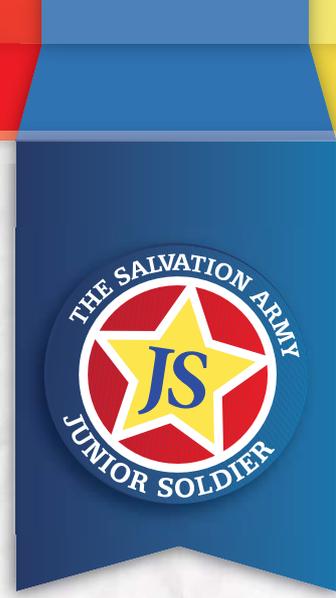


Junior Soldiers

Unit 11 : Lesson 1

Living Healthy



PURPOSE : For the children to explore and understand that how they look after themselves physically, emotionally and relationally is really important to God.

'God paid a great price for you. So use your body to honour God.'
1 Corinthians 6:20

Consider & Prepare

Read:

1 Corinthians 6:12–20

Romans 12:1–2

Philippians 4:2–9

1 Corinthians 9:24–25

Being classed as unhealthy is not too hard to achieve. With the variety of fast foods, junk food and inactive entertainment readily available for an inexpensive price, many people are choosing to live unhealthy lifestyles and forming unhealthy habits. Unfortunately, this means that issues such as heart disease, obesity, diabetes and, generally, a sense of being unwell starts to rise in the statistics.

Looking after ourselves physically is only one thing we need to be diligent about. What we do, how we spend our time and the people we hang out with can also have an unhealthy impact on what we think, say and do. The choices that we make, the activities that we participate in, the things we watch and listen to and the people that we spend time with can influence our lifestyle and decisions and how we interact with and see the world.

So why does this matter? Why does God care whether we are healthy or unhealthy? These are the questions the Junior Soldiers will be exploring in this lesson. To help them explore these questions, we need to first look at what being unhealthy can mean and all the factors that it involves. It is made up of a number of key areas which include our body, our mind and our spirit being unhealthy. If we aren't reading our Bible and praying on a daily basis, we can become spiritually unhealthy. If we are watching television shows or reading books that are morally not right: our minds can become unhealthy. And when we feed our bodies unhealthy foods and drinks, overeat and do no exercise, our bodies become unhealthy.

When these unhealthy choices are a part of our lives they can start to affect us physically, emotionally and in our relationships. We might become lethargic, sad and unmotivated and find it hard to achieve our daily tasks. It can also affect our relationship with God and the quality of time we spend with Him. We might start to place other things such as television shows, computer games or food as a higher priority than spending time with God and living a life that is pleasing to Him. We can get distracted by things of this world instead of focusing our attention on God, which is not healthy for us.

On the contrary, when we are healthy, we are able to serve God to the fullest. When we are healthy we can be in tune with God and the way that He wants us to live our lives. God wants us to think about and look after ourselves, our whole body and mind and spirit, as this is the place where the Holy Spirit lives. He wants us to use our body and look after our bodies so that they can be used to honour God. It is important for the children to explore this topic and work out how they will care for themselves so that they will honour God. It would be helpful for them to hear your reflections and how you go about keeping yourself healthy in body, mind and spirit.

During this lesson, be sensitive to your language and how the message is being received by children who may be obese or have weight or health issues; you may also have children from lower socio-economic groups who live day-to-day on fast food or poor nutritional options.



What you will need:

For 'Connecting In'

- The song 'A Memory Verse: 1 Corinthians 6:19+20 (You Were Bought)' by Colin Buchanan
- A watch
- Tennis balls
- A variety of magazines and newspapers
- Paper
- Textas

For 'The Main Thing'

- Two blenders
- A 'Happy Meal'
- Strawberries
- Banana
- Yoghurt
- Milk
- Teaspoons & small cups

For 'Tying In'

- Bibles—a variety of versions, e.g. CEV, NLT, MSG
- Large sheet of paper
- Textas
- Paper Magiclay

For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off the 'Home & Beyond' cards for each child.



