

juniors

# A HEALTHY HEART



## THEMED PROGRAMME



### AIM

To spend time looking at what makes a healthy heart – one of the most important parts of our body. This could link with World Heart Day which takes place on the 29<sup>th</sup> September each year.

### ACTIVITIES

-  A Healthy Heart Changes Speed
-  A Healthy Heart is Well Fed
-  A Healthy Heart Does its Job
-  A Healthy Heart is Full of Love
-  A Healthy Heart Gets Lots of Exercise
-  A Healthy Heart Works Hard

# A HEALTHY HEART

## » INTRODUCTION

The human heart is amazing! It's just over the size of a fist, but the heart is the body's hardest working muscle.

It keeps you alive, pumping blood around your body, providing it with oxygen and nutrients.

As the heart is so important to us, it's crucial that we look after and keep it healthy. A healthy heart needs feeding well, plenty of exercise and a lot of love.

Find out more information and ideas on the British Heart Foundation website at [bhf.org.uk](http://bhf.org.uk).

## ? DID YOU KNOW?

- Over a lifetime, on average, a heart will beat roughly 3.5 billion times.
- The heart pumps blood through 60,000 miles of blood vessels. If stretched out, that's over twice around the world.
- The heart pumps 800 million pints of blood around the body in a lifetime. That's the same as leaving the kitchen tap on for 45 years.
- Laughing is good for your heart. It reduces stress and boosts your immune system.



GET ACTIVE



10 MINUTES



READY TO GO

## GET ACTIVE: A HEALTHY HEART CHANGES SPEED

Heart beats will change speed depending on what a person is doing. For example, when doing exercise, a heart will beat much faster than when you're sat on the sofa. See if your group know why this is? Answer – Muscles need much more oxygen when exercising, so the heart needs to get more blood with oxygen to them as quickly as possible.

Get your group to measure their resting heart beat rate. Do this by getting them to place two fingers on the inside of their wrist, until they can feel their pulse. Count the beats for 60 seconds to get a resting heart rate.

Now play a game which gets them running around, to raise their heart beats. After a while, stop the game and get everyone to measure their heart rate again. It should be much higher. Get the group to compare the difference between the two rates and see whose has increased the most.



GET CREATIVE



10 MINUTES

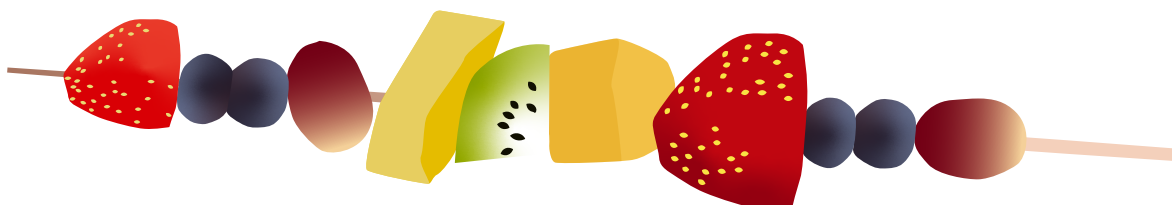


PREPARATION NEEDED

## GET CREATIVE: A HEALTHY HEART IS WELL FED

A healthy body and a healthy heart are really important. One way we can keep both our body and heart healthy is by eating things which are good for us, such as fruit and vegetables.

With your group, chop up a variety of different fruits into small segments and using wooden kebab sticks, get them to make fruit kebabs. Use this activity as an opportunity to let your group taste different fruits they might not have tried before.





