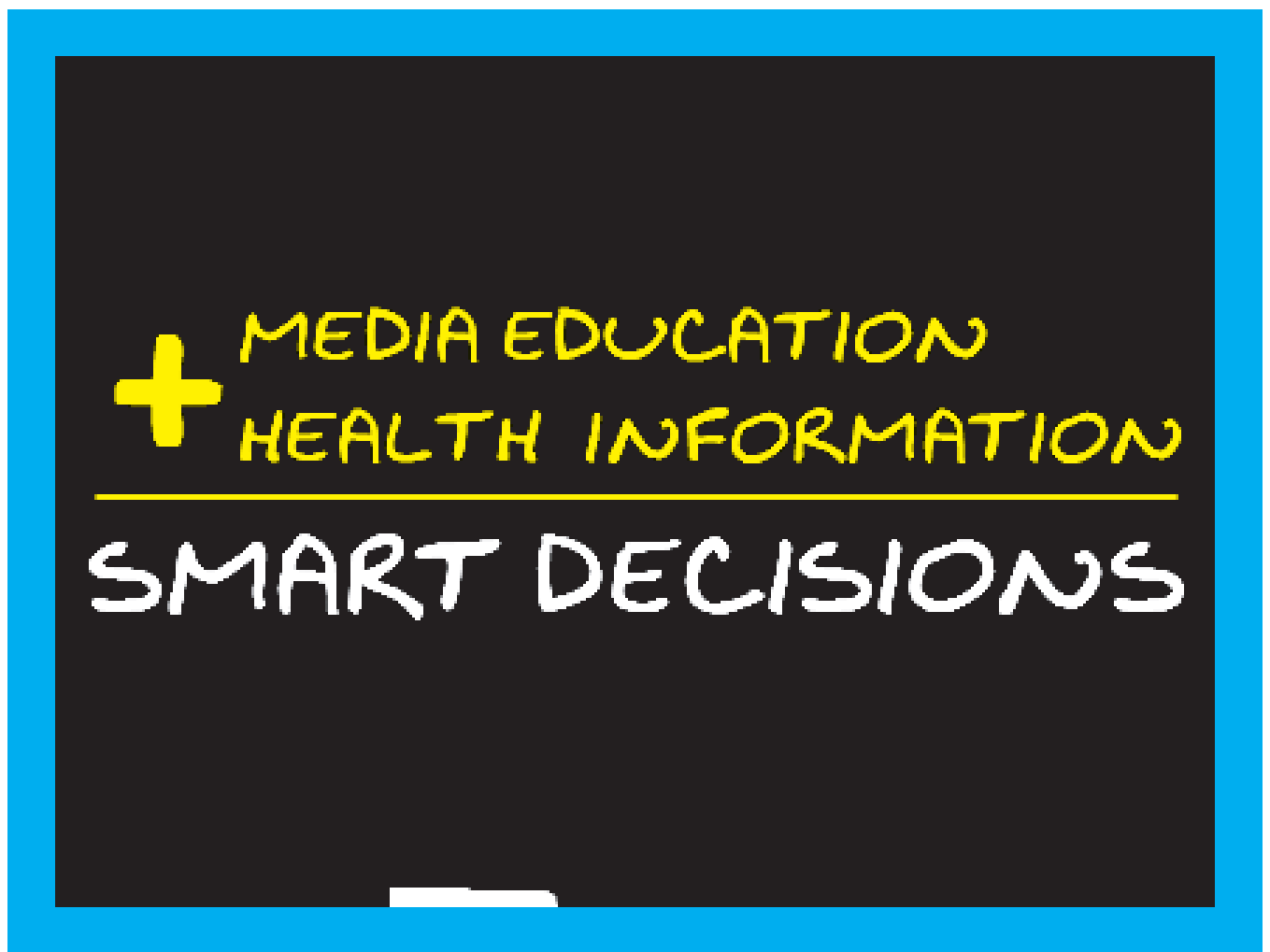


# Introduction and Overview

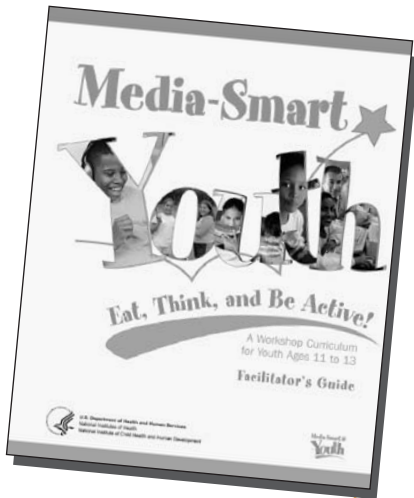
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## **W**elcome to **Media-Smart Youth: Eat, Think, and Be Active!**

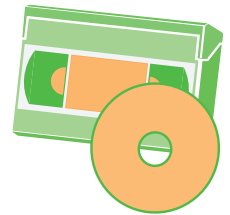
This engaging and exciting curriculum helps young people understand the complex media world around them. It will also help them make thoughtful decisions about issues important to their health, specifically nutrition and physical activity.

# It's All Here



Everything you need to plan and carry out Media-Smart Youth is included in this packet.

- The **Facilitator's Guide** features 10 structured lessons and a variety of helpful resources. The table on the next page provides a summary of the lessons.
- A companion **Media-Smart Youth Video and DVD** includes modules for both youth and facilitators.
- Pre- and post-curriculum optional activities—called *Tell Us What You Think* and *Tell Us What You Think Now*—provide your program staff and facilitators the opportunity to learn what the youth know and think about media, nutrition, and physical activity issues before and after participating in the curriculum.
- A colorful **6 Media Questions Poster** illustrates the program's media analysis tool.



This **Introduction and Overview** gives you the upfront information you need to plan Media-Smart Youth, including:

- **Introducing Media-Smart Youth**, which provides background on why and how the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) created this curriculum
- **Preparing for the Curriculum**, which describes some of the key steps and decisions to consider before conducting the Media-Smart Youth curriculum; this information is most helpful for program directors, agency staff, and facilitators
- **Paying Attention to the Details**, which provides the information that facilitators need to carry out the Media-Smart Youth lessons

