

Session 1: *I Can Keep Myself Healthy*

OVERVIEW:

Key Concept

To be the whole, fulfilled person I was created to be, I need to build healthy living skills.

Objectives

In this session, participants will:

- Get acquainted.
- Understand group guidelines regarding appropriate group behavior.
- Be introduced to the *Kids Like Me* program.
- Learn the components of healthy living: Physical, Psychological, Social, and Spiritual.
- Discover that they are important to God and He is always with them.

Session Affirmations

<p><i>Physically:</i> I can be healthy.</p>	<p><i>Psychologically:</i> I am healthiest when I think positively about myself and others.</p>	<p><i>Socially:</i> I am healthiest when I share my life with others.</p>	<p><i>Spiritually:</i> I am important to God and He loves me.</p>
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Key Verse(s)

Psalm 100: (*Selected portions from International Children's Bible*)

- (3) Know that the Lord is God. He made us, and we belong to him. We are his people....
- (5) The Lord is good. His love continues forever.

Session Outline

Welcome! (25-35 Minutes)

Gathering Activity: Name Tags
Introduce the Group Rules
Warm Up: Getting Acquainted Game

Lessons for Living (25 -35 Minutes):

Introduction to Kids Like Me Groups
Activity #1: Healthy Living Circle
Activity #2: Healthy Living Card Game

Family Groups (25 - 35 Minutes):

Sharing Activity: I Can Keep Myself Healthy!
Bible Verse(s): Psalm 100
Prayer Journal

Wrap-Up (15 Minutes):

Connecting with Others
Connecting with God
I AM SPECIAL Closing

Materials and Preparations

A big welcome sign posted in the room before participants arrive.
Portable CD player and quiet background music CD's.
Plastic Name Badge holders (3 x 4") with blank inserts.
Art supplies for decorating name tags, such as markers, stickers.
Rules For Sharing, made into a poster.
A small, soft stuffed animal or bean bag.

GROUP LEADER NOTE: A copy of all posters, activity sheets and handouts are found at the end of this session plan to help you with lesson planning. A CD containing all the handouts in PDF files is also included with this curriculum.

Healthy Living Circle enlarged on a flipchart page and cut apart on the lines, creating four quarters. You will also need a large poster board to reassemble the circle during the group. Print the title *Healthy Living Circle* across the top. One set of the *Healthy Living Game Cards*, reproduced and cut apart. NOTE: If you have more than 16 children, make two sets so every child will have one card.

One copy per child of the *Healthy Living Game Cards* sheet – NOT CUT APART.
One notebook per leader for the small group Prayer Journals.
A flipchart page or long strip of paper with the heading *Our Acts of Kindness* printed across the top.

Key Verses from Psalm 100 (see above) printed on a poster board or flipchart.
Parent Information Letter and *Session Overview* to be sent home with each child.

GROUP LEADER NOTE: as many of the participants will have learning differences (see Appendix F), always:

- PRINT information on the Board in capital letters so that participants with dyslexia or other reading difficulties will be able to read it easily.
- Copy handouts on COLORED pieces of paper.

Session Plan

Welcome!

Gathering Activity: Name Tags

As children arrive, **direct** them to tables on which you have laid out plastic name badges with blank inserts and art supplies. Using their favorite color, **print** their first name in big letters in the center of the blank insert. Then let children decorate their tags in any way they wish. **Talk** with children as they work, asking them questions about their favorite foods and things they enjoy doing. Encourage older children to draw small pictures of these things on their tags. When the tags are completed, insert them into the plastic holders and pin them on. Be sure all leaders make their own tags, too.

Rules For Sharing:

GROUP LEADER NOTE: As you begin, it is important to establish several rules that will govern your time together. These rules are necessary to establish a safe environment in which all children can feel comfortable to honestly express their thoughts and feelings, particularly about difficult subjects.

Have children sit in chairs or on the floor. **Say:** *Before we do anything else, it is important that we set some rules for our group. This is our group, and we want it to be a safe place for everyone. All groups – like families, school classes and even groups of friends – have rules.* **Ask:**

- *What do rules do for us?* Let children respond. Rules help us get along better, have fun and stay safe.
- *What would it be like if we did not have any rules?* Refer to what it would be like to play games, drive on roads, etc. if there were no rules.
- *What rules do you think we need to make our group safe for all of us?* Let participants share ideas.