Connecting In

You were bought...

For this activity you will need a copy of the song 'A Memory Verse: 1 Corinthians 6:19+20 (You Were Bought)' by Colin Buchanan. You can purchase this song individually on iTunes or find it on the CD *Jesus Rocks the World*. Ensure that you listen to the song before the session so that you are familiar with it and you might like to make us some actions ready to teach the children as well. It would be good to also have the words on PowerPoint for the children to follow while they are singing.



Get the children to stand up. Explain to them that you are going to sing a song together about a key Bible verse you are learning about today. Teach the children the actions and play the song. Ensure that all leaders are energetic and are participating in the singing and actions as well.

Link: Read 1 Corinthians 6: 19–20 together.

'These are the verses that the song we just sang is based on.'

- I wonder what you think 'you were bought' means. Who paid what for you?
- Why does this mean we need to 'glorify the Lord with our bodies'?

Allow the children some time to begin thinking and sharing their thoughts about the topic and what stands out for them in the song and the verses. There will be other opportunities throughout the lesson for them to explore what this means further.

'God wants us to be able to worship, love and serve him the best that we can. This means that we need to be healthy with our bodies, our mind and our spirit in order to do this in a way that is pleasing to him. To do this, we must remember how much God loves us and the price he paid by sending Jesus to die for us so that we could live connected with God. We are blessed with the gift of life and it is important for us to look after this gift and care for our health in all areas.'

Healthy Hearts...

For this activity, children will be looking at and measuring their heart rate. To do this, you will need to help them to find their pulse in either their neck or wrist. Then, get a leader to time 15 seconds while the children count how many heart beats occur in that time. At the end of the 15 seconds, times the amount of heart beats by four to give you your heart rate per minute. At the end of exercising, a healthy heart rate for children under 11 is between 130 and 140 beats per minute. For children older than that it is slightly lower.

'Today we are going to begin by having a look at the health of our hearts. We are going to be measuring our heart rates while we are sitting still, then we will complete some exercises and measure our heart rate again.'

The exercises that you might like to do for this activity can vary, however, we recommend that you include at least three or four different stations. You may like to get all the children to participate together in the same activity, or they can rotate in small groups with a leader and participate for a certain amount of time. Some examples of exercises you might like to include are below:

- How many push-ups can you do in 30 seconds?
- How far can you throw a ball (like shot-put) in three tries?
- How many shuttle runs can you do in a minute?
- How many star jumps can you do in 30 seconds?

Once all the children have completed the activities, get them to measure their heart rates again straight away.

Link: 'It can be lots of fun to exercise or play games and run around with your friends.

- I wonder what your favourite game, physical activity or sport is.

'As well as being fun, playing games and exercising is also a way of honouring God. God wants us to be healthy physically, emotionally and in our relationships. This means that when we participate in something as simple as running around, it can be a way for us to participate in worshipping God because we are looking after ourselves and trying to make healthy choices. Today we are going to explore together other ways that we can look after ourselves by making healthy choices and why that is important to God.'

Collages...

For this activity you will need a range of magazines, newspapers and catalogues with pictures of people, as well as a range of other items such as food, sports equipment or clothing, books, movies, games etc. You will also need a large sheet of butchers paper for the children to create a poster on. Depending on the size of your group, you may like to do this in a few smaller groups, or you might like to have two groups and get one to create a healthy poster, while the other creates an unhealthy poster.

Ask the children:

- What does it look like to be healthy?
- What does it look like to be unhealthy?

'Today we are going to create a collage based on what you think healthy and unhealthy looks like. You can use the pictures in the magazines, newspapers and catalogues to choose images that represent being healthy and unhealthy. You may also like to write some words (or use words from the magazines) that you think will help to represent healthy or unhealthy.'