# Media-Smart Youth At-A-Glance

Lesson	Activities	Snack Break	Action Break	Mini Production	Take-Home Idea	Video Module
<b>1</b> Welcome To Media-Smart Youth	Getting Started A: What Is the Media-Smart Youth (MSY) Workshop? B: Working Agreement C: Focus on Fruits and Vegetables	It's Veggie Time!	Red Light, Green Light	N/A	Tell family about MSY; try a working agreement; tell family about fruits/vegetables	What Is MSY? (intro to workshop)
<b>2</b> Thinking About Media	A: What Are Media? B: Media & Health—What's the Connection? C: Mini-Production	Mix It Up!	It All Depends on Where You Sit (Wall Sit)	Whose Point of View Is It? Media Question 1 (VIDEO; news report)	Determine purpose next time you use media	What Are Media? (clips of formats; media purposes)
<b>3</b> Asking Questions	A: More Than One Kind of Kid B: The 6 Media Questions C: Mini-Production	Just Peachy!	The Director Says... (Simon Says)	And...Action! Media Question 3 (PRINT; comic strip)	ID message next time you watch TV; discuss with family	Sample Media (samples for 6 Media Questions activity)
<b>4</b> Nutrition Know-How... Eat It Up!	A: Hurray for Whole Grains! B: Cutting Back on Fat and Added Sugar C: Mini-Production	Fruit and Krunch Kebabs	A Cool Wind Blows	Creating a Nutrition Poster. Media Question 2 (PRINT; poster)	Share new nutrition ideas: fruit/vegetables, whole grains, low-fat, and added sugar	Eat It Up! (snacks)
<b>5</b> Motion Com-motion—What Is Being Active?	A: What Is Physical Activity? B: Activities Fit To Be Tried C: Mini-Production	Terrific Tortillas	(Built into Lesson)	Physical Activity Jingles. Media Question 4 (MUSIC; jingle)	Measure pulse; tell family/friends about pulse	Activities Fit To Be Tried: Music Sequence (music for Activity B)
<b>6</b> Visiting a Grocery Store	Option 1: Going to the Grocery Store (fieldtrip) Option 2: Bringing the Grocery Store to You A: What's on the Label? B: Mini-Production (optional)	Eating Right... Quick as a Flash!	Playground Games	Write a Song or Do an Internet Scavenger Hunt (optional)	Look for fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat and added sugar, read Nutrition Facts labels; talk about food packaging	N/A
<b>7</b> The Power of Advertising	A: What Is Advertising? B: Thinking About Body Image C: Mini-Production	Food-Group Mania	Let's Do Yoga!	Omission Mission. Media Question 5 (THEATER; skit)	Look for product placement next time you use media	Let's Do Yoga! (Action Break); The Power of Advertising (influence of advertisements)
<b>8</b> Super Snacks and Better Bones	A: Foods in the Media and Thinking About Packaging B: Building Better Bones C: Mini-Production	Bone-Building Sundaes and More	Weight-Bearing Fun	Your Attention, Please! Media Question 6 (PRINT; billboard)	See which snacks are high in calcium; calcium and physical activity help strong bones; Scavenger Hunt: Calcium	Smoothie Sensations (smoothies)
<b>9</b> Making Smart Choices Fun and Easy	A: Being Active: What Makes It Easy? What Makes It Hard? B: Get in the Action! C: Mini-Production	Pop It!	The Human Knot	Get Out the Vote! Choose Your Big Production Media Format	Think about helpers/obstacles; talk to family and friends about making physical activity easy	Big Production Montage (clips of Big Productions)
<b>10</b> Getting Into the Production Mode	A: This Message Brought to You By... B: 6 Media Questions from the Production Point of View C: 3 Ps in Production	Dip It!	Walkin' In Style	T-Shirts (optional)	Next time you use media, figure out production phases; tell family and friends about the 3 Ps and about the Big Production	On the Air! Roll the Presses! (behind-the-scenes look at production)

# Introducing Media-Smart Youth

These days, young people are actively engaged with the media world around them—they're often reading, watching, listening, or surfing.

Media—such as television, videotapes, video games, the Internet, radio, compact discs, magazines, and more—are all around us. They can have a lifelong effect on young people's attitudes, behaviors, and on ways of thinking about many things, including physical activity, nutrition, and health.

Advertising tells us what and when to eat, and how to be active. Sports celebrities, entertainers, and other pop-culture icons offer powerful role models of lifestyle choices. Obvious and subtle messages about body image are everywhere. What's more, when people are using media they are generally not being physically active.

Navigating through this world of media requires knowledge and skills. That's why Media-Smart Youth: Eat, Think, and Be Active! was created. Youth who are media smart have the know-how and critical thinking abilities to be thoughtful media participants. They question the “who,” the “why,” the “what,” and the “how” behind the words and images. As a result, they are wiser about the messages they see and hear, and about the decisions they make.



## What Is Media-Smart Youth?

The Media-Smart Youth education program focuses on building media analysis and media production skills to help young people ages 11 to 13 understand the connections between media and health. The program uses nutrition and physical activity examples to help youth learn about these connections and to build their media analysis skills. As part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) National Youth Media Campaign, this program is coordinated by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), a component of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Media-Smart Youth combines youth development principles and practices with current media analysis, content, up-to-date research findings, and federal recommendations about nutrition and physical activity. It is also consistent with widely accepted, national learning standards (see Appendix I for more information on the relationship between Media-Smart Youth topics and these standards).

In the Media-Smart Youth program, young people will:

- Learn about the connections between media and health
- Analyze and create media messages
- Evaluate both obvious and subtle media messages to determine accuracy and consistency with their values
- Learn about key components of a nutritious diet, including fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and calcium, and about the importance of reducing fat and added sugar intakes
- Develop strategies for making healthful food choices in real-life settings
- Discuss the importance of daily physical activity in promoting health
- Develop strategies for becoming more active in their daily lives
- Create health messages for other young people

## Why Do We Need Media-Smart Youth?

Every day, youth ages 11 to 14 in the United States—who spend on average 6 hours and 45 minutes a day using media—encounter a barrage of marketing and advertising messages.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the number of television commercials that children and young people view has risen from about 20,000 per year in the 1970s to recent estimates of more than 40,000 per year.<sup>2</sup> The majority of the advertisements they view are for food, primarily candy, cereal, and fast food.<sup>3</sup>

While media use and exposure to food marketing and advertising messages are at an all-time high, health experts are expressing a growing concern about the nutritional quality of the American diet. Children, young people, and adults are consuming more calories than they need without meeting recommended intakes for many nutrients.<sup>4</sup> These intakes are particularly important for young people, who may not be getting the nutrients they need for their growth and development. According to a 2005 report from the Institute of Medicine and a recent study published by the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, more than 15 percent of young people in the United States are obese.<sup>5,6</sup> Many more are at risk for becoming overweight or obese. Fewer than one-third of young people in the United States eat recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables.<sup>7</sup> In addition, fewer than 50 percent of children ages 6 to 18, and fewer than 15 percent of teenage girls ages 14 to 18, get the recommended daily amount of calcium.<sup>8</sup> Americans' increasingly sedentary lifestyle is another important part of the obesity problem. Nearly half of American youth ages 12 to 21 are not vigorously active on a regular basis.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Roberts, D.F., Foehr, U.G., Rideout, V.J., & Brodie, M. (2004). *Kids & Media in America*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>2</sup> The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation (2004, February 24). *The Role of Media in Childhood Obesity*. (Publication 7030). Retrieved April 12, 2005, from <http://www.kff.org/entmedia/entmedia022404pkg.cfm>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, Department of Health and Human Services. (2005). *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. Retrieved April 14, 2005, from <http://healthier.us.gov/dietaryguidelines>.

