

MODULE B BACKGROUND INFORMATION GRADE 12 PE



Background Information

Stages of Change Review

1. **Pre-contemplation** (no intention of making a change): In this stage people begin to recognize that a problematic behaviour exists. At this point, they may engage in self-evaluation or self-reflection and may determine that a change is needed. When this happens, they will progress to the contemplation stage.
2. **Contemplation** (thinking about making a change): In this stage people seek out information about the problematic behaviour and become more aware of the possible problems associated with it. They will speak to others about the problem and discuss or think about possible solutions. These individuals are now ready to move to the preparation stage.
3. **Preparation/decision** (getting ready to make a change): In this stage people make a commitment to change the problematic behaviour, believing they can make the change. They have become knowledgeable about how to go about making the behaviour change and about the benefits resulting from it. They devise a plan for practising the new behaviour. These people are ready to move to the action stage.
4. **Action** (making the change): People in this stage initiate their plan for making a behaviour change. They find ways to stay motivated, which may include seeking support from others. They attempt to control the triggers of the problematic behaviour and give themselves ways to stay focused on the healthy behaviour. The new behaviour will begin to substitute the unhealthy behaviour. Some people may incorporate a personal reward program for sticking with the action plan.
5. **Maintenance** (working at keeping the change): In this stage people's actions are similar to those in the action stage, but people are engaged in the new behaviour for a minimum of six months. During this stage people are focused on staying on their action plan and not going back to their previous behaviour.



Background Information

Why Set Goals?*

Numerous research studies have shown links between goals and achievement or improved performance in many areas such as education, athletics, and business. Reasons for setting goals include the following:

- **Goals help target our desires.** We all have a desire to succeed at or with something. This desire to succeed helps us to reach our goals and overcome obstacles that get in the way. We feel better and work harder when we are striving to reach clear goals that we have personally selected and that have an identifiable purpose.
- **Goals help us to stay focused and avoid distractions.** People who set goals will achieve results because they have learned how to focus their time, energy, and resources on a specific objective. Staying focused on our goals helps us to bypass many of the challenges and obstacles that stand in the way of achieving the desired results. By setting clear and attainable goals and consciously working toward them, we can avoid many of the pitfalls and distractions of daily living.
- **Goals help us to maintain motivation.** Motivation is a significant driving force in helping us to accomplish the things we really want in life. Achieving and maintaining a healthy active lifestyle will at times be a struggle. Having goals and staying motivated will help us to recover from the setbacks or periodic letdowns that are commonplace experiences when trying to change a habit or making attempts to start a new one. Our motivation will come from the reasons why we chose particular goals in the first place.
- **Goals help us to set values-driven priorities.** As we move toward any goal, we will be faced with having to make decisions. By keeping our eyes on the goal and staying true to our values and beliefs, we will make the “right” choices. Our choices will be based on what is most important to us. We need to remember that our goals were self-selected and based on important reasons for reaching them.
- **Goals provide a plan for change.** A well-designed action plan that outlines a series of short-term goals provides a necessary process to reach bigger and long-term objectives. Breaking a long-term goal into achievable smaller steps makes the road to the ultimate goal much easier. Short-term goals provide a way of measuring whether we are making the intended progress or whether we are getting sidetracked. Evaluating our plan allows us to learn from mistakes and overcome barriers. It also provides opportunities to change our plan based on our experiences.

* Source: Time Thoughts. “Goal Setting: Why Should I Set Goals?” *Goal Setting*. <www.timethoughts.com/goalsetting/WhySetGoals.htm>. Adapted with permission.

Why Do So Few People Set Goals?*

Some experts estimate that only five to ten percent of people think about their goals regularly, and only one to three percent of people have clear written goals. Most experts agree that goal setting is a powerful tool. If this is the case, why do so few people set goals?

Reasons why people don't set goals include the following:

- They don't know what they want. (No goals)
- They don't know how to set goals or don't plan how to achieve them. (Action)
- They don't have goals, they have wishes.
- They are afraid of change.
- They make excuses that form personal barriers.
- They get frustrated, discouraged, or overwhelmed. (Too many goals, too big, too slow)

Having clear and precise goals will help us stay motivated and focused, particularly when facing adversity. Setting goals is a way of regulating behaviour to attain a self-determined and desired target. The goals could be financial, educational, or health- and fitness-oriented.