GET LEARNING



10 MINUTES



IN THE  
CUPBOARD

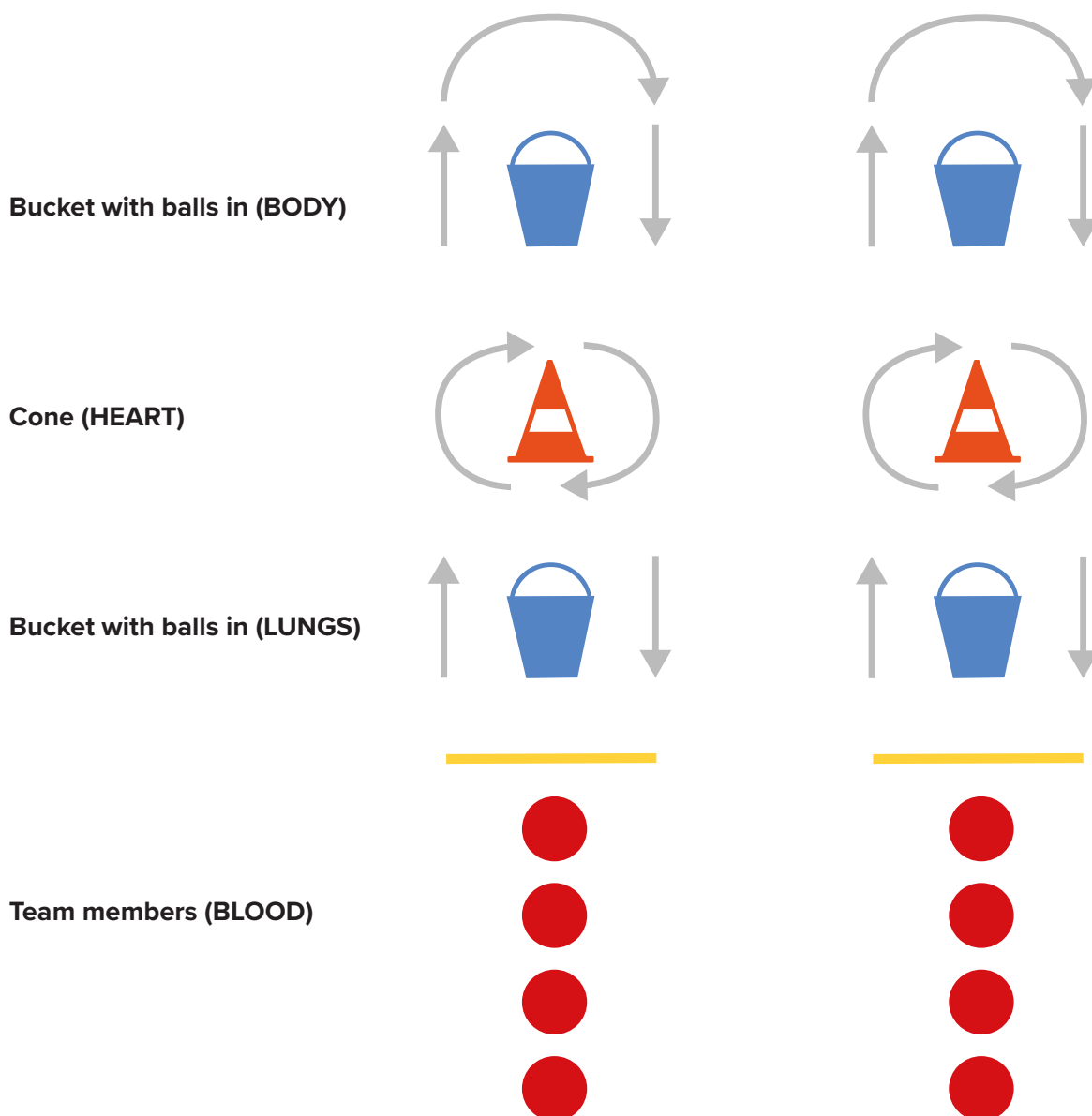
## GET LEARNING: A HEALTHY HEART DOES ITS JOB

In the form of a fun game, learn about the role the heart plays in pumping blood around the body, carrying oxygen to the body and removing waste. For this game you will need 2 or more teams, a cone & 2 buckets with a few small balls inside each bucket per team.

Beforehand, see if any of your members know the role of the heart and can explain its function to the rest of the group. Before playing the game, explain to your group what each item in the game represents from the details below.

Set up a bucket at either end of the room, with a cone in between the two buckets for each team. Sit each team by their first bucket. On go, one team member (blood) at a time must collect a ball (oxygen) from their first bucket (lungs), run to their cone and run around the cone once (heart), before running to their other bucket (body) to drop the ball of oxygen off. Whilst at the far bucket (body), they must pick up another ball (carbon dioxide) from the bucket, go back to the cone and run around it once (heart) before dropping the ball off at the first bucket (lungs).

Continue this game until either all the team members have had a go, or after so many goes. The team which completes the game the quickest will be crowned the 'healthiest heart'.





## GET INTO THE BIBLE: A HEALTHY HEART IS FULL OF LOVE

The Bible encourages us to 'love one another'. Ask your group for some examples of how we can show love to our friends, family and the people around us. Examples may include things like being kind, saying please and thank you, holding the door for someone, sharing, donating to charity and so on.

One way we can show love to each other is by prayer. If we care about someone or if we feel like someone needs help and could do with some love, then we can pray for them. God listens to our prayers.

Give each member in your group a post it note and encourage them to write down people, things and situations which they want to share their love with and pray for. Once they are done, bring together all the post it notes and form the shape of a love heart on the floor or wall. Finish the activity in prayer, praying for the items listed on the giant love heart of notes.



## GET ACTIVE: A HEALTHY HEART GETS LOTS OF EXERCISE

Children should get an average of 1 hour of physical activity each day. This can include playing sports and games, but can also include walking to school or riding a scooter.

Explain to your group that exercise has lots of benefits, including a stronger heart, bones and muscles, improves fitness, helps with concentration and even helps with sleeping.

Get the group to think about what physical activity they usually do each day of the week – maybe they have PE at school on a Monday, netball practice on Tuesday evening, etc. Are there any days they do not do an hour's physical activity?

To help ensure they have done an hour of physical activity today, get them playing one of their favourite games. Ideally a game which gets them running around and being active.



## GET LEARNING: A HEALTHY HEART WORKS HARD

The average heart pumps around 5 litres of blood around the body every minute. That's over 7,200 litres every day! Use this activity to show your group how hard a heart has to work and see if they can get anywhere close to working as hard as the heart does.

You will need **two bowls**, **5 litres of water** and a **¼ measuring cup or small ladle** (holds roughly 60-70ml).

Fill one bowl with the 5L of water. On **Go**, a child has 1 minute to try and transfer the water from one bowl to the other using their measuring cup. Get a number of members of the group to give it a go and see who can do the best.

This activity should be nearly impossible and will help to show just how strong and effective the heart is as a muscle!