Now **show** the *Rules For Sharing Poster* you made earlier. **Say:** *Here are the rules we will use in our group. For our group to be safe, it is important that we all understand them, and agree to follow them. Let's look at each one:*

1. **Respect one another:**
 - Everyone's thoughts and feelings are important.
 - We speak only for ourselves; we let others speak for themselves.
 - One person speaks at a time.
 - Listen to the person talking.
 - Keep our hands to ourselves.
2. **Use "put-ups" only.** We give only compliments and encouragement.
3. **You can pass,** but everyone's thoughts and feelings are important!
4. **All sharing in group is confidential.** "What is said in group, stays in group." Emphasize that this rule applies to all group leaders, too. However, be sure to explain that as a group leader you are a mandated reporter and can not keep confidential any of the following information you may hear during group:
 - Someone is or has been hurt physically or sexually.
 - Someone is planning to hurt him/herself or someone else.

Suggested Consequences for Violating Group Rules. Explain that if someone does not follow these rules there will be consequences. Suggested consequences are:

1. *First time:* A warning
2. *Second time:* A time-out (1-5 minutes)
3. *Third time:* Participant will be asked to leave group for the remainder of the session. Be sure there is a safe place for a child to wait, if they are asked to leave the group.

GROUP LEADER NOTE: It is vital that these rules are followed consistently, and that consequences are enforced for any violations. This is the only way the atmosphere of safety that is essential to the group process can be maintained.

Warm Up: Getting Acquainted Game

Gather children in a circle. Have available a soft stuffed animal or bean bag.
Say: *We are going to play a game to get to know each other a little better. In a moment, I am going to read a question and then toss this bean bag to someone in our circle. Whoever catches it will answer the question, and then toss it to someone else. That person will answer the question, too. We will keep tossing the bean bag until everyone has had a turn.* **Read** the first question and begin the game by tossing the object to someone else. **Be sure all leaders play, too.** When everyone has answered the first question, move on to the next one.

- What is something you really like to do?
- Who do you live with (brothers, sisters, grandparents, children, foster parents, group home)?
- Name one thing that scares you.
- Name one thing you REALLY wish you could do!
- What would you like to be when you grow up?

Lessons for Living

Introduction to the Kids Like Me! Program

Introduce the group by **saying:** *We are here because someone in our family is in a recovery group. They may have used alcohol or drugs, or be here for another kind of group. This group is just for kids – it is our group. It is a safe place for you to talk about anything you want to talk about and to learn about how to live a healthy life. We will learn from each other. All of us who are your leaders are looking forward to being with you! We will have lots of fun and interesting things for you to do each week, and we hope you will join us, too. Now let's talk for a few minutes about our main theme – how to live a healthy life.*

Activity #1: The Healthy Living Circle

Say: *Your life is a special gift to you, and part of your job as you grow up is to learn how to keep yourself strong and healthy. Being strong and healthy involves many things, and that is what our group is all about. There are four parts of us we must learn to keep healthy.*

Choose four volunteers. **Give** each volunteer one of the four quarters of the *Healthy Living Circle* which you prepared earlier (see Materials and Preparations section above). **Display** a large poster board, on which you have printed the title *Healthy Living Circle* at the top. **Say:** *We are going to create a poster that will help us remember what it means to live a healthy life. Our circle will have four parts, each one telling us about one area of our lives we need to keep healthy. Those areas are:*

Physical. Ask the volunteer holding the Physical quadrant to bring it forward. Help him/her glue it to the poster board. **Say:** *The first part of our lives is the physical part, which means taking care of our bodies.*

Psychological. Ask the volunteer holding the Psychological quadrant to bring it forward. Help him/her glue it to the poster board. **Say:** *The next part of our lives is the psychological, which means taking care of our minds and feelings.*

Social. Ask the volunteer holding the Social quadrant to bring it forward. Help him/her glue it to the poster board. **Say:** *The third part of our lives is the social, which means having good friendships and family relationships.*

Spiritual. Ask the volunteer holding the Spiritual quadrant to bring it forward. Help him/her glue it to the poster board. **Say:** *The last part of our lives we will talk about in our group is the spiritual, which means knowing God and having a special relationship with Him.*

Now **ask** group members to **suggest** ways they can keep themselves healthy in each of these areas of life. They can read the suggestions already printed in the circle and add more ideas of their own. **Add** any additional ideas they may suggest to the corresponding section of the circle.

End by referring to the last statement in the Physical section: *No harmful substances.* **Ask** volunteers to share what they think that means.