* Source: Time Thoughts. "Goal Setting: Why Should I Set Goals?" *Goal Setting*.
<www.timethoughts.com/goalsetting/WhySetGoals.htm>. Adapted with permission.

Steps to Setting and Achieving Goals

Many people set goals they want to achieve. Some of these goals centre on acquiring material things (e.g., a car, a winter vacation). Some goals involve doing or learning new things (e.g., write a book, paint a picture, learn a new sport). Still other goals have to do with self-improvement (e.g., exercise regularly, get a different job, eat healthier). These are all great goals, but many people never reach them because they have not considered making a specific plan to achieve them.

STEPS TO SETTING AND ACHIEVING GOALS

1. **Choose specific, measurable goals.** Decide on your goals and base them on reasons that are meaningful and important to you. Be as specific as you can about what you want to accomplish. Instead of wanting to eat healthier, specify the things that you want to change in your eating behaviour (e.g., eat seven to ten servings of fruit and vegetables daily). This way, you know exactly what you need to change and by how much. You have now made your goal measurable.
2. **Set achievable goals.** Break down your goals into achievable smaller goals, thus progressing toward your final goal in stages. This is one way to build in a gradual process to achieve the ultimate goal. The stages can serve as checkpoints for you to see how you are progressing and whether the smaller goals need to be reset. When you know whether you have exceeded your expectations or are beginning to fall behind, you can make the necessary adjustments. When working on changing physical activity patterns it is important to keep a log or a record of your activities.
3. **Evaluate your goals to ensure they are realistic.** Setting an unrealistic goal that is not based on current conditions or circumstances is counterproductive to achieving a goal. Setting high goals is important, but if the goals are not realistic they will eventually be perceived as unattainable, and progress toward reaching the goals will cease. Seek out people who can support you in reaching your goals and use the needed resources available to you.
4. **Create a timeline for and visual reminders of your goals.** A goal is simply a stated dream with a deadline. Establish a timeline for the goals you set. The timeline may be influenced by the smaller goals that you have set for yourself. It is very important to set a particular timeframe for each goal. This will keep you focused on the actions you set for yourself and provide you with a way to assess your progress in terms of achieving the goal. Create visual reminders of your goals and place them where you will see them every day. Keep in mind that your reasons for choosing your goals were important to you, and moved you to devise a plan to accomplish them.
5. **Prepare yourself for obstacles or barriers.** The obstacles you face while working toward your goals may be emotional. For example, you may feel frustrated that people are not supporting you. You may feel discouraged that the expected changes are not happening quickly enough. Feelings of frustration or discouragement are natural reactions. Adjusting the small goals may help ease the emotional reaction. It is important to stay committed to your goals and not to lose hope.
6. **Reward yourself.** As you achieve each small goal, reward yourself in some way for a job well done.

Health and Fitness Trends

Background Information

Each year, leaders in the area of health and fitness determine general trends in the fitness industry based upon various sources of data. Two important groups that conduct extensive surveys are the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) and the American Council on Exercise (ACE).

ACSM's Health and Fitness Trend Predictions

ACSM is the largest sports medicine and exercise science organization in the world. Its members are dedicated to promoting and enhancing physical performance, fitness, health, and quality of life worldwide.

The surveys conducted by ACSM identify trends that can be found in a variety of environments where health and fitness services and programming are provided. This includes commercial gyms, fitness retailers, medical and other clinical environments, and recreation and community program environments. Data is collected from experts around the world. The trends identified in the surveys are based on information provided by highly respected fitness professionals. The ultimate goal of identifying the trends is to determine and implement solutions to them.

Based on the findings from its international surveys, ACSM identified the top 20 health and fitness trend predictions for 2007 and 2008, which are identified on the ACSM website (see References on the following page). "Exercise programs for children to fight childhood and adolescent obesity" was ranked as the number 1 and number 2 worldwide fitness trend in 2007 and 2008 respectively (Thompson, "Worldwide Survey Reveals Fitness Trends for 2008," 8).

Childhood obesity has become such an important trend that it is a topic of discussion and program development worldwide. Reducing this trend has become a high priority in many parts of the world, including Manitoba. For example, Manitoba has taken steps by increasing the time allocated to physical education/health education and making it a required course in all grades from Kindergarten to Grade 12. In addition, all schools in Manitoba are required to develop their own nutrition policies to promote healthier eating options (Healthy Child Manitoba, *Manitoba School Nutrition Handbook*). These initiatives came about as a result of the recommendations of the Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures All-Party Task Force, reported in 2005 in *Health Kids, Healthy Futures: Task Force Report*.

