Week 2: Staying active on a daily basis

For week 2 of our challenge we are emphasizing the importance of maintaining activity every day. Our bodies are designed to move, and movement means that your metabolism (the rate at which you burn calories; you can also think of it as how fast your body uses up the fuels you consume in the form of food) stays higher, so you don't gain unwelcome weight and your muscles stay strong. Now, for some people weight gain is necessary and desired, such as for children who are actively growing. But movement is important for kids also because it keeps their muscles strong. Activity also keeps your heart strong. Your heart is a muscle too, and when you do an activity that makes your heart beat faster, the heart responds to the challenge by growing and getting stronger so that it can pump more blood in each contraction with less effort. Activity also helps joints to be flexible and promotes a larger range of motion with less pain (or maybe even pain free!). There are lots of different ways you can move—some people move when working, such as doing chores around the house or in the yard, or maybe carrying heavy objects like a delivery person does. Some people move when recreating, such as playing a game, jumping rope, dancing, hiking or riding a bike. Some people move when training, such as a runner getting ready to participate in a race or a weight lifter preparing for a competition. Different kinds of movement can promote a variety of purposes, but the movement is the important thing—you will feel better, sleep better (and look better too!) when you move regularly. Here are some websites with information about movement and health:

1. No Equipment, No Problem: Tips to Stay Active on the Road (cooperaerobics.com)
2. The Benefits of Active Aging (cooperaerobics.com)
3. CooperAerobics - Cooper Aerobics - Which Came First: Exercise or Attitude?
4. CooperAerobics - The Role of Exercise and Metabolism in Weight Loss
5. CooperAerobics - Cooper Aerobics - The Role of Physical Fitness in Overall Health