BE SURE CHILDREN UNDERSTAND that all use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, and someone else's medication, is risky for everyone, but especially children with blood relatives who have problems with alcohol and other drugs. Point out that taking medication as prescribed by their doctor *for them* is healthy, but that taking someone else's medication or medication differently than prescribed is risky.

Activity #2: Healthy Living Card Game

Turn the *Healthy Living Circle Poster* over so children cannot read it. **Say:** *Let's see how much we can remember about keeping ourselves healthy. I am going to give each of you a card. Please do not show it to anyone yet.*

GROUP LEADER NOTE: If you have children who cannot read, pair them with someone who can read.

Distribute the cards, being sure every child has one card. Allow a few moments for children to read their cards quietly to themselves. Then proceed as follows:

- *If you have a card that tells one way to keep yourself **PHYSICALLY** healthy, please raise your hand. Remember, physical means keeping your body healthy. Direct* those who raise their hands to stand in a group in one corner of the room.
- *If you have a card that tells one way to keep yourself **PHYSIOLOGICALLY** healthy, please raise your hand. Remember, psychological means keeping your mind and emotions healthy. Direct* those who raise their hands to stand in another corner of the room.
- *If you have a card that tells one way to keep yourself **SOCIALLY** healthy, please raise your hand. Remember, social means keeping your relationships and friendships healthy. Direct* those who raise their hands to stand in another corner of the room.
- *If you have a card that tells one way to keep yourself **SPIRITUALLY** healthy, please raise your hand. Remember, spiritual means keeping your relationship to God healthy. Direct* those who raise their hands to stand in the last corner of the room.

If anyone is left, have a co-leader quietly direct them to one of the corners as you continue. **Beginning** with the Physical corner, **ask** the children to read their cards out loud. Then **ask** the rest of the group if all the cards read describe ways to keep ourselves physically healthy. If not, have the group suggest which card would fit better in another corner. Have the child holding that card move to the appropriate place. **Repeat** the process for the other three corners.

When everyone is standing in the proper corner, **enthusiastically praise them** for a job well done and lead the whole group in a round of applause!

Family Groups

GROUP LEADER NOTE: Family Groups are small groups led by one leader. They allow children to share more openly and receive more personal attention. For best results have one leader for every 4-5 children and be sure returning children stay with the same leader each week. See the *Getting Started* section in this manual for more information about these small groups.

Say: *Now we are going to go into our family groups. Your family group is a place where you can talk to a leader, to each other and to God. You will be in the same family group each week. Divide* the children into as many small groups as you have leaders in your room and have them move to their assigned meeting place (a table or corner where they can huddle together). The small group leaders then lead the following activities:

Sharing Activity: I Can Keep Myself Healthy! Activity Sheet

Give each group member one sheet of the *Healthy Living Game Cards* **NOT CUT APART**. **Say:** *We just learned many ways to keep ourselves healthy. Probably none of us does all of them all the time – including me! But I think all of us are doing some of them already.* **Review** the items on the sheet. Then **ask:**

- *What are some things on this sheet you are doing right now to keep yourself healthy? Pick one or two things and color the squares green. As children work, affirm* them for doing something healthy to take care of themselves.

Say: *Learning how to keep ourselves healthy is what our group is all about. All of us have things we could do to live more healthily. One thing I would like to do to make my life healthier is _____* (choose an item from the sheet and share it with your group). **Ask:**

- *If you could change one thing right now to make your life healthier, what would it be? Look at your sheets again. Pick just one thing and color it red.* Allow time for children to complete this step. If you have younger children, you may need to guide them to make a choice.
- *What can you do this week to start doing your one thing?* Help children name one concrete thing they can do. Examples: “When I come home from school, I’ll eat fruit for a snack instead of candy.” Or, “I will go outside and play instead of watching cartoons on Saturday morning.” Or, “I will talk to God everyday when I wake up.” Have them write or draw what they will do this week on the back of their sheets.

Bible Verse: Psalm 100

Say: *One of the ways we keep ourselves healthy is by getting to know God. We learn about God from His special book, the Bible. For instance:*

- *Did you know that you are very, very important to God?*

- *Did you know He loves you more than any person here on earth could ever love you?*
- *Did you know He promises to be with you all the time and listen to you whenever you want to talk to Him?*

Those are just some of the things we learn about God in the Bible. Let me read some special verses from Psalm 100:

GROUP LEADER NOTE: If you have children who are good readers, invite them to read the verses to the group.

