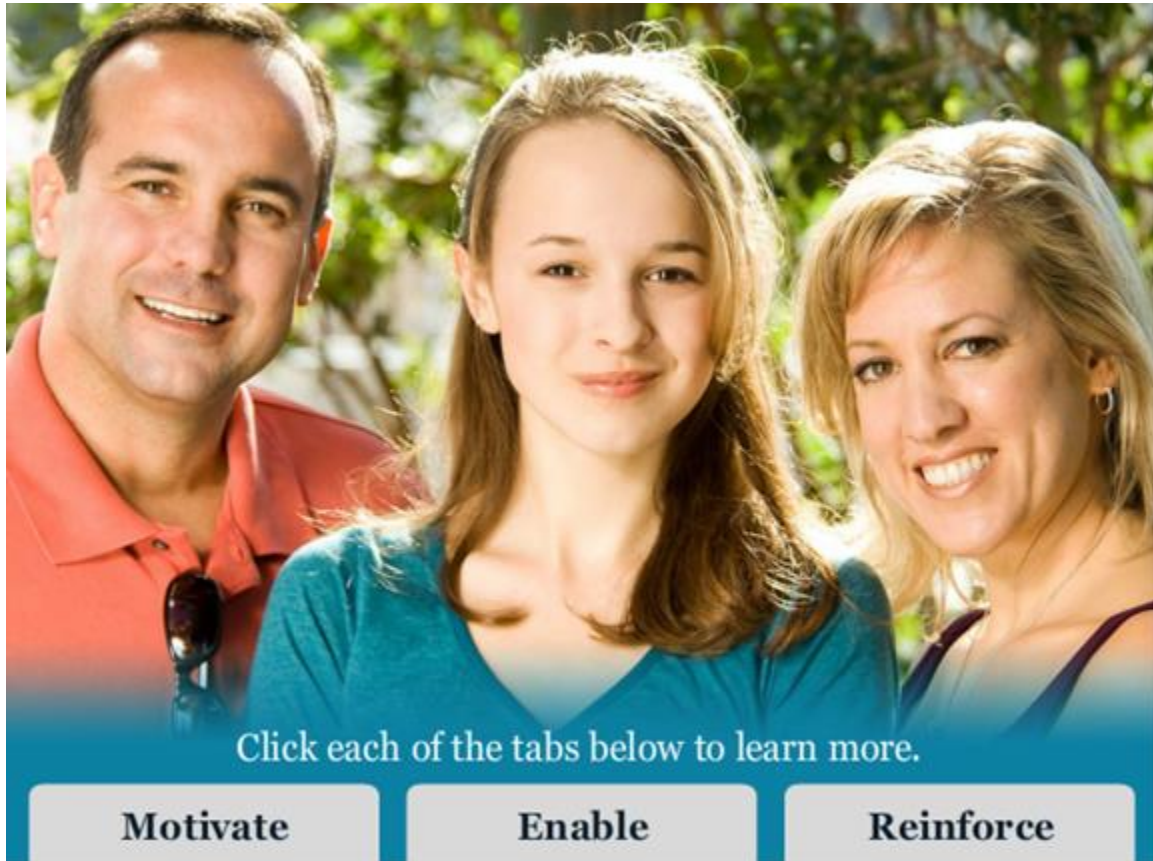


Module 9: Vehicle Information Center

Topic 3 Content: Family Health Habits

Introduction



Once your family has set a health goal, you need to make a plan that will help you to succeed in reaching it. There are three questions to ask yourself that will help you make a plan and stick to it.

- What would motivate your family to try new or healthier behaviors?
- What would enable your family to succeed at the new behaviors?
- What rewards would reinforce these new behaviors?

Module 9: Vehicle Information Center

Topic 3 Content: Family Health Habits

Motivate



Health Benefits to Help Motivate

- Improved health
- Less tired
- More strength
- Less frequent sicknesses
- Feeling happier
- Helps family become closer

Health Risks to Help Motivate

- Feeling sluggish
- Depression
- Life-threatening diseases

To motivate is to stimulate someone's interest in working toward a goal. You need to feel inspired to make a change in your life, and without motivation, you will not even feel like starting. Motivating factors help you recognize your goal as important, and see it as something you need to do.

Think about the benefits that will follow if you stick to your goal. You might see benefits like improved health, feeling less tired, becoming stronger, and less frequent sicknesses. Setting and accomplishing goals together can help make you happier and will bring you closer as a family. You also need to think about the threats you may face if you do not follow through with your healthy lifestyle goal. The threats may include feeling sluggish, becoming depressed, and even developing life-threatening diseases. Families that are confronted with a history of disease can use that threat as a way to feel more motivated in working toward a healthy lifestyle goal.

Module 9: Vehicle Information Center

Topic 3 Content: Family Health Habits

Enable



To enable is to make a goal feasible and possible. Look at your goal and identify barriers that will get in your way. If your goal is to spend more time outside doing physical activity, a barrier could be bad weather. Your family will need to come up with ways to accomplish your goal even with these barriers. By knowing what you are up against, you will be able to overcome obstacles as they approach.

Another way to enable yourself is to look at the resources available to you. When making a plan, your family can look up specific resources in your community that will help make it possible to reach your goal. Resources can be a large variety of things, such as:

- community centers;
- health-food stores;
- community health clinic;
- books and websites;
- sports equipment;
- doctors and health specialists; and
- parks and trails.

Module 9: Vehicle Information Center

Topic 3 Content: Family Health Habits

Reinforce



To reinforce is to strengthen an effort by giving support. It is important to reinforce your and your family's new habits and goals, so that you continue to follow a healthier lifestyle together. Track your progress in reaching a goal with something as simple as putting stickers on a chart. These charts will help reinforce good habits because you will see how far you have come and what you have accomplished. Tracking progress can also promote friendly competition and motivation within your family.

It is also beneficial to talk about your progress regularly. You should re-examine the barriers and benefits associated with your goal, because they could change. New barriers and benefits may show up after some time, so your family should prepare to face the new challenges and enjoy additional benefits. Discussing your progress also allows your family to feel supported, and to voice any concerns. By supporting and listening to one another, you are reinforcing that this is a family effort.

Once you get started and begin to see a change for the better, you will build more confidence and self-awareness, reinforcing your new health habits. Feeling pride in something you do is the ultimate reinforcement. When you feel good about doing something, you will want to continue it.