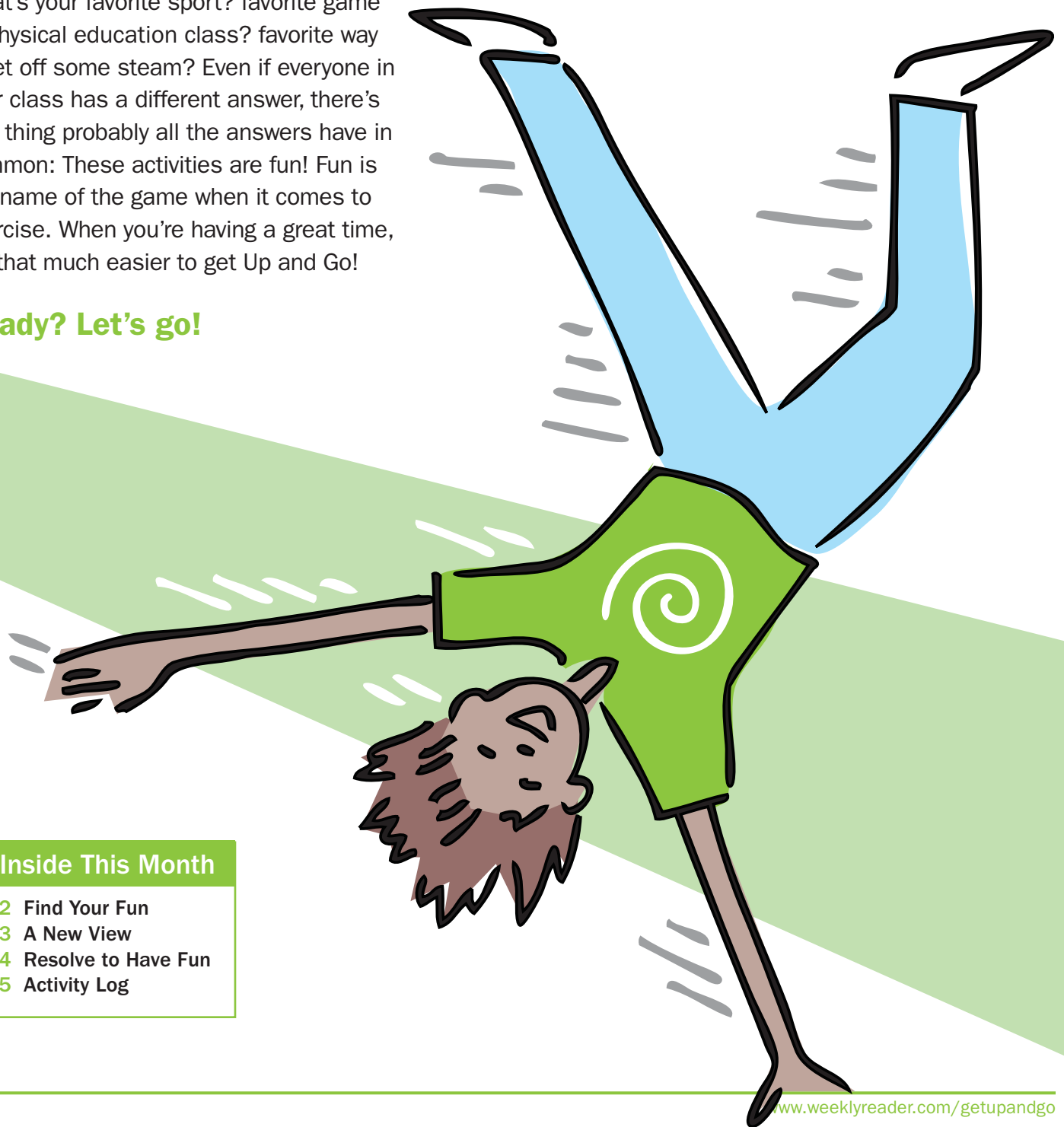


# Good Times!

What's your favorite sport? favorite game in physical education class? favorite way to let off some steam? Even if everyone in your class has a different answer, there's one thing probably all the answers have in common: These activities are fun! Fun is the name of the game when it comes to exercise. When you're having a great time, it's that much easier to get Up and Go!

**Ready? Let's go!**



## Inside This Month

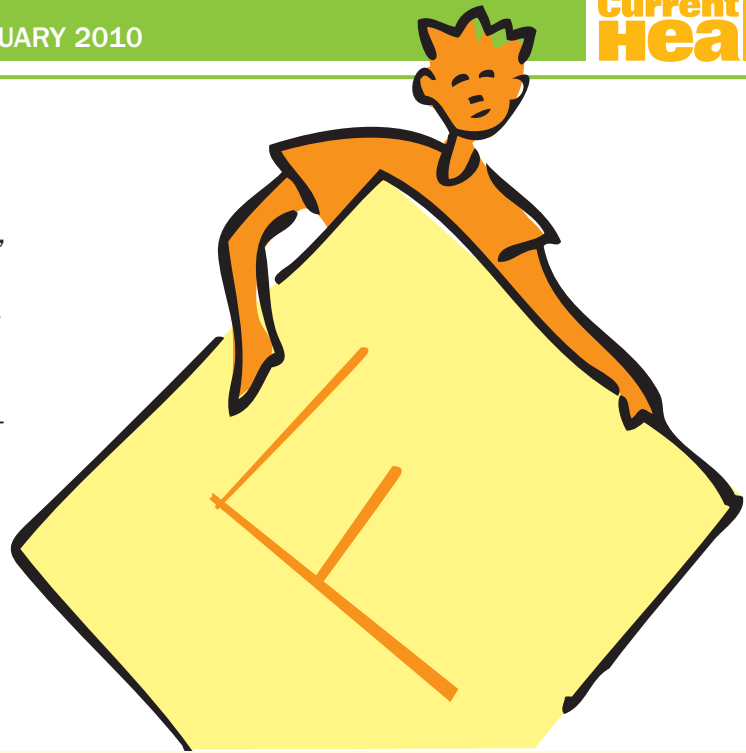
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## Find Your Fun

Play isn't just for little kids. It's for everybody!