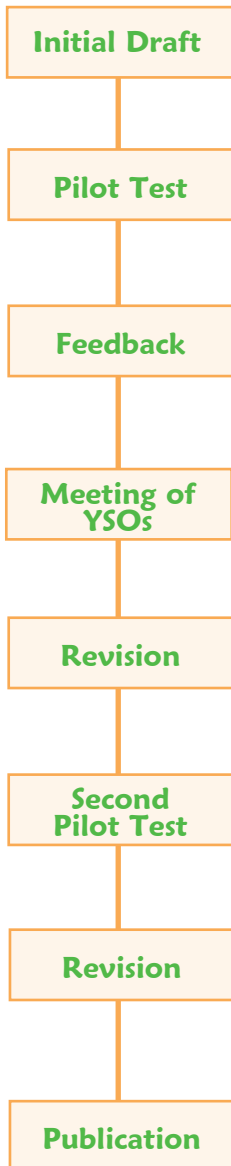
<sup>5</sup> Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. (2005). *Preventing Childhood Obesity: Health in the Balance*. Eds, Koplan, J.P., Liverman, C.T., & Kraak, V.I.

<sup>6</sup> Ogden, C.L., Flegal, K.M., Carroll, M.D., & Johnson, C.L. (2002). Prevalence and trends in overweight among U.S. children and adolescents. *The Journal of the American Medical Association*; 288(14), 1728–1732.

<sup>7</sup> Life's First Great Crossroads: *Pre-Teens Make Choices that Affect their Lives Forever*. (2000, May) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

<sup>8</sup> Gleason, P., & Sutor, C. (2001). Children's Diets in the Mid-1990s: Dietary Intake and Its Relationship with School Meal Participation (C. OCN-01-CD1, p.xv). Alexandria, VA: Office of Analysis, Nutrition and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

<sup>9</sup> Satcher, D. (1999). *Physical Activity & Health: Report of the Surgeon General*. Retrieved April 14, 2005 from <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/sgr/adoles.htm>.



In response to these problems, the U.S. congress asked four agencies within DHHS to develop programs that would help young people make choices that reinforce healthful behaviors, including being physically active and eating nutritious foods. This curriculum is part of those efforts.

## How Was Media-Smart Youth Developed?

Media-Smart Youth has gone through a lengthy development process, with rigorous review and testing. An initial draft of the curriculum was pilot-tested in a variety of settings by youth-serving organizations (YSOs) in seven sites around the country. Facilitators at each pilot site submitted online feedback after each lesson. In addition, curriculum developers observed lessons at all sites and solicited written and verbal feedback from participating youth and their parents. These opportunities for feedback allowed facilitators, youth, and parents to comment on lesson content and flow, timing of activities, directions to facilitators, facilitator preparation, and overall appeal and success of the curriculum. After the pilot tests were completed, all the sites participated in a day-long meeting to discuss their experiences and make suggestions for revising and improving the curriculum. The curriculum was then extensively revised and reviewed by experts in nutrition, physical activity, media literacy, and youth development. These revisions led to another round of pilot testing, which created more opportunities for feedback from facilitators and youth, that led to a final set of revisions and refinements to the curriculum. The result is the guide you have in hand.

# Preparing for the Curriculum

This curriculum is—first and foremost—flexible! It is easily adapted for use with young people from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds and those with special needs or interests. It may be used in a wide variety of community settings—such as afterschool programs and summer camps—and by many types of youth-serving agencies.

Media-Smart Youth brings together a mix of learning formats, including brainstorming, small and large group discussions, games, and creative productions. All of these activities are intended to create discussion and encourage problem solving and critical thinking. The curriculum includes 10 structured lessons with activities that explore media, nutrition, and physical activity topics. Each lesson also includes a *Snack Break* and an *Action Break*. These breaks reflect the nutrition and physical activity content of the curriculum and provide fun, hands-on ways to experience these concepts.

The curriculum concludes with a *Big Production*—an opportunity for youth participants to use what they have learned to create a media project designed to motivate other young people to take action for better nutrition or increased physical activity. In the process, the youth learn new skills in production, teamwork, and creativity.

Media-Smart Youth also has an accompanying videotape/DVD, which contains segments for facilitators and segments for youth. The segments for facilitators offer an orientation to the program and tips on implementing it from facilitators who participated in the pilot testing. The segments for youth are designed to teach program concepts in an engaging media format. You can decide whether to use the videotape/DVD during the lessons. *Choosing not to use the videotape/DVD will not affect your ability to carry out the program.* Appendix D provides a short synopsis of each segment on the videotape.

There is a checklist on page 28 that will help you think about the resources you may need for this program.

*Make sure to watch the “Welcome to Facilitators” and “Voices of Experience” modules of the Media-Smart Youth video or DVD. These modules will be especially helpful to you as you prepare for the curriculum.*



Finally, the Media-Smart Youth curriculum includes several appendices with supplementary material and resources that will help you make the most of the curriculum. These include:

- Sample permission forms
- Additional *Snack Break* and *Action Break* ideas
- A guide to the Media-Smart Youth video/DVD
- Guidance and resources for doing the *Big Production*
- A list of resources on curriculum topics
- Sample materials to help you promote and publicize the program
- A list of academic standards that reflect key learning areas supported by the curriculum lessons
- A sample certificate for youth who complete the curriculum
- A glossary of important terms used in the lessons

Now that you are familiar with how the overall curriculum is structured, here are some key items to think about before you get started.

## Determining the Timing of the Lessons

The suggested time for each lesson is 90 minutes—70 minutes for activities and 10 minutes each for the *Snack Break* and the *Action Break*. And, if you decide to use them, you'll also need to allow 20 additional minutes each for the pre- and post-curriculum *Tell Us What You Think* activities that come before Lesson 1 and after Lesson 10. Lesson 10 also includes an extra optional activity. If you choose to do this extra activity, you'll need to make sure you have an extra 30 minutes to complete it.

Suggested times also are provided for each activity within the lessons. The age, gender mix, and size of your group will affect how much time you will need for the lessons, so keep this in mind when you establish the schedule and timing of your program. Pilot sites varied in the time needed to get through the lessons. To give you added flexibility, you may want to build more time into the lessons when you set up the schedule.



