

## Taking “Fit” to the Streets

*You’re the Cure—Let’s make our neighborhoods “fit” for physical activity*



PREP NOTE: Ask the facilitator to provide a brief, written introduction to share with the program participants. Also prepare your opening remarks. For example, you may want to select an inspiring quote or reading.

- Kick off your program with a warm welcome and your opening remarks.
- Introduce the facilitator to your fellow community members. Or, if you are the facilitator, share with the group why this topic is important to you and your reason for offering to host this lesson.

## Taking “Fit” to the Streets Lesson Overview

### Welcome

- EmPowered To Serve and the ETS Health Check
- Program Topic and Urgent Community Need

### Taking “Fit” to the Streets

- Call to Action: You’re the Cure— Let’s Make Our Neighborhoods “Fit” for Physical Activity

### Closing Thoughts



- Get everyone “on topic” by reading through the lesson overview.
- Let participants know that the lesson takes about 1 – 1 ½ hours to complete.
- Share:
  - Our goal for this lesson is to identify actions our group may take to make neighborhoods safe places where adults, children and youth can and want to be physically active.
  - For example, we may decide we need to create a coalition of local community organizations and businesses that advocates for evening access to gyms at neighborhood schools. Or, we may want to work at the federal level and email members of Congress about the need for better, stronger policies to provide funding for infrastructure projects. More to come on this...

**What is ETS?**  
***EmPowered To Serve***

**EmPowered To Serve is a movement sweeping our nation to improve the health of multicultural communities.**

- We unite as the ETS megacommunity to make healthy change happen in diverse communities across the country.
- Learn More at [EmPoweredToServe.org](http://EmPoweredToServe.org).

**The AHA's  
2020 Goal**

Improve heart health of all Americans by 20%.

Reduce deaths from heart diseases and stroke by 20%.



- Read the introduction to EmPowered To Serve.
- Share why you joined the ETS movement.
- Encourage anyone who has not yet joined the ETS megacommunity to go online after the program and sign up for this national movement.
- Note that ETS is a movement of the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association in partnership with community organizations across the country.
- Highlight the American Heart Association’s 2020 commitment to the country.

## ETS Health Check

### Blood pressure and weight check:

- Starting point for you
- Optional and anonymous, no name



#### Why check blood pressure?

High blood pressure (HBP) is a risk factor for heart disease, the No. 1 killer worldwide.

HBP is also a risk factor for stroke, the No. 2 killer worldwide.

#### Why worry about being overweight?

Nearly 70 percent of adults are either overweight or obese.

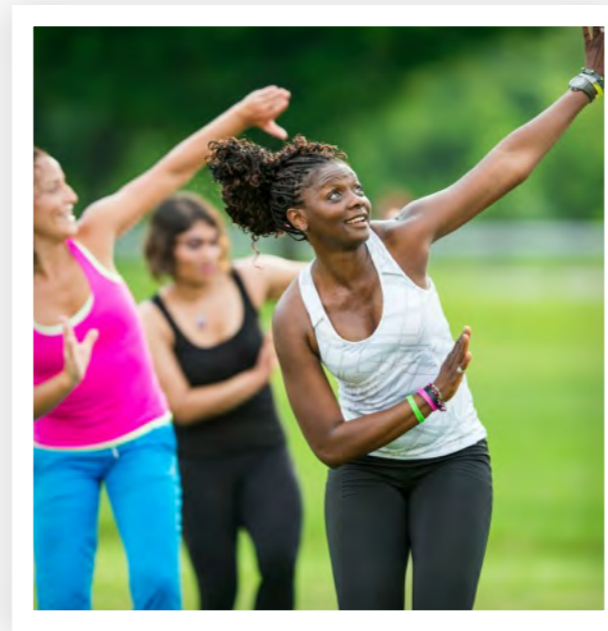
Being obese puts you at a higher risk for heart disease, stroke, HBP, diabetes, and more.

- Explain that the EmPowered To Serve Health Check is a way for community members learn about their blood pressure and current weight.
  - Review the information on why to check blood pressure.
  - Highlight the reasons for worrying about being overweight.
- This optional health screening gives information needed to complete the My Life Check personal health assessment.
- If you have not already done so, please complete the My Life Check assessment using your unique URL. It only takes a few minutes to complete. Our goal is for 15 percent of our group to complete this simple health assessment.
- Did you already complete the My Life Check assessment?
  - Have you been working on making healthier choices?
  - You may want to go online and take the assessment again.
  - Check your score. See how you are doing!

## Safe Places to be Active

Safe places to be active equal thriving communities.