Psalm 100: *(Selected portions from ICB)*

(3) Know that the Lord is God. He made us, and we belong to him. We are his people....

(5) The Lord is good. His love continues forever.

These verses tell us that we belong to God and He loves us – forever! Ask:

- *Do you feel God loves you? Why or why not? Let volunteers respond. Affirm all responses at this time, even those who may say they do NOT believe God loves them.*

GROUP LEADER NOTE: You might want to encourage children to be honest during this discussion by stating that you realize that sometimes things happen in life that may make it hard to believe God loves us. If you have an example of such a time in your own life, share it now. This will set the tone for the group, letting children know it is okay to be honest about their feelings, especially about their relationship to God, and that you understand how difficult life experiences can affect their lives.

When all volunteers have shared, briefly **share** why you believe God loves you. End by stating your desire for all the children to experience God's love this week.

Prayer Journal:

GROUP LEADER NOTE: Each week you will spend the last few minutes of family group leading a prayer time. The purpose of this time is to help kids see God's presence and power as a significant resource in facing life's circumstances. Use a notebook to write down children's requests so you can remember them from week to week. Children will begin to see God's power as you review these requests and record the answers the children report.

Say: *Because God loves us so much, He invites us to talk to Him about the things that are happening in our lives. We can talk to God about anything – especially when we need help feel upset about something that is happening. I am going to use this notebook to make a list of the things we want to talk to God about. We will pray for these things here and I will also pray for them at home this week. Then next week, we will talk about how God is answering our prayers.*

Ask kids to share any requests they have, especially about things they may be facing right now that seem hard. **Write** all the requests in the notebook, adding one of your own. End with a **brief prayer** for each child, thanking God that he or she is there and praying for any specific requests.

Wrap-Up

GROUP LEADER NOTE: All the small groups will gather together again for this final segment of the meeting. See the *Getting Started* section of this manual for ideas about how to accomplish this re-gathering quickly and easily.

Connecting with Others:

One of the most important parts of living a healthy life is the ability to see beyond ourselves and recognize our connection to our world. Children are empowered when they realize they can make a difference in their families, communities, and beyond. This is especially true for children of alcoholics/addicts, who typically grow up believing they are NOT special and do NOT make a difference. However, kindness and getting involved in the lives of others is not something we as human beings are automatically inclined to do. It is an attitude toward life that is developed by being exposed to, and engaging in, acts of kindness. Therefore, throughout this series, children will be asked to perform “required acts of kindness.” These acts of kindness will be reported and kept in a list throughout the sessions of this group. This list will allow participants to have a tangible record of how much they have impacted their world just by reaching out to others in small ways.

GROUP LEADER NOTE: The *Connecting With Others* activity was added in response to the research (Search Institute’s 40 Developmental Assets and Resiliency Studies – see Appendix G) indicating that it is critical for children to develop a sense of empathy and compassion through helping others.

Display the flipchart page or long strip of paper which you have titled *Our Acts of Kindness*. **Introduce** this project by saying: *A big part of living a healthy life is learning how to think about others and look for ways we can be helpful and caring to them. Each of us can reach out to others in caring ways, but sometimes it takes a little time to remember to do so.* **Ask:**

- *What are some ways we could be kind to someone this week? Remember, these acts of kindness can be as small as making eye contact and smiling at an elderly person on the street, or carrying a bag of groceries up the stairs for a neighbor.* Have children **brainstorm** ideas and **print** them on the top of the list.

Say: *I would like each of us (that includes us as leaders, too) to do one act of kindness before the next session. This act of kindness is to be a gift we give to others and we will not accept anything in return. If the person we help offers anything, we can ask these people to pass on the kindness by helping someone*

else. Each week I am going to bring this paper to our group. We will all have a chance to share the acts of kindness we did during the week and I will write them here. Let's see how quickly we can fill up our paper with acts of kindness! I think we will all discover how much fun it can be to be kind.

Connecting with God

Display the Psalm 100 verses which you have printed on a poster board or flipchart. Ask the group to **stand in a circle**. Then **say**: *As we get ready to leave, I want to remind you again how important you are to God and that He loves you very much. Let's read these verses from the Bible together.* **Lead** the group in reading the verses out loud.