## Scheduling the Lessons

The Media-Smart Youth program has no set schedule. You decide the frequency and scheduling of lessons that work best for you and your participants. The sites that pilot-tested this program used a variety of formats. Here are some possible options:

- One lesson at a time, once or twice a week, after school or on a weekend day
- One lesson at a time, on consecutive days
- One lesson at a time, once a month
- Multiple lessons in a day, over several days or weeks (this option might work best for a camp program where youth are together for a concentrated period of time)

Aside from the overall timing of the program, you will also want to carefully consider *when* to schedule lessons. These questions can help you determine the best timing:

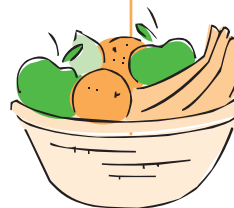
- Do most youth in your group have regular school, social, or family commitments on a particular day or at a specific time?
- Are there cultural or religious considerations for selecting or avoiding particular days?
- When are facilities most readily available?

Youth will work on the *Big Production* after completing all 10 lessons. Planning and carrying out the *Big Production* may take anywhere from one day to a few weeks or months—it all depends on the project you choose.

## Choosing the Right Location

Every aspect of Media-Smart Youth is designed to help young people learn by doing. For example, some of the activities require the youth to work in groups, or to move around in a space, or to work on large pieces of paper with markers and other supplies. Your location will need to be large enough to accommodate these activities.

Before you choose your location, take a quick look at the *Snack Breaks* for all lessons and the additional snack ideas in Appendix B so you will know what to expect. Most of the suggested snacks are simple and easy to prepare, but a few require refrigeration and most require some setting up. A nearby sink for hand washing and clean-up will help make *Snack Breaks* easier.





Also, the size of the room will be a consideration. Each lesson will get the youth up and moving. All of the physical activities can be done indoors and require little, if any, equipment. Be sure to review the lesson activities and *Action Breaks* and the additional *Action Break* ideas in Appendix C before you choose a location for the program.

### Recruitment Ideas At-A-Glance

- Send a postcard or e-mail message to young people who regularly participate in your activities.
- Make simple posters or flyers to put on bulletin boards in schools, at libraries, and in local stores.
- Contact parents and guardians who have enrolled their children in other programs sponsored by or hosted by your organization.
- Encourage young people to enroll for two—themselves and a friend.
- Put a notice in your organization's newsletter.
- Send an announcement to your community newspaper for inclusion in its event listings.
- *Your ideas here!*

## Selecting the Participant Group

Media-Smart Youth is designed to stimulate discussion and critical thinking that can happen only through the active participation of all the youth. To help you get everyone involved, we suggest that you limit the size of your group to 15 or fewer participants. A group this size will allow you to maximize opportunities for each youth to become fully involved. For the purpose of group work and valuable discussion, a minimum of eight youth is suggested.

## Recruiting Youth Participants

You will want to consider a variety of approaches to spread the word about your program. Think about past recruitment efforts that have worked for your organization or try something new that you think will be successful. Consider hosting a pre-registration event that features media demonstrations, fun activities, and nutritious snacks. You may wish to play the Media-Smart Youth videotape Segment #11: *Big Production Montage*, which displays productions created by youth who participated in the pilot phase of the program. Or, you could host an orientation before the program begins to help youth and their parents become excited and better informed about the program. Ask others throughout your community to help with your enlistment efforts, too.

## Keeping Youth Involved

With thoughtful recruitment efforts, you should have many eager young people ready to learn how to be media smart. Keeping them engaged so they gain the full benefits of the program can sometimes be difficult, though. For some, the excitement of creating their own *Big Production* may be enough to keep them coming. Others may need more reasons. Consider awarding a small item in each lesson, such as a packaged snack that is low in fat and added sugar, a container of 100-percent fruit juice, a whole-grain food item, or small toys that promote physical activity, such as a ball or Frisbee™, to those who volunteer answers or are particularly helpful. Or offer a small prize to the participants who follow through with each lesson's *Take Home a New Idea!* activity. There are many other ways to keep young people engaged. Ask the youth themselves for ideas that will keep them coming back.

## Engaging Parents and Guardians

Getting parents and guardians involved in Media-Smart Youth is great for everyone—for you, the youth, and families. A simple letter sent before the first session of the program can start the process of involving parents and guardians by telling them about the program, asking them to support their children's active participation, and encouraging them to get involved in the take-home activities included with the lessons.

Getting parents and guardians engaged also means getting permission for their children to participate. If your organization's policy is to require parental permission for youth to participate in your other programs, you will want to do the same for the entire Media-Smart Youth curriculum and for the field trip in Lesson 6. Keep in mind that if you plan to put any youth's voice or image on any Media-Smart Youth products during the program, you will need written parental consent for all youth. You can find sample permission forms in Appendix A. In addition to covering the usual information, these sample forms ask parents and guardians to report any allergies their child may have. This knowledge will be particularly important for planning *Snack Breaks*.

You may want to go beyond getting permission from parents and guardians. Ask for volunteers to join you during the lessons and to come along for the Lesson 6 field trip. These opportunities are great ways for the youth to show off their newly acquired knowledge and critical thinking skills to parents and guardians!

### If You Have Extra Time, Consider a Field Trip to a Media Outlet

Whether or not you work with a media partner, you may want to give the youth some real-world exposure by taking them on a field trip to a newspaper office, TV or radio station, or graphic design firm. Field trips are wonderful opportunities for the youth to see the concepts they are exploring in the program. If you choose to add this option, think about doing it early in the program. You will also need to do some advance planning; the planning suggestions and sample permission form for Lesson 6 (the grocery store field trip) will help you organize a media outlet trip.

If you aren't able to visit a media outlet, take a virtual tour of a production studio as you begin planning your *Big Production*. The Lesson 10 Media-Smart Youth video/DVD segment, *On the Air! Roll the Presses!* provides a behind-the-scenes look at the action at a TV studio, a radio studio, and a newspaper office.

## Deciding Whether or Not to Use a Media Partner

You can conduct the Media-Smart Youth lessons and carry out the *Big Production* using your own organization's current staff, expertise, and resources. However, you may want to get someone with a little more media expertise to help you, especially when it comes to planning and executing the *Big Production*. A media partner may be an individual—a newspaper reporter, advertising executive, or local high school photography teacher, for example—or several representatives from one or more media-related organizations.

You may conduct the program without a media partner, but you should consider the special value added to the youth's experience by involving representatives from one or more local media organizations. A media partner can add:

- Professional perspective
- “Real-life” reinforcement of content
- Expert insight, guidance, and support
- Facilities, supplies, and equipment

A media partner's involvement is limited only by your collective imaginations. Here are some options:

- Enroll a media partner to assist you in conducting the entire Media-Smart Youth curriculum
- Invite a media partner to guide you through the *Big Production*
- Conduct the curriculum and *Big Production* on your own, but ask a media partner to help promote and distribute your group's *Big Production* media product when it is completed

### ◆ Finding a Media Partner

If you are not sure about whether to seek out a media partner or how to go about finding one, these questions may help you.

