. Repeat steps 1-8 until all **DISCUSSION STATEMENTS** have been discussed and opinions recorded or time runs out.
- ♥ Guide the students through the first round. Once in play, circulate around the room to help keep students on task, and answer any questions that might arise in the group discussion.
- ♥ Provide a five minutes signal before the activity is over to alert groups to finish up their discussion.

MAKE A PLAN

- ♥ Close the activity by directing each student to make a one-step personal plan to improve his/her heart health and write it on two index cards—one to keep and one for the teacher. Ask them to write one **behavior** they want to change about their diet, exercise or stress management. Ask them to be **realistic** and **specific**.
EXAMPLES: *I will start walking 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week.*
I will stop eating donuts for breakfast.
- ♥ Ask if any of the students would like to share their one step towards a healthier heart. Remind them even small changes make a difference!

For more information on the Heart Smart project, Heart Smart Discussion Activity presentation and materials, plus a collection of heart health web resources, go to <http://www.miamisci.org/heartsmart>.

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