Each week we are going to close our group in the same way – by telling ourselves something very important. We can all say this together because it is true! If it feels safe, have participants hold hands as they **yell** out together:

GOD MADE ME SPECIAL AND HE IS ALWAYS WITH ME!

AS CHILDREN LEAVE: *Be sure to:*

- **Collect their name tags** for use next week.
- Pass out (or hand to parents as they arrive to pick up their children) the **Parent Information Letter** and today's **Session Summary**.



Kids Like Me!

Parent Information

Welcome to Kids Like Me!

We are so glad your child was with us in **Kids Like Me** today. KLM is especially designed for children living in families in a chemically dependent family. By joining us each week, your child will:

1. *Enjoy a safe group environment led by well trained leaders.*
2. *Learn valuable life skills many of us did not learn until we entered recovery!*
3. *Share the group experience with other children who are living with similar life circumstances.*
4. *Discover how a personal relationship with God can be his/her greatest source of help, hope and healing.*



At the end of each session your child will be given a *Session Summary* page. This sheet contains the main concepts your child heard in the group and a suggested Do-At-Home activity. We encourage you to make every effort to spend time with your child(ren) doing these activities each week. It will not only reinforce the life skills your child is learning in group, it will strengthen your overall family relationships, too!

We look forward to having your child with us again. Should you desire to talk with a program leader about any aspect of our program, please do not hesitate to do so at the numbers listed below.

To Contact Us ...

If you have any questions about the **Kids Like Me** program, please contact one of our program leaders:

Leader: _____

Contact: _____

Leader: _____

Contact: _____

KLM Session Topics

The **Kids Like Me** curriculum is organized in a 13 week cycle. During each cycle, the following topics are presented:

Healthy Living

Communication

Feelings

Feelings Defenses

Anger Management

*Alcohol, Tobacco and
Other Drugs Info*

Chemical Dependency

*Chemical Dependency Af-
fects the Whole Family*

Wise Choices

Boundaries

Friendships

Uniqueness

These subjects have been carefully chosen based on the most recent research pertaining to the needs of children of alcoholics/addicts. However, *the healthy living skills presented are applicable to all children.* Therefore, *all children are welcome in Kids Like Me!*





Kids Like Me!

Session Summary

I Can Keep Myself Healthy!

Key Concept: *To be the whole, fulfilled person I was created to be, I need to build healthy living skills.*

In today's session, we talked about what it means to live a healthy life. The main concepts we discussed are:

- We can take responsibility to keep ourselves healthy.
- There are four parts of our lives we need to keep healthy:
 1. **PHYSICAL:** Keeping our bodies healthy.
 2. **PSYCHOLOGICAL:** Keeping our minds and emotions healthy.
 3. **SOCIAL:** Keeping our relationships healthy.
 4. **SPIRITUAL:** Keeping our spirits healthy, especially through a personal relationship with God.
- Using **healthy living skills** is the way we keep ourselves healthy. The purpose for our group is to learn these valuable skills.

During Family Groups every child identified one thing they are already doing to keep themselves healthy, and then chose one thing they would like to work on this week.

You can follow up at home this week by talking with your child about the goal your child set, and asking if there is anything you can do to help him/her meet it.

Session Bible Verses

Part of keeping ourselves spiritually healthy is knowing God. The verses we presented are from **Psalms 100** (from the International Children's Bible):

*(3) Know that the Lord is God. He made us, and we belong to him.
We are his people....*

(5) The Lord is good. His love continues forever.

These verses tell us that we belong to God AND that He loves us. Because He is both loving AND God, His love for us is perfect. We can trust Him to guide us throughout our lives.