- Do you know people at a media organization in your community—perhaps a theater, newspaper, radio or TV station, production company, or graphic design studio?
- Do you have the time and ability to contact local media organization(s)?
- Does your local high school or college have facilities and faculty media experts?
- Are there any media professionals among the parents or guardians of program participants?
- Does a local corporation have internal production facilities?
- Do you have a local cable (TV) access station?

If you are having trouble finding a media partner or decide to do the *Big Production* on your own but still need media equipment, contact local high schools or colleges. Many schools have production studios in their buildings. Ask whether these schools offer classes on using the production equipment or other media-related skills, and determine if any of the students would like to help you with your *Big Production*.

### ◆ Involving Your Media Partner

Here are some other tips for deciding how to involve a media partner:

- Be specific about the role you want the media partner to play. Which lessons do you want the partner to attend or facilitate?
  - ▶ If you have enrolled your media partner to help with the entire curriculum, you may want the partner to lead each lesson's *Mini-Production* (Activity C) along with Lesson 9, in which the youth select their media format and the action they will promote; Lesson 10, in which the youth learn about the main phases of production; and the *Big Production* sessions.
  - ▶ If your media partner is going to assist only with the *Big Production*, invite him or her to take part in Lessons 9 and 10, and lead the *Big Production* sessions.
  - ▶ If your media partner is helping only to promote your finished *Big Production*, negotiate a specific plan for the partner's involvement, such as the number of times your *Big Production* will air on the partner's cable TV station or the number of times your ads will appear in the partner's newspaper.

- Talk with your media partner to ensure you understand each other's facilitation styles and approaches to discipline issues, and agree on a mutually acceptable approach. Do what you can to help the media partner feel comfortable around young people. Remember, facilitation may not be your media partner's area of expertise.
- Determine whether your budget will allow you to pay your media partner. If so, you may want to pay for the partner's time or for the use of the organization's facilities or equipment.

## Getting Your Community Involved

The value of the Media-Smart Youth program extends far beyond what goes on in the lessons. Involving members of your community can benefit your program now, as well as nurture relationships for the future. Try some of these ideas:

- Ask high schools to post flyers to recruit participants or enlist teenage volunteers to help with lessons or the *Big Production*.
- Invite local personal trainers, nutritionists, or people with media experience to serve as guest facilitators.
- Contact your local library about hosting one or more lessons. Libraries often have rooms available for community members to use. They also provide access to research and media sources that may be useful.
- Ask a local printer or copy center to donate poster-sized versions of print advertisements (both commercial and public service announcements) for the lessons.
- Approach a local grocer to donate food or ingredients for your *Snack Breaks*.
- Approach your local newspaper office or radio or TV station to see whether it would want to do a story on your Media-Smart Youth program.
- Approach local media outlets to air or promote your *Big Production* product.

You will be surprised at how many ways you can get people involved and at how many people want to get involved. Look for every opportunity to make your program a well-known community endeavor. Appendix H contains some tools that you can use to publicize and promote your Media-Smart Youth programs.

# Paying Attention to Details

This section covers the details you will need to focus on to plan and conduct your program. It will give you a good understanding of the concepts behind Media-Smart Youth—and it will help you make the most of your time and your skills. Take some time to review this information now and refer to it often as you prepare for each lesson.

## Focusing on the Lessons

The Media-Smart Youth lessons follow a simple and consistent structure and format—an opening activity, a *Snack Break*, a second activity, an *Action Break*, a third activity called a *Mini-Production*, and a short *Finishing Up the Lesson* section. There is also a *Take Home a New Idea!* section in each lesson. The only variation from this structure is in Lesson 5. Lesson 5, which focuses on physical activity, provides youth with an opportunity to be active during the lesson activity itself and does not include a separate *Action Break*.

Throughout the curriculum, the start of each lesson indicates what you will need to prepare for it, and then guides you through it step by step.

The **Opening Page** of each lesson provides an overall summary of what's to come:

- The length of the lesson
- An overview of the lesson content
- Learning objectives for the lesson to help you stay on track and to evaluate success
- A list of all the lesson's activities and how much time is suggested for each
- A list of materials you will need for the activities, *Snack Break*, and *Action Break*
- A Facilitator's Preparation list, which suggests steps to do ahead of time to help the lesson go smoothly

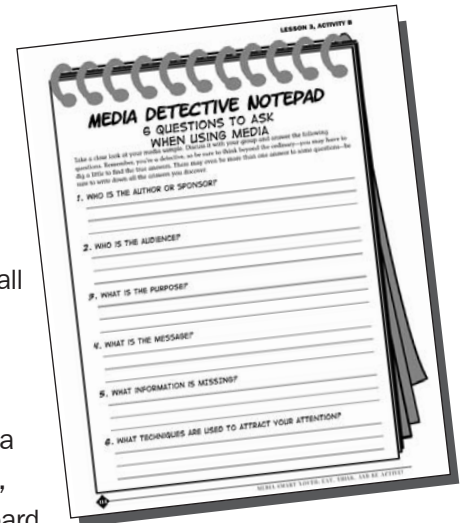
**Activities A and B** are the core content segments. These activities are designed to be carried out quickly—usually in 20 to 30 minutes



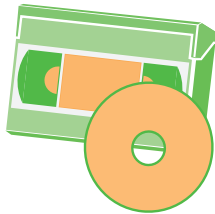


each—to keep youth energized and interested. You may find that some activities lend themselves to in-depth discussions that may take more than the recommended time. Stay alert to the participants’ needs and their reactions. You want to keep youth engaged and interested, but you also want to cover all the material in each lesson.

**Activity C** is the *Mini-Production* in which youth use the skills they have learned in the lesson to create a simple media product, such as a video news report, comic strip action hero, poster, jingle, skit, or billboard. All *Mini-Production* handouts and tools are included at the end of each lesson on sheets that can be photocopied clearly in black and white.



Each lesson includes a corresponding **Media-Smart Youth Video/DVD** segment (with the exception of Lesson 6, the field trip to a grocery store). Whether or not you choose to use the videotape/DVD, and how you use it, is up to you. The videotape/DVD and lesson content complement each other, so if you choose not to use the videotape/DVD, its main points are covered in the existing lesson content. If you have extra time and wish to present both the lesson content and the videotape/DVD segment, you may do that, too. Each lesson has a specific point at which the videotape/DVD may be viewed (usually during Activity A or B). This point is indicated with an icon in the text margin (see left).



The **Snack Break** is a simple, nutritious treat that comes after Activity A. The recommended time for this break is 10 minutes.



The **Action Break** gives the youth a chance to get active and energized after Activity B. The recommended time for this break also is 10 minutes.