Even if you don't have recess at school anymore, you don't have to give up that daily active play-time. In fact, some of the activities that are a lot of fun on the playground, basketball court, or school field can be fun for people of all ages. Since kids and teens should get at least 60 minutes of exercise very day, adding a game or two to your life can go a long way toward helping you meet that goal!

Answer the questions below and see if they help you come up with a way to add more playtime to your life—or create your own new, fun game.



**My favorite recess or PE class activity that I don't play anymore:**

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**Why don't I play it anymore?**

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**In what ways could I change the rules of the game, or how it is played, so that I could play it today?**

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**How can I use this game as a way to get more exercise?**

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Even the NBA has included the old playground game H-O-R-S-E during All-Star Weekend. In the game, players make shots at the hoop, getting one letter of the word "horse" each time they miss. When a player misses five shots (and has spelled out the word "horse"), he or she is out.

## A New View

One way to have fun while getting fit is to look at exercise in a new way. How about upside down?



A student at Athletic Playground does a handstand with the help of a spotter.

RIGHT: COURTESY OF THE ATHLETIC PLAYGROUND; BELOW: ISTOCK

Upside down is just one of the ways kids, teens, and adults get active at Athletic Playground in Emeryville, Calif. It's a gym where play is the name of the game—literally! People learn to tumble, climb ropes, and do handstands at this gym.

Think about what it would be like to do a handstand while playing a game of soccer. They do, at Athletic Playground. "We have a class that's called 'handstand play,'" explains Shira Yaziv, gym co-owner and founder. In that class, all kinds of games are turned upside down. Even a simple game such as Simon Says can be an intense workout when you're balancing on your hands! Plus, handstands are great exercise for your whole body, Yaziv adds—your shoulders, arms, and core muscles such as your abdominal muscles all get involved. Handstands are also used in some yoga poses.

No matter what you plan to use your handstands for, be sure you learn to do them right. "Make sure you're safe," Yaziv says. She suggests working with a spotter—that's someone who will watch you closely and be there to help—to make sure you don't fall or hurt yourself. Or look into local classes in gymnastics or yoga where you can learn more from the pros about balancing your body safely.

And as with any new activity, sometimes it can take a while before you really get the hang of things. Hang in there, Yaziv says.

"Definitely don't give up. Keep trying," she says. "The process is more important than the results. If you're enjoying playing, you'll get benefits."

This Web site shows photos of people doing handstands at sites all over the world, from palaces to beaches. Check it out at [www.handstandseverywhere.com](http://www.handstandseverywhere.com).



## Resolve to Have Fun

January is the month when a lot of people make plans to be healthier. Many people do that by making New Year's resolutions.

One thing that happens to many people, however, is that the resolution doesn't stick through the entire month of January, never mind the whole year. That can be because the resolution was too difficult, too hard to do every day, or not fun enough.

When you want to add more exercise to your life, be sure to choose activities that you really want to do, says Elizabeth W., 17, of Alabama. She's a member of the Youth Advisory Board for the Alliance for a Healthier Generation. The board helps come up with ideas for making healthy living part of everyone's lives.

You can do just about anything to get active, Elizabeth says. "It doesn't have to be a specific sport that you pick," she says—just be sure it's something

fun. That's the key. "You'll be getting healthier without really thinking about it," she says.

Elizabeth swims every day for exercise. She knows that making a commitment to fitness is an obstacle for a lot of young people, whether they're trying to keep a resolution or not. Having a support system can help you. Elizabeth says that she knows she'd think about skipping practice sometimes if she didn't have her swim coach and her mom to keep her going. "If you don't have people to back you up in what you want to do, that's going to make it very difficult," she says.

Need some backup to keep your healthy resolution going? Ask a sibling, friend, or trusted adult to cheer you on and offer support. Or make a poster or collage to inspire you and hang it up to remind you of your healthy goals.



### TALK ABOUT IT!

Come up with a list of things that you think successful resolutions have in common. Then make your own healthy resolutions!

## Personal Get Up and Go Activity Log

Fill in the days of the week and the date for the week as shown in the sample. In each day's log, write down each activity you did and the amount of time you exercised for. Then, at the bottom of each day's square, write down the total number of minutes you spent exercising. Experts say kids and teens need at least 60 minutes of exercise most days of the week. (Try to aim for even more!)

date: Jan. 1

- Played Wii
- 2 hours
- Went for a swim
- 30 minutes
- Shot hoops with Dad
- 45 minutes
- Biked with Mom
- 1 hour



### Track Yourself!

Make a special three-ring binder or folder with prongs to keep track of your progress. Punch holes in each week's planner and file it in your binder. Decorate your binder or folder with photos and sayings to help keep you motivated. The binder will also help you look back at how far you have come, and celebrate all your hard work!

## My Exercise Goal:

(write something you hope to get out of your Get Up and Go plan. You don't need to tell anyone else! This is just for you.)

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