ACE's Fitness Trend Predictions

The American Council on Exercise (ACE) is a non-profit organization that promotes the benefits of physical activity and protects consumers against unsafe and ineffective fitness products and instruction.

Health and Fitness Advertising

Introduction

An important aspect of becoming an effective consumer is to be critical of the advertising associated with many of the health and/or fitness products and services available. People must be able to determine which advertisements are based on facts and research, and which make claims based on incomplete or inaccurate information. Manufacturers selling some fitness products base their advertising on many of the myths surrounding fitness development. Advertisers are very clever and creative with their “pitches,” making the advertised products seem amazing and revolutionary. The end result is that they make their sales, and the uninformed, trusting consumer is often left with inferior products that may, but likely will not, live up to expectations.



Background Information

Evaluating Advertising Claims*

The benefits of an active healthy lifestyle are well-known and well-documented. Unfortunately, there remain many myths and misunderstandings about how the body responds to exercise and physical activity, as discussed in the previous lesson. Advertising and marketing businesses for fitness products and services are aware of these misunderstandings and make advertising claims based on them. Many unscrupulous advertisers make unsupported claims that their exercise products offer quick, almost effortless ways to shape up, keep fit, and/or lose weight. The reality about changing the body is that there is no effortless, perspiration-free way to maintain a fit and healthy body. Deriving the benefits of exercise requires doing the necessary work.

Being informed, or possessing the ability to find reliable information, is the way to navigate through false claims in advertising. The consumer must be cautious or suspicious of any products that

- claim to make the body more attractive
- promise amazing results in a very short period of time

It takes time and effort to make changes to the human body.

Although some manufacturers of fitness products can provide independent research to support what they are saying about their products, many manufacturers rely on exaggerated and fraudulent claims to sell their products.

Some key elements found in advertisements should alert consumers to the possibility of false advertising. When detecting key elements such as the following, consumers should become wary of questionable exercise products:

- **Easy, effortless, and fast:** Machines and other devices that are advertised as “guaranteeing” the user certain results in a short time should be ignored. The benefits of exercise cannot be stored, and the body needs time to adapt and change. In other words, change comes with time and effort. Advertisements that promise easy or effortless results are simply false.
- **“Spot” reducing:** One of the most appealing claims, yet also one of the most inaccurate and false claims, is that a product can reduce the fat from a particular part of the body. The most popular body parts targeted by these advertisements are the buttocks, hips, and stomach. Achieving a major change in appearance requires sensible eating and regular exercise that works the whole body.
- **Faster than others:** The claims that one machine will produce results faster than other similar machines is difficult to evaluate, especially when there are no independent scientific studies to substantiate the claims. Arguably, any equipment that helps a person exercise several major body parts will likely burn more calories than equipment that works only one body part. Everyone responds to exercise differently. Finding the right frequency, intensity, time/duration, and type (FITT) of exercise is the key.
- **The fine print:** If there is fine print, even in a television commercial, then there is something the advertisement is trying to hide. Sometimes the fine print mentions a diet or “program” that must be used in conjunction with the equipment. Even if it doesn’t, remember that diet and exercise together are much more effective for weight loss than either diet or exercise alone.
- **Testimonials:** Be wary of verbal or visual testimonials such as “before” and “after” pictures from “satisfied” customers. Their experiences are not typical, which is why their testimonials are being used. Just because one person has had success doesn’t mean someone else will get the same results. Many of the “customers” are paid by the companies, and the endorsements, whether they are from consumers, celebrities, or star athletes, don’t mean the equipment is right for you. Another consideration is that, with current technology, pictures can easily be altered. In fact, some before and after pictures are not even of the same person.
- **Final total cost:** The advertised cost of a product usually does not include shipping and handling fees, sales tax, and delivery and set-up fees. Determine the final cost of the purchase by calculating the terms of purchase (e.g., “Three easy payments of . . .” or “Pay only \$49.95 a month.”). Inquire about all the monetary details before ordering a product.
- **Guarantees and warranties:** Get details on warranties, guarantees, and return policies before making a purchase. Some guarantees (e.g., “30-day money-back guarantee”) may not sound as good as you were led to believe if you have to pay shipping on a large, bulky piece of equipment you want to return.

Becoming an Informed Fitness Consumer

Introduction

A *consumer* is a person who purchases and/or services. When someone buys or uses products and / or services intended for physical activity or fitness development, the person becomes a *fitness consumer*.

