



# Physical Activity

## ***Benefits of Regular Physical Activity***

- Helps build and maintain healthy bones and muscles.
- Helps control weight, build lean muscle, and reduce fat.
- Reduces feelings of depression and anxiety and promotes psychological well-being.

## ***Youth Participation in Physical Activity***

- Nearly half of 12-to 21-year olds do not engage in vigorous physical activity on a regular basis.
- The percentage of high school students participating in daily physical education classes dropped from 42% in 1991 to 27% in 1997.
- Only 49% of high school students were enrolled in a physical education class in 1997.

## ***Prevalence of Overweight Youth***

- The percentage of children and adolescents who are overweight has almost doubled since 1980.
- More than 11% of children and adolescents are now overweight.

Source: School Health Index for Middle School and High School, February 2000, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Directions: With a partner, examine and discuss the information above. Using the chart on the next page, draw conclusions related to the following:

1. Why do activity levels of teenagers drop off after the age 12?
2. What would motivate teenagers to be more active?
3. In what types of activities would teenagers be interested in participating?

Why do activity levels of teenagers drop off after the age 12?

What would motivate children ages 9 - 13 to be more active?

In what types of activities would teenagers be interested in participating?