And last, but not least, **Finishing Up the Lesson** gives you the chance to wrap up by asking youth to share one or more fun and interesting things they learned during the lesson. The curriculum lists several key points to listen for, but you should let youth describe what they have learned in their own words. Each of these sections also includes *Take Home a New Idea!* This activity gives youth an opportunity to share at home what they have learned in the program. It is a great way to engage family members and reinforce program concepts. Youth also receive a copy of the recipe from the session’s *Snack Break* to take home and try with their family and friends.



## Focusing on the Big Production

The *Big Production*, which takes place after the youth have completed all 10 lessons, is a media product created by participants for young people in their own age group. These *Big Productions* are likely to appeal to slightly younger ages as well. The purpose of a *Big Production* is to motivate others to take a specific action for better nutrition or increased physical activity. *Big Productions* may be relatively simple—such as a store window display or a school newspaper article—or more complex, such as a radio spot on a local station, a video public service announcement, or a physical activity event to raise money for a local charity.

Planning and carrying out the *Big Production* may take anywhere from one day to a few weeks or months—it all depends on the project. You and your media partner (if you choose to use one) will have to work together to set realistic timelines for developing the product, sharing it among small groups, providing and soliciting feedback, revising the product, and producing it for distribution. Appendices E and F contain information, guidance, and tools to help you plan for and carry out a successful and fun *Big Production*.

## Facilitating the Facilitation

The pages of the Media-Smart Youth curriculum are filled with visual aids to help make your facilitating job easier.

Colorful icons make it easy to find exactly what you're looking for:



appears on the front page of the lesson next to the list of lesson activities



indicates the suggested length of time for an activity



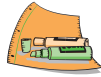
indicates the content overview provided for the lesson or an activity



indicates the learning objectives of a lesson or activity



indicates any facilitator's preparation that may be needed



indicates any materials or supplies needed



indicates a good opportunity to be sensitive to the diversity of the group in the discussion or activity



appears next to italicized text that you can paraphrase or read to the youth as written



indicates when to show a Media-Smart Youth video/DVD segment



appears next to the *Snack Break*



appears next to the *Action Break* and next to other times in which youth are being active or have the potential to be active



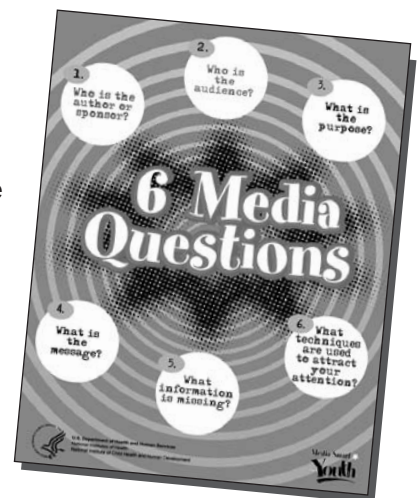
indicates when it's time to finish up the lesson

### A Note About...

Be sure to read these boxes for helpful information and teaching suggestions.

Highlighted boxes, like the one above, provide important background information, and teaching suggestions at appropriate places in the lesson.

A **6 Media Questions Poster** is included with the Media-Smart Youth curriculum. This poster is a tool to help young people analyze and create media. You will want to post it when this topic is introduced in Lesson 3, and in each of the remaining lessons of the program.



Throughout the Media-Smart Youth curriculum, you will find recurring words and phrases that have particular meaning.

For example: When Media-Smart Youth refers to **physical activity**, it means *anything* that gets a person moving...such as jumping rope, playing basketball, walking, or carrying groceries. Physical activity does not have to be strenuous.

You'll often see the phrase "**LISTEN to ideas from youth. If necessary, GUIDE them to the following responses**" as part of the facilitator's directions. This phrase indicates where and how you might help move the discussion in a certain direction. In some cases, the list under this phrase includes examples of potential answers. In other cases, the list includes specific content that youth should learn. This convention is used to stimulate discussion so the facilitator isn't always just lecturing to the youth, but rather engaging them in a guided discussion. Use your imagination for good ways to guide the discussion (such as "What about...," "Have you thought of...," "Can you think of other ways, such as..."). For more information on asking open-ended questions, see the Leading with Open-Ended Questions section of the Media-Smart Youth introduction and overview (p. 25).

Throughout the lessons, the term **large paper** refers to any kind of large sheets of paper, oversize newsprint, or large pads that are commonly used for group training. Youth will use these sheets in many activities, and the large paper will be helpful to you when you want to write down key points from discussions. These sheets are available in most office supply stores, drug stores, or grocery stores. Because you will need to post them often, consider purchasing large pads that already have a strip of light adhesive at the top of the back of each sheet.

To energize critical thinking skills, the lessons often call for **brainstorming**. These "brain dumps" are a great way to encourage all the youth to participate in a nonjudgmental and freeform way. You will be surprised at the thoughtful and creative ideas that emerge during a brainstorm!

One final and all-important term: **snack**. Snacks are sometimes frowned upon because they are associated with high-calorie, low-nutrient foods and drinks. Media-Smart Youth has a different take on this concept: Young people need snacks to satisfy their rapidly growing bodies, and

the key to choosing snacks—as with any other food—is to choose with healthy nutrition in mind. Each lesson includes a delicious and nutritious snack that echoes the concepts the youth learn in the lessons. Keep in mind that these food breaks are snacks, not meals, so pay attention to how much food you provide. Controlling how much food you provide also will help you manage your budget.

The nutrition information in Media-Smart Youth focuses largely on snacks for several reasons. Many youth have more control over their snack choices than over their meal choices, which may be planned and prepared by other family members or school cafeteria staff. Also, youth often eat snacks during afterschool time, and this curriculum is well suited for afterschool settings. Media-Smart Youth teaches youth how to make smart snack choices.

## Doing Your Homework

You will find that planning and preparing before each lesson will save valuable time and will help increase your confidence about facilitating each lesson. Every lesson tells you exactly what you need to do to carry it out. Here is a general checklist to help you prepare.

**Review the text for the lesson.**

Become familiar with the content and timing of activities and breaks. The more you know ahead of time, the more comfortable you will feel when you begin the lesson. Remember, the length of time listed is a suggestion only. Feel free to adjust the time to suit your group's needs...and don't forget set-up and clean-up.

**Gather or shop for materials.**

Media-Smart Youth uses limited materials—such as markers and paper—that are usually readily available. Many may be put aside at the beginning of the program for use throughout the lessons (see A Suggested Shopping/Gathering List on p. 22). Other supplies and equipment—such as a VCR, DVD player, disposable camera, or tape recorder—are not required, but may add extra value to activities. Your media partner or others in the community may be able to provide some materials.