- Community design can affect physical activity and obesity rates.
- Safe sidewalks, green spaces, parks, and public transportation help lower the risk for developing chronic disease.
- A recent study found that people who live near parks or rec centers are 38 percent more active.



- Review the information on the slide.
- Ask the group:
  - Did you walk or bike to school?
  - How many of you know kids who walk or bike to school?



## **Not Everyone Has Access**

**Many people don't have easy access to safe parks or recreational facilities.**

- Communities may not have the financial support to invest in walking paths and other transportation infrastructure, particularly in underserved communities.

- Ask for three volunteers to read the information on the slide.
- Emphasize that it is time for your community to take “fit” back to the streets.
- Many communities are dealing with shrinking budgets and may struggle to maintain the infrastructure of towns and cities.



## Let's Get in Gear

All communities can prosper from:

- Safe areas for physical activity
- State and community advocacy to increase areas for walking and biking
- Nearby playgrounds, parks, and safe streets to walk or bike

- Review the information on the slide.
  - We need to give families safe, planned areas for getting physical activity, including ways to walk to school.
  - We need to support state and community advocacy to increase walking and bicycling.
  - All communities can prosper with nearby playgrounds, parks and safe streets to walk or bike.

## Program Objectives

At the end of this lesson,  
you'll be able to get into gear  
and be a community voice  
about:

- **Voices for Healthy Kids**, a collaboration between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the American Heart Association, which helps to create Active Places® for our kids and youth.
- Getting everyone into gear by joining **You're the Cure**.



- Review the information on the slide.
- Let everyone know working together **with national partners** to create safe places— working at the state and local levels to help construct and reconstruct complete streets that are safe and convenient for all users and all modes of transportation.
- Share that today’s program is about rallying our community voice for safe neighborhoods to promote more physical activity.
- Let the group know that one way to work towards getting more active is to embrace Life’s Simple 7.
  - Life’s Simple 7 are seven simple steps that we can take toward ideal heart health.
  - It outlines easy ways to take control of your heart health.
  - One of those things is to Get Active.
  - Even small changes can bring long-term benefits.
- Recall that we talked about the My Life Check personal health assessment?
  - My Life Check helps you learn where you stand with Life’s Simple 7.





## Point #1

**Other communities have created safe places for physical fitness—we can, too.**

*We'll look at three examples:*

- Local community efforts
- State policy changes
- Federal advocacy impacts

- Review the information on the slide.
- Introduce the three examples:
  - Local community—Encouraging young adults of color to go into healthcare careers and apply for scholarships.
  - State program—Ensuring coverage for low-income adults, including free preventive health services through Medicaid.
  - Federal level—Working to keep and improve the reform law and for other policies to address health inequities.

## Local Community Efforts

### New bicycle programs path the way for new opportunities for physical activity:

- Bike-share programs, in which bicycles are available at low or no cost for short-term public use, are now available in many cities.
- Some cities are increasing biking routes.
- States are including bicycle lanes and walking trails in transportation budgets.



- Review the information on the slide.
- Weave in insights shared by the small groups.
- Ask the full group:
  - Do you think a bike-sharing program might work in our community?
  - Would increasing bike lanes and walking trails help our community members get out and move more?

## Santa Ana Wellness Corridor



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- Share with the group:
  - Great, heart-healthy events and programs are happening in Santa Ana, California.
  - The American Heart Association/American Stroke Association worked with the Latino Health Access and City of Santa Ana to open the Wellness Corridor in downtown Santa Ana.
  - This team of advocates proposed that the Corridor become a safe zone for physical activity.
  - They proposed installing more benches, water fountains and bike lanes; fixing sidewalks; and opening city-owned restrooms.
  - Plus, 150 American Heart Association Walking Path signs were placed along six routes of the Wellness Corridor.



## State Policy Changes

**By working together, we can make safe places for everyone in our community to be active.**

**Advocacy led to a new Arizona law:**

- Schools unlock the gates and open up their facilities to the community.
- Kids who are physically active learn better.
- This law supports efforts to promote life-long health.

- Review the information on the slide.
- Weave in insights shared by the small groups.
- Ask the full group:
  - Do you think the local schools might agree to open up their grounds and facilities to the community for after-school physical activity?



**Shared Use Liability Toolkit**

**Anyone can be an advocate.**

- Ways to advocate for use of school facilities, e.g., gyms, fields, and playgrounds
- How-to information
- Standard messages



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- Explain to the group:
  - The American Heart Association offers a toolkit to help us advocate for changes that will allow us to use school facilities after hours.
  - That might be the gym, the fields, the playground.
- Ask the group:
  - When you think of advocacy, what comes to mind?
- Share with the group:
  - Anyone can be an advocate.
  - You and me and our neighbors coming together and sending a message that we want communities to live, learn and play in health environments--that’s advocacy!