Link: 'Just looking at the wonderful collages that you have created shows me that there is a big difference between people that engage in healthy choices, and people that engage in unhealthy ones. I wonder what differences stand out to you.'

'God wants us to be healthy so that we will always be able to worship him at our best. This doesn't just mean physically with the food that we eat or how much we run around, but also spiritually (how often we might pray and read the Bible) and emotionally (whether we are feeling happy or stressed or sad or loved). Today we are going to explore together other ways that we can look after ourselves by making healthy choices and why that is important to God.'

The Main Thing

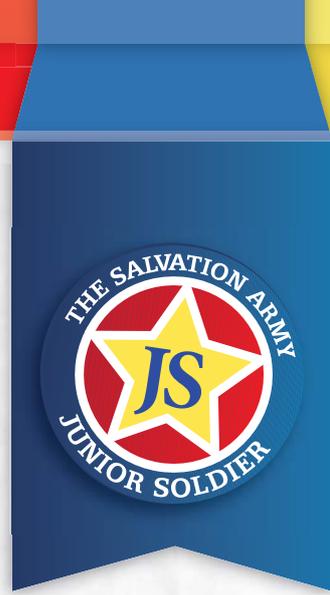
What you put in is what you get out...

For this activity, you will need two blenders, a 'Happy Meal', strawberries, banana, milk and yoghurt. Please note that you may want to make the 'healthy smoothie' as a trial before this lesson to work out how much of each ingredient you need to make a tasty smoothie. You will also need some teaspoons and some small cups for the children to try the food smoothies.

- What is your favourite food? Why?
- Do you think this would fit into the healthy or unhealthy category?
- What are some foods that you would list as healthy?
- What are some foods that you would list as unhealthy?
- I wonder which list of food you prefer to eat from.

'Who likes to go to McDonalds? I wonder what your favourite treat there is. Well, today I have a 'Happy Meal' with me that includes a cheese burger, fries and a Coke. Right now, this meal might look quite delicious and tasty but I wonder if you would put this in the healthy or unhealthy category.'

- Who likes fries? *(As you are asking this question, place the fries into one of the blenders.)*
- What about cheese burgers? *(Again as you are asking this add the cheeseburger to the blender with the fries.)*
- And who likes to drink Coke? *(Again add the Coke to the blender with the cheeseburger and fries.)*



'Each part of the meal that I have placed into the blender (chips, cheeseburger and Coke) represents some of the unhealthy things that we might put into our bodies. While they look nice and delicious at the start, as we start to blend (*press the blender button*), things start to look a bit yuk. Even though what is being blended up is still the same meal, it doesn't seem to look as appetizing anymore. In fact I'm not sure that I would like to eat this at all and put it in my mouth and stomach—what about you? (*Give a teaspoon to each of the children that would like to taste the blended meal*). I wonder if you think this is a good meal for our bodies. Perhaps it might be a 'sometime' food, a treat but not a choice that we make a lot—what do you think?



'Well, the 'Happy Meal' is one choice but let's have a look at another. There are other options of yummy and healthy foods that are really good for us.'

- Who likes yummy fruits like bananas and strawberries? (*While you are asking this place the fruit into the blender.*)
- They have good vitamins and fibre that are healthy for our bodies.
- If these are not your favourite fruits what would you use?
- To go with the fruit I have some yoghurt (*while you are sharing this add the yoghurt to the blender with the fruit.*)
- This contains probiotics and protein. Both of these help our bodies to stay healthy and strong and feeling good.
- Lastly, I have some milk (*while sharing this, add the milk into the blender with the fruit and yoghurt.*)
- Milk gives our bodies calcium which helps to keep our bones strong. Without the right amount of calcium, we might even find it hard to walk!

'As I blend this together, have a think about the difference between this food that I am mixing now compared to the 'Happy Meal' we blended earlier.'

- I wonder which one tastes better.
- I wonder which one is better for us.

Give each child a small cup (be wary of allergies) to try the smoothie.