**Create a comfortable environment.**

Evaluate your meeting space. Is it too hot or cold? Is it the right size and shape? Is the lighting appropriate for the activity? Is noise a problem? Ensure the atmosphere is right. Set up the room to maximize interaction and enjoyment of the lesson. Be creative! Classroom-style seating may

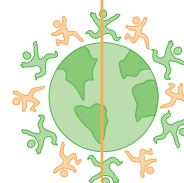
be too “school like” for youth to feel relaxed; desks may be a barrier, too. Consider a circle or semi-circle of chairs, or let young people sit on the floor. Mix up seating arrangements from lesson to lesson and within lessons to keep young people engaged.

❑ **Consider your participants.**

Some groups are more energetic than others. They may want lots of action and competition between teams. Others groups are quieter. They may want more pencil-and-paper activities, more cooperative group activities, and less competition. Some youth have no difficulties sharing their thoughts and being active in front of peers. Other youth may be less outgoing. Consider the nature of your group and the individual youth, and adapt the activities to suit them. Appendix C includes suggestions for adapting activities for youth with disabilities.

❑ **Make the most of the diversity of your participants.**

The lessons provide many opportunities for you to recognize and celebrate the richness and diversity of the cultures and ethnicities represented in your group. Adapt the discussions and activities as needed to reflect the identities of the group. The *Mini-Productions* may be a particularly good opportunity for the youth to showcase their heritages through the media they create. At the same time, be alert to any instances when highlighting cultural or ethnic identity may be uncomfortable for the youth. Throughout the lessons, we’ve included an icon (right) to note times where you may want to highlight or be sensitive to issues related to cultural or ethnic identity.



❑ **Prepare for *Snack Breaks*.**

All snacks are intended to be simple and to illustrate a different nutrition concept, but they are just suggestions. Feel free to modify snacks for your group. Would you like to include special cultural or ethnic foods? Do you need to consider allergies or dietary needs? Do you need a cooler, refrigerator, or freezer? Do you have everything you need for clean-up? Do you have a sink or bathroom nearby for hand washing? Decide what you need and want, or look at more snack options—including no-refrigeration-needed ideas—in Appendix B.

Many afterschool programs qualify for federal reimbursement for snacks if they participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National School Lunch Program or Child and Adult Care Food Program. To see whether your Media-Smart Youth snack costs could qualify for reimbursement, visit the USDA Web site:  
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/afterschool/default.htm>

## A Suggested Shopping/Gathering List

A few materials are used in every lesson or *Snack Break*. You may want to gather or buy enough of these items to last throughout the workshop.

### For Activities

- Large paper
- Easel (if desired)
- Colored markers and pens
- Masking tape
- Pens and pencils
- Watch or timer

### For Snacks

- Drinks (100-percent fruit juice, fat-free or low-fat milk, water, or seltzer)
- Paper plates
- Paper bowls
- Paper napkins
- Cups
- Plastic knives and spoons



## Deciding Whether to Work with Other Facilitators

You may wish to work with other adult facilitators as you carry out the Media-Smart Youth curriculum. Involving others in the lessons can be invaluable to your program and to the young people. When making this decision, take a look at some of the benefits and challenges. Determine the best equation for your group.

You may decide that the advantages of working with another facilitator outweigh any disadvantages. If so, follow these guidelines to maximize success:

All facilitators should:

- Review and become familiar with the full curriculum
- Discuss and determine respective roles and responsibilities
- Agree on facilitation and discipline techniques
- Meet or talk before each lesson to prepare and divide planning and facilitation duties
- Get together after each lesson to discuss what worked and what might be improved next time
- Respect each other's differences and individual strengths
- Be supportive
- Be flexible

### Multiple Facilitators

#### Benefits

- Help youth stay focused
- Help the sessions run more smoothly
- Bring diversity of ideas
- Involve community

#### Challenges

- Show different facilitation styles
- Use different approaches with youth
- Have different attitudes about discipline

## Making the Most of Your Facilitation

The Media-Smart Youth curriculum uses several key strategies to facilitate critical thinking and encourage discussion. The activities encourage youth to explore questions, answers, and possible connections. The point is for them to work together to share information and solve problems. Here are a few skills that you can develop to help make that happen.

### ◆ Modeling Open and Nonjudgmental Behavior

In Lesson 1, participants develop a Working Agreement that governs their participation in the group. Throughout the program, encourage the young people to accept and follow that agreement. But don't forget *your* behavior with, and reactions to, the group. Your actions can go a long way toward setting the right example.

### ◆ Working in Small Groups

To increase participation, youth will work in small groups for many of the activities, and then come back together as a whole group to share their discussions and results. As part of your planning for each lesson, you may want to decide how you will divide the youth into groups for these activities.

### ◆ Handling Sensitive Issues

The Media-Smart Youth curriculum is not about weight loss or dieting, or forcing anyone to do physical activity. However, this curriculum addresses nutrition and physical activity—two important “body issues”—and it is designed to promote and encourage critical thinking and discussion. As a result, personal, sensitive, or uncomfortable topics may occasionally arise. You should try to anticipate and prepare for these situations. Before beginning the program, discuss with the leadership of your organization how you might address such potentially difficult situations. During the program, be sure to create an accepting environment where everyone feels comfortable participating and safe in expressing their thoughts.

## Why Small Groups?

Because of the small numbers involved, this kind of work provides participants with more opportunities to practice skills, share thoughts, work cooperatively, and actively observe others. As a result, participants can more easily:

- Establish common ground and provide the foundation for finding solutions together
- Cultivate support that can enhance self-esteem
- Acquire new skills
- Improve performance through immediate feedback
- Learn and become motivated

## Ideas to Consider When Sensitive Issues Arise:

- If you know the answer to a question, share it briefly. If not, acknowledge the importance of the issue, and explain that you will try to find the answer after the lesson.
- Don't insist that a young person participate in a discussion or physical activity if he or she seems uncomfortable. Don't allow other participants to tease or pressure the young person.
- Try to redirect the discussion back to the topic at hand if the issue raised leads in a new direction.
- Consider asking participants to talk with you or another trusted adult after the lesson.
- Ask participants to find out more on their own and report back to the group at a later session.
- Model respect for *all* sensitive issues and special needs, including visible physical disabilities, as well as food allergies or dietary needs. Make sure that participants respect each other.
- Honor—and support—cultural differences, some of which can greatly influence nutrition and activity choices and body image attitudes.

### ◆ Leading with Open-Ended Questions

Many activities begin and end with a group discussion that prompts the young people to reflect on their own experiences, opinions, and ideas; think about answers to their own questions; and share knowledge. You can start and keep the discussion going by using open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are those that get people talking. They often start with “what, when, where, and how.” In contrast, closed-ended questions are questions that can be answered by “yes” or “no,” and that often do not require additional discussion.