## They Did It in Georgia...

**Volunteers—people just like you and me—worked with AHA, NAACP, and other volunteers to pass Shared Use legislation.**

- Shared Use legislation removes barriers for schools to open up their facilities including gyms, playgrounds, and tracks.
- Liability rests on the user, not the school system.

- Share with the group that others have succeeded in opening school facilities.
  - Worked with American Heart Association, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and other volunteers to pass legislation permitting after-hours access to school facilities.
  - These are called “Shared Use” laws or policies.
  - They allows schools to open their facilities, including gyms, playgrounds and tracks.
  - The responsibility for safety and liability rests on the user—not the schools.

## Federal Advocacy Impacts: F-I-T K-I-D-S



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Life is why™  
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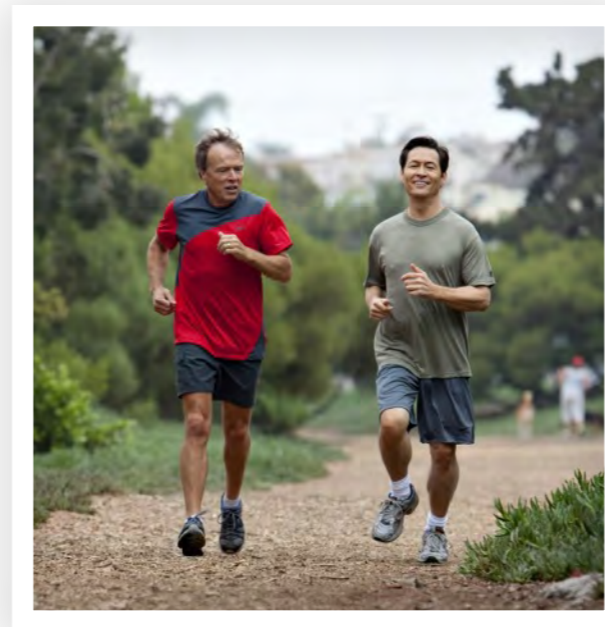
PREP NOTE: Review the resources list for this lesson. Find the link for the video with “FIT Kids Act Press Event.” Download the video before the program, or skip this slide.

<https://youtu.be/cFIBygagWjU>

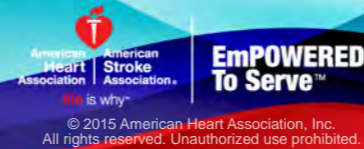
## Join AHA Efforts

### Working on Behalf of Multicultural Communities:

1. Support efforts to design our workplaces, communities, and schools around **active living** and **integrate physical activity opportunities** throughout the day.
2. Support policies and programs aimed at **improving the built environment and active transport** including Safe Routes to School and Complete Streets.



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- Review the information on the slide.
- Engage the group in a discussion about where to focus energies as a group:
  - On the local level, this might be working with local offices to set up a safe route for our kids to walk to school. On a state level, it could mean organizing a letter-writing campaign and/or making visits with state officials. On the federal level, it could be by joining with the American Heart Association to change federal laws and regulations to provide more access to quality health care in our community.
- Get the discussion going with any or all of these conversation starters:
  - What do you think are some of the challenges for our community in providing safe places to be physically active?
  - What types of things can we do as a community to overcome those barriers?
  - What action steps can we commit to make TODAY to move forward?



## Point #2

### Voices for Healthy Kids Helps to Create Active Places® for Our Kids

- Voices for Healthy Kids is a national initiative that provides resources and tools for advocates working on childhood obesity.
- It encourages physical activity for kids, youth, and adults.



- Review the information on the slide.
- Share with the group some examples of how Voices for Healthy Kids works:
  - Identifying state **and local** policy that can support safe routes to school programs and infrastructure.
  - Ensuring departments of transportation use funding for safe routes to school programs effectively.
  - Promoting “complete streets” that integrate safe bike and **safe** walking paths into planning and construction processes.
- Weave in insights shared by the small groups.
- Ask the full group:
  - Are any of the Voices for Healthy Kids infrastructure activities options for our community?

### Point #3

**You're the Cure: Join today. Let's get into gear.**

**You'll get information about how to:**

- Engage on local, state, and federal levels to advocate for change in your community.
- Make a difference on issues that matter to you—and to all of us as a united community voice.