A fitness consumer is faced with having to make a number of choices and decisions. The first decision relates to the required products and/or services. Secondary decisions have to do with a need to acquire the goods and/or services. What an individual can acquire depends largely on the resources available.

CANADIAN FITNESS INDUSTRY STATISTICS

According to the International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association, the Canadian health and fitness club industry revenue (USD) totalled approximately 1.8 billion dollars in 2007. There were 4900 clubs in Canada, with a membership of 4.5 million persons, or 15.0% of the population ("Canadian Market Statistics").

Having as much knowledge as possible about the products and services being considered for purchase allows the consumer to make the best purchasing decisions. The informed consumer also needs to be aware of the factors that influence these decisions.

This lesson focuses on helping students to become critical and effective consumers, which involves evaluating physical fitness products and services. Students have the opportunity to investigate major fitness products and services and develop skills to help them become informed consumers.

To make effective consumer decisions, the fitness consumer must be informed about many aspects of fitness development. Knowledge is the key to consumer power. Combining knowledge and understanding about personal needs, habits, and goals, fitness planning, exercise equipment, and facilities will lead to educated decision making. This knowledge and information should be considered when evaluating fitness products and services.

Fitness products include exercise equipment and props, monitoring devices and technology, and "performance" clothing and footwear. Fitness services include access to fitness centres, information and education, personal trainers, and specialty classes and programs. Fitness products and services constitute a multi-billion dollar per year industry in Canada.

Choosing and Buying Fitness Equipment

Physical fitness can be developed and maintained without the use of any equipment, let alone the variety of expensive products and services available. Fitness products and services are extensively advertised and readily available, however, and many of them can be effective.

Buying exercise products may seem simple, but a thorough investigation into the products under consideration is essential. Some products are very expensive due to the research involved in designing and creating them. Many people buy expensive products based on brand names or the assumption that the products will make exercising easier and more convenient.

Initially, individuals may make regular use of the fitness equipment they purchase, but after a period of time, the product may become little more than an awkward and expensive “clothes rack.” Before investing in equipment, people need to understand the financial and lifestyle commitment associated with it.

Considerations for Buying Fitness Equipment*

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) suggests that individuals consider the following tips before buying fitness equipment:

- **Determine the exercise goals.** Whether your goal is to build strength, increase flexibility, improve endurance, or enhance general health, consider a fitness program that meets personal goals. Overall fitness and health can be achieved through a variety of physical activities as part of an active healthy lifestyle, and may not require the use of special equipment.
- **Determine the level of commitment.** The idea of exercising at home may sound very appealing, but using a piece of equipment regularly requires significant motivation. Before buying expensive equipment, assess personal commitment to an ongoing fitness program. Plan to set aside some time daily for physical activity, and follow through with the plan.
- **Evaluate the equipment before buying.** Fitness equipment is manufactured for the general population; therefore, the equipment must be fully adjustable to suit individual body characteristics. The machine or equipment should be sturdy, smooth, and easy to use. When shopping for fitness equipment, go to the store dressed for exercise, and give the equipment a full workout. Measure the area at home where you will put the equipment and note all dimensions (length, width, height). In addition, consider questions such as the following:
 - Will the equipment need a source of power?
 - How heavy is it?
 - Is noise a factor?
 - Are you paying for features you will not need?
 - Will the equipment need assembly?
 - What maintenance will it require?
 - What are the safety considerations?
- **Evaluate the advertising claims.** Some companies make unreasonable and outrageous claims to entice the consumer into believing they are true. False or misleading claims are common in the fitness industry. People who are desperately looking for quick fixes to problems that have taken years to develop often make rash and misinformed decisions. If a claim sounds almost too good

to be true, it likely is! Check out product reviews. The reviews may point out specific trouble areas for a piece of equipment that may cause difficulties once the equipment is brought home.

- **Shop around.** Much of the advertised fitness equipment is available at local sporting goods, department, or specialty stores. Shop around for the best price. Before you buy any equipment, do the following:
 - Determine the total cost, including shipping and handling, sales tax, delivery, and set-up fees.
 - Obtain the details on warranties, guarantees, and return policies from the retailer and the manufacturer.
 - Investigate the seller's and manufacturer's customer service and support capabilities. Inquire as to whom you can call if repairs or replacement parts are needed.
 - Try the toll-free numbers provided with the equipment to see whether help is truly accessible.