Session 1 Parent Handout

To Do At Home: A Family Act of Kindness

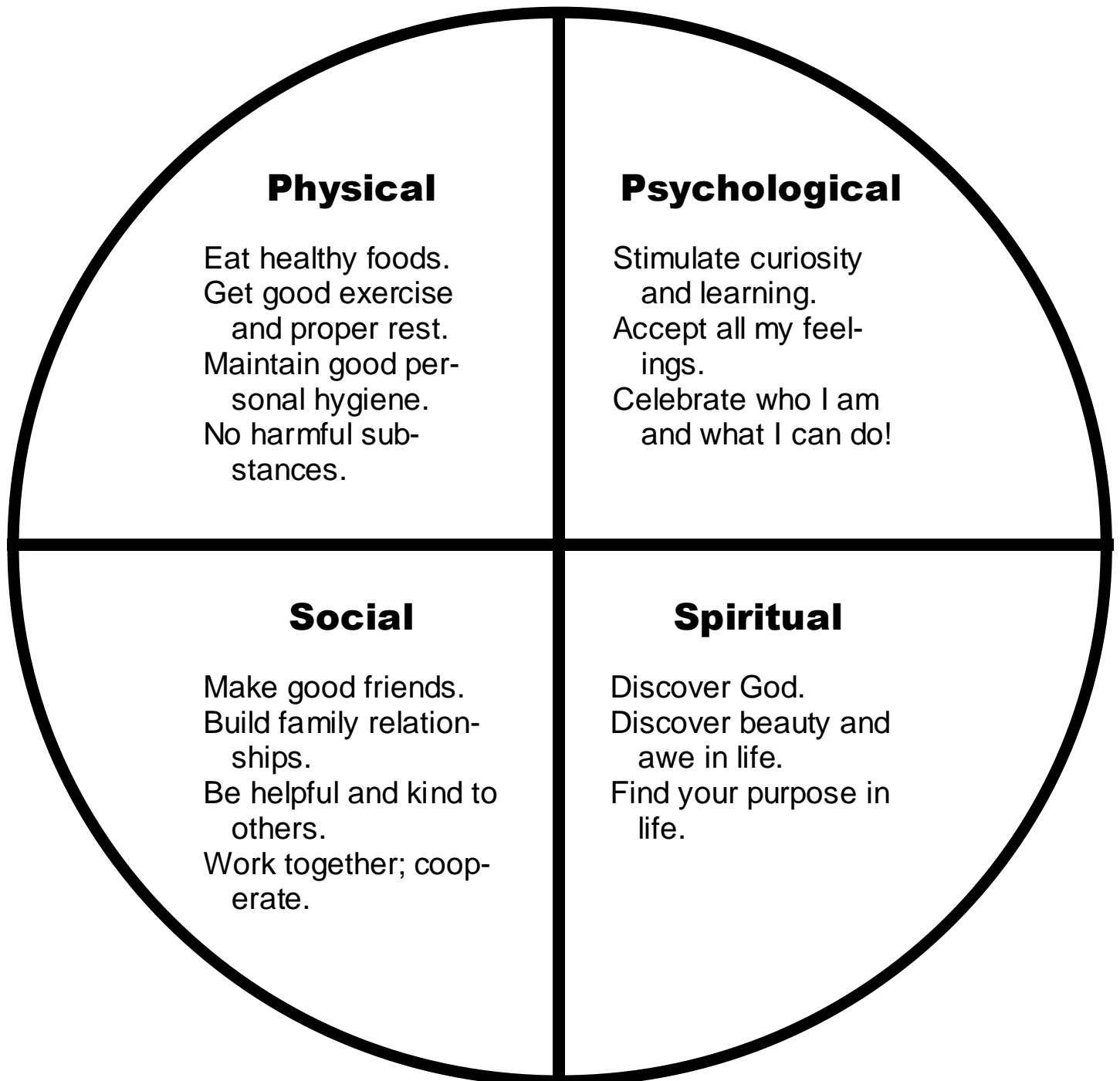
An on-going part of KLM is an assignment called "Acts of Kindness." This helps children see beyond themselves and recognize their connection to the broader world. Each week, they are asked to do one act of kindness *without accepting anything in return.*

This week, involve your family in a *Family Act of Kindness*. Choose something all family members can do **together**. **Ideas:**

- Make and give a small gift to someone.
- Spend an hour weeding a garden for an elderly person.
- Take cookies to someone who received bad news.
- Your ideas...?



The Healthy Living Circle



Children's Group
Healthy Living Game Cards

Eat lots of fruits and vegetables	Get lots of rest and sleep	Exercise everyday	No alcohol or other drugs
Learn new things	Accept all my feelings!	Know I am special	Know what I can do well
Make good friends	Be kind and helpful to others	Cooperate and get along with others	Cooperate and get along at home
Talk to God everyday	Go to church every week	Enjoy God's beautiful world	Ask God to help me each day

Group Leader Notes

DATE: _____ GROUP: _____ SESSION TOPIC: _____

ACTIVITIES AND GROUP REACTIONS:

Welcome!:

Lessons for Living:

Family Groups:

Wrap-Up:

INDIVIDUAL SUMMARIES/NOTES:

- 1. _____

- 2. _____

- 3. _____

- 4. _____

- 5. _____

- 6. _____