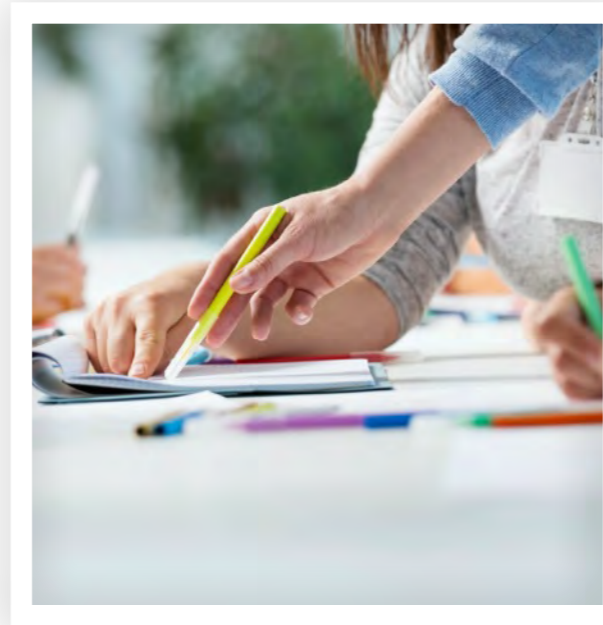


**you're** the **cure**  




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- Review the information on the slide.
- Note that this is a national network of advocates who are really making a difference on local, state and federal levels.



## Let's Be the Cure

### What issues do we want to work on?

- Get engaged with You're the Cure.
- Share our stories online.
- Recruit five friends to join *You're the Cure*.
- Respond to action alerts.
- Ask friends to respond to action alerts by sharing on Facebook and Twitter.

- Review the information on the slide.

## Let's Get Heard

**As a united community voice, we can make a difference:**

- We can push for healthy changes in our community.
- We can influence those who make policies.

**You're the Cure:**

- Offers structure and guidance
- Gives direction
- Provides updates
- Connects to American Heart Association state contacts

[www.YoureTheCure.org](http://www.YoureTheCure.org)



- Review the information on the slide.
- Explain to the group:
  - Join You're the Cure.
  - Choose the “My Profile” and check out our state contacts.
  - By reaching out to our state contacts, we can join statewide efforts to push for tobacco control and clean air.

## What Can We Do?

### Let's break into groups.

- Each group will get an article about a success story.
- Please read and discuss it.
- Discuss how this strategy might work in our community.

### Pick one person to report back.

- Briefly describe what the communities did to increase access to safe places for physical activity.
- Give your group's insights about how this strategy might work in our community.



- Review the information on the slide.
- Hand out the articles about the success stories.
- Give the groups 5 to 10 minutes to discuss the articles.
- Budget another 10 minutes for the reports back to the full group.
- Ask each person reporting back to the full group to:
  - Share a couple sentences describing what the communities did to increase access to safe places for physical activity.
  - Share your group's insights about how this strategy might work in our community.

## Call to Action

**You're the Cure—Let's make our neighborhoods "fit" for physical activity.**

***Share what you learned with five friends:***

- Ask them to join you in being an active community voice!



- Review the call to action on the slide.
- Remind the group that they have agreed to do \_\_\_\_\_ and encourage them once more to sign up at [www.youarethecure.com](http://www.youarethecure.com).



## Create a Culture of Health

### Commit to take action:

- Go to [EmPoweredToServe.org](http://EmPoweredToServe.org).
- Use My Life Check® to check your progress.

### Join Us for more ETS Programs.

- Encourage everyone to be active in the EmPowered To Serve movement.
- Share how being part of the ETS megacommunity helps you embrace a lifestyle of health.
- Encourage everyone to come to a future ETS health lesson.

## Wrap-Up



### We appreciate your thoughts!

- Post what you liked best online at:  
<http://community.empoweredtoserve.org/home>



- Thank everyone for coming.
- Thank the facilitator and all of the volunteers who help coordinate the program.
- Take a moment to share an inspirational reading or ask the group to join you in an uplifting song.
- **Reminder!** Once your participants have left, be sure to complete the Ambassador Questionnaire. For details, see your Ambassador Guide, page 11.



## EmPoweredToServe.org

### Help create a sustainable culture of health:

- Unite with others to drive **lasting** (sustainable) positive change.
- Learn ways to improve **community beliefs and behaviors** (culture) about health.
- Share best practices and develop strategies that promote **sound body, mind, and spirit** (health).



- Put this slide up as your closing slide and leave it up until all of the participants leave the room.

## We are EmPOWERed To Serve

...Serve our health, serve our community



The American Heart Association requests that this document be cited as follows:  
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