Fitness equipment can often be purchased from second-hand stores, at yard sales, or through classified advertisements in local newspapers. Items bought second-hand are usually not returnable and do not have the warranties of new equipment. Buy wisely.

Equipment Choices

Some common equipment for aerobic exercise, strength training, and other miscellaneous fitness training is identified below.

| Aerobic Equipment (Cardiorespiratory and Muscular Endurance) | Strength Training Equipment (Muscular Strength and Endurance) | Miscellaneous Fitness Equipment (Training, Core and Flexibility) |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Treadmills ▪ Stationary bicycles ▪ Ski machines ▪ Steppers/climbers ▪ Elliptical trainers ▪ Rowing machines ▪ Aerobic riders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Free weights ▪ Multi-station machines ▪ Bands and tubing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Heart-rate monitors ▪ Pedometers ▪ Stability balls ▪ Specialized equipment (e.g., medicine balls, agility ladders, balance boards) |

Many other fitness gadgets and gimmicks are available on the market. These items, often advertised on television infomercials, are not always of the highest quality and may not deliver on their claims.

It is important to spend the necessary time investigating the exercise equipment being considered for purchase and commit to using the equipment before buying it. After making the purchase, the buyer should take the steps needed to protect the investment and follow the manufacturer's

maintenance suggestions. It will be easier to sell equipment that is in good condition, should the equipment no longer be needed or wanted.

Exercise Clothing and Footwear

Having the right clothing and footwear for a chosen activity is important, and sometimes critical. Knowing what the activity demands will be and wearing the right clothing and shoes to meet those demands are important aspects of being an informed fitness consumer.

What we wear during activity can contribute to the activity itself. A well-fitting, well-designed, and activity-appropriate outfit can make the difference between a pleasant activity experience and a negative one.

Every aspect of “performance” or activity clothing, from underwear and socks to outerwear, has been designed around managing and controlling moisture (perspiration and rain), temperature, and wind. Some clothing absorbs moisture, some repels moisture, and some moves or wicks moisture. Still other clothing is created to keep a person cool during activity, or to hold in warmth.

The movement of air also creates challenges for clothing designers. Usually, breathable fabrics are desired by consumers, but sometimes non-breathable fabrics are needed.

Special footwear, specifically designed for a given activity, is available for virtually every activity and sport. Many people purchase footwear that is not designed for the uses it will actually serve. Running footwear is not intended for walking, and walking footwear is not intended for hiking. Tennis footwear is designed differently from volleyball footwear because of the varying movement demands.

When selecting fitness equipment and other products, consumers need to keep in mind the purposes for which they are intended.



Background Information

Considerations for Evaluating a Fitness Centre

When deciding on a fitness centre, consumers need to consider criteria such as the following:

- **Price**
 - Do the membership fees or user fees fit your budget?
 - Does the centre offer monthly or seasonal memberships or only long-term memberships? If the centre does not allow a trial period or short-term memberships, consider another facility.
 - Can a friend join a member occasionally for a user fee?
- **Facility**
 - Are you able to tour the centre at the intended time of use?

- Are the facilities clean and well-maintained?
- Does the equipment look up to date and well-maintained?
- Are the exercise areas uncluttered and safe?
- Do the members follow safe and hygienic practices?
- Is there appropriate signage for rules and procedures?
- Does the centre offer other appealing facilities (e.g., sauna, whirlpool)?
- **Staff**
 - Does the centre have enough staff to work with clients?
 - Can you book a staff member to assist with education and programming?
 - Does the staff have fitness leader certification?
 - Does the staff offer clients a personal fitness assessment and is there an initial medical inquiry?
 - Is the centre supervised at all times?
- **Programming**
 - Does the centre offer a variety of fitness programming, such as aerobics, spinning, yoga, and other classes?
 - Are the classes a part of the membership or are participants required to pay additional fees for them?
 - Does the centre have all the machines and free weights needed for personal fitness programming?
- **Satisfaction**
 - How long has the centre been in business? Check out the centre through the local Better Business Bureau or check online for customer satisfaction.
 - What on-site services are available (e.g., towels, hair dryers)?
- **Convenience**
 - Is the centre conveniently located for you?
 - Is the centre accessible by public transportation? Is there ample parking?
 - Are the hours of operation suitable?
 - How crowded is the facility at the time of intended use?
 - Is there enough equipment to keep wait time to a minimum?