'We have the choice to eat and drink healthy or unhealthy things. If you keep choosing the unhealthy items, I wonder how you will feel. Do you think that it will impact how you feel or your energy levels?

'Food is just one area that we can focus on when we think about being healthy, I wonder if you can think of any others. (*Allow the children some time to think about and share their thoughts.*)

'Just like we can put unhealthy food in our bodies, we can also put other unhealthy things into our minds or spend time with others who make unhealthy choices. Things that we do, read or see can be unhealthy for us, just like food. Watching some television shows or movies or even some YouTube clips can impact how we think and behave as well as other choices that we make, especially if we do this often. Our attitudes and words can also be influenced by the people that we spend a lot of time with and this might be an unhealthy thing.

'God wants us to be able to worship, love and serve him the best that we can. This means that we need to be healthy with our bodies, our mind and our spirit in order to do this in a way that is pleasing to him. To do this, we must remember how much God loves us and the price he paid by sending Jesus to die for us so that we could live connected with him. We are blessed with the gift of life and it is important for us to look after this gift and care for our health in all areas of our lives. Let's have a closer look at what the Bible has to tell us about this.'



Tying In

What does the Bible say?

For this section you will need some Bibles or printed out copies of the following verses. It would be good to have a variety of versions for the children to read and explore as they wrestle with what God is saying, e.g. CEV, NLT, MSG etc. You will also need some large sheets of paper and textas for the children to use while they are looking at the following questions. It would be good to divide into small groups for the children to best engage in this activity.

Read Romans 12:1–2 from a variety of versions of the Bible.

- What stands out for you in these verses.
- I wonder why God want us to have a healthy mind body and spirit.
- I wonder how we might be able to use our bodies to glorify God.
- Do you think we can glorify/worship God better when we are healthy in mind/body and spirit? Why/why not?
- When you have a healthy mind what might that look like, sound like and act like?
- When you have a healthy body what might that look like, sound like and act like?
- When you have a healthy spirit what might that look like, sound like and act like?

Prayer...

For this prayer activity you will need some paper magiclay and a large sheet of paper divided into three sections with the three headings, 'Mind', 'Body' and 'Spirit' written.

Ask each of the children to use the paper magiclay to create a body shape. As the children are doing this, encourage them to think about the wise choices they can make to have a healthy mind; the wise choices they can make in order to have a healthy body, and the wise choices they can make in order to have a healthy spirit. The children can add words or pictures to the sections as you explore the wise choices suggested for each one.

Ask the children to pass their paper magiclay body shape to the person sitting next to them and choose something from the three sections (mind, body and spirit) to pray for, asking God to help them make the wise decisions they will need in order to keep themselves healthy. Encourage the children to take their body creation home as a reminder to keep praying not only for their choices but for the choices of the person they prayed for today.

Home & Beyond

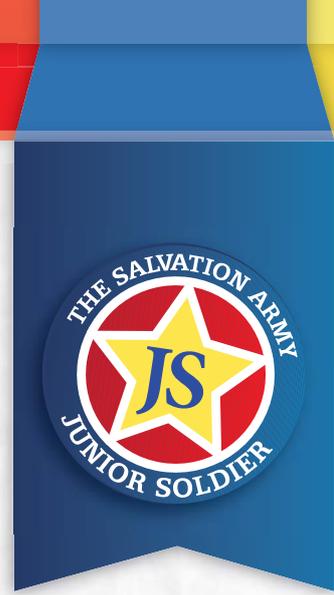
Print off the 'Home & Beyond' cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

Diary/Graph...

This week, create a sheet that shows the following about your family. It might look like a diary or a graph or a mind map:

- The food you eat
- Time spent in front of the television
- Time spent praying and talking to God
- Time spent reading or talking about the Bible
- Time spent doing something active

Bring back your results to share with the group the next time you meet. As a group you might like to think if there is anything you would like to change.





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