Here are some examples of open-ended questions:

- ▶ “What do you mean by...?”
- ▶ “What kind of fruits do you like?”
- ▶ “When is it easy for you to be physically active?”
- ▶ “How did you figure out that this food contains whole grains?”
- ▶ “Can you tell me more about...?”

## Be Sure to...

- Acknowledge positive behaviors frequently
- Give encouragement and compliments
- Demonstrate respect for participants and their beliefs
- Be clear about how you expect group members to treat each other
- Respect participants' feelings and boundaries
- Model cooperative behavior
- Demonstrate concepts and examples when possible
- Participate in the games and competitions when possible
- Use simple language
- Encourage group members to share experiences
- Build on strengths
- Listen!
- Let group members react, think, and analyze
- Be flexible and enthusiastic

Here are some ways to turn closed-ended questions into open-ended ones:

Closed-Ended		Open-Ended
“Did you watch TV last night?”		“What TV shows, if any, did you watch last night?”
“Do you like that CD?”		“What did you think about that CD?”

### ◆ **Leading by Example**

Young people will be more motivated to fully participate in the active parts of the curriculum if you are part of the fun. Dress in casual clothes and appropriate shoes and join in the games and *Action Breaks*. If you ask the group to run to the other end of the room as part of an activity, do it yourself first. Be energetic and animated! Remember, model the active behavior you are encouraging. You may be surprised at how positively the group responds.

### ◆ **Making the Lessons Fun...and Relevant**

Try to avoid using the word “class” during lessons. Mentioning the “classroom” or asking the “class” to pay attention may make the activity feel too much like school for the youth.

If you notice that the youth are restless or bored, take a minute or two to do a physical activity. Even a short activity will get their hearts pumping and their adrenaline going. Short spurts of activity will bring their focus back to the curriculum and offer them a nice break. Ask them to stand and do jumping jacks for 60 seconds without stopping. Or, turn on some music and suggest they dance in place. If you have extra time and the weather permits, have them go outside and just run.

Incorporate current events into your discussion. If you meet the weekend after a major news event, discuss how the event was covered in the media (print, TV, radio, Internet). Or, if a new movie is about to come out, see what youth think about the various marketing activities associated with the movie’s release.

Young people enjoy seeing themselves. Photograph or videotape the youth in action during the Media-Smart Youth activities. Create and bring a photo collage to the next lesson or play the taped footage.

◆ **Encouraging Active Participation and Leadership**

Media-Smart Youth provides many opportunities to help young people build confidence, encourage leadership, and give them the feeling that this program is *theirs*. Take full advantage of every chance to ask for volunteers and get participants involved in facilitating lessons. A few of the participants will likely assume these roles naturally; some will be able to do so with coaching and guidance, and others will prefer to remain in the background. Your efforts to make the environment as nurturing as possible will encourage those who are not natural leaders to be more comfortable in the group.

◆ **Making Transitions**

A big part of your role is to help youth see the relationships among all the activities and lessons. A skilled facilitator is prepared to summarize each activity and transition to the next one. The summary gives the participants a quick recap of the main points of the activity, while the transition relates those points to previous and upcoming activities.

**To Summarize an Activity:**

- State the main point of the activity
- Ask the group for its ideas
- Acknowledge the group’s hard work
- Congratulate the group for its good ideas

**To Transition:**

- Tell how this point or activity is related to the next
- Use only one or two sentences

Here’s an example of a transition:

**You’ve learned all about Media-Smart Youth.  
You’re ready and you’re set.**

**Now, GO...**

**and make your Media-Smart Youth workshop terrific!**

**Ways to Involve Young People:**

- Ask them to:
- Hand out materials
  - Take notes
  - Time activities
  - Lead activities
  - Encourage others in a group
  - Report to the group
  - Help prepare snacks
  - Help lead *Action Breaks*
  - *Your ideas here!*

# Some Things to Keep in Mind

## Resources Checklist

Conducting the Media-Smart Youth workshop requires several types of resources. Before you begin the program, keep in mind the items that will be needed for lessons and activities. Brainstorm where and how you can get them. Not all items will need to be purchased. Think about those that could be donated, volunteered, or obtained at a discount.

Resource	Where/How I Can Obtain This Item (Purchased, Donated, etc.)
<b>MATERIALS/SUPPLIES</b>	
<b>Creative supplies</b> —Several <i>Mini Productions</i> and other activities call for creative supplies such as markers, scissors, pens/pencils, masking tape, stickers, glitter, glue, streamers, and other decorative supplies.	
<b>Paper supplies</b> —Large and small format paper, poster board, white and colored paper, construction paper, and posting notes are used throughout the workshop. Name tags and pocket folders for each participant are also required.	
<b>Photocopies</b> —Each lesson requires the production of worksheets and take-home papers. Throughout the course of the workshop, numerous photocopies will be required.	
<b>Media samples</b> —Certain activities require the facilitator to provide teen/youth magazines or other print publications and other items such as CODs, print ads, posters, and segments of popular TV shows, movies, or radio programs.	
<b>Watch/timer</b> —A watch, stopwatch, or timer may be used to keep track of time required for each activity.	
<b>Other specific materials</b> —Clipboards (or hard, flat writing surfaces), a container or ballot box, and a bandana are also needed for select activities.	
<b>TV/VCR or DVD player</b> —If using the Media-Smart Youth video/DVD, a TV and player will be needed.	
<b>Camera and recorders</b> —Several pieces of media equipment may be used for <i>Mini Productions</i> and other activities, including a video camera and blank tapes, disposable camera, or audio tape recorder and blank tapes. (optional)	
<b>Optional activity supplies</b> —White t-shirts are required for an optional activity in Lesson 10 and prize incentives may be used for the <i>Lesson 6: Visiting a Grocery Store Scavenger Hunt</i> .	
<b>FOOD</b>	
<b>Snack ingredients</b> —Each lesson includes a <i>Snack Break</i> and will require enough snacks for the number of youth participating in the workshop.	
<b>Snack supplies</b> —To make and serve the snacks, a variety of paper plates, bowls, cups, plastic utensils, serving spoons, toothpicks, napkins, sandwich bags, and kitchen equipment may be needed.	
<b>OTHER NECESSITIES</b>	
<b>Venue/location</b> —A venue or location for workshop meetings may need to be secured if your group doesn't already have a regular meeting spot.	
<b>Transportation</b> —Transportation of youth participants to and from the workshop location may be offered or necessitated.	
<b>Media partner</b> —The workshop may be conducted with the assistance of a media partner. See p. 13 of the Introduction for more information regarding how to engage a media partner.	
<b>Media production equipment</b> —Depending on the scope of the <i>Big Production</i> , media production equipment may be needed. See Appendix E to learn about the types of equipment involved in producing media.	