

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND MENTAL HEALTH

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ABSTRACT

Physical activity improves health and well-being. It reduces stress, strengthens the heart and lungs, increases energy levels, helps you maintain and achieve a healthy body weight and it improves your outlook on life. Research shows that physical inactivity can cause premature death, chronic disease and disability. Health Canada encourages Canadians to integrate physical activity into their everyday life; at home, at school, at work, at play and on the way ... that's active living. The World Health Organization describes mental health in a positive sense, as follows: Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. Physical activity is defined as any bodily movement, produced by skeletal muscles, that requires energy. This includes activities undertaken while working, playing, carrying out household chores, travelling and engaging in recreational pursuits. There are massive ranges of physical activities you can do including: Walking, Jogging, Swimming, Tennis, Dancing, Yoga, Gym Workouts, Aerobics, Weight Training, Playing Team Sports such as Football, Basketball, Volleyball, Badminton and so on.

KEY WORDS: - Physical Activities, Mental Health, Physical Fitness

INTRODUCTION

For children, regular physical activity is essential for healthy growth and development. For adults, it allows daily tasks to be accomplished with greater ease and comfort and with less fatigue. For seniors, weight-bearing physical activity reduces the rate of bone loss associated with osteoporosis and regular physical activity maintains strength and flexibility, balance and coordination and can help reduce the risk of falls. Regular physical activity prolongs independent living.

Mental health is described as more than the absence of mental disorders or disabilities, and a number of different social, psychological, and biological factors can pose risks to mental health. One way to enhance our mental wellbeing and protect our mental health is through participating in physical activity. Physical activity has been shown to have a strong and positive influence on mental wellbeing and some mental illnesses. Physical activity has the potential to improve the quality of life of people with severe mental health problems, such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, through improvements in physical and mental health.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DECREASES DEPRESSION

Physical activity is a powerful depression fighter for several reasons. Most importantly, it promotes all kinds of changes in the brain, including neural growth, reduced inflammation, and new activity patterns that promote feelings of calm and well-being. Finally, exercise can also serve as a distraction, allowing you to find some quiet time to break out of the cycle of negative thoughts that feed depression.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY MINIMIZES THE ANXIETY AND STRESS FACTORS

Physical activity is a natural and effective anti-anxiety treatment. It relieves tension and stress, boosts physical and mental energy, and enhances well-being through the release of endorphins. Physical activity is also an effective way to relieve stress. Working up a sweat can help manage physical and mental stress. Exercise also increases concentrations of nor epinephrine, a chemical that can moderate the brain's response to stress. So go ahead and get sweaty - working out can reduce stress and boost the body's ability to deal with existing mental tension. The warm and fuzzy chemicals that are released during and after exercise can help people with anxiety disorders calm down. Hopping on the track or treadmill for some moderate-to-high intensity aerobic exercise can reduce anxiety sensitivity.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IMPROVES MOOD

Research on moods, anxiety and exercise shows that physical and psychological benefits of exercise include reduced anxiety and improved mood. And, while the connection between anxiety, mood swing and physical activity are not clear, working out eases symptoms of anxiety making the person feel better. Physical activity increases your level of endorphins, which are natural mood lifters.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ENHANCES EMOTIONAL SOUNDNESS

Exercise can increase your overall energy levels, thereby helping you feel better emotionally and psychologically. It can cause positive emotions and also reduce experiencing negative feelings by individuals.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BRINGS CHANGE IN SELF-ESTEEM

On a very basic level, physical fitness can boost self-esteem and improve positive self-image. Regardless of weight, size, gender or age, exercise can quickly elevate a person's perception of his or her attractiveness, that is, self-worth.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IMPROVES SLEEP QUALITY AND RELAXATION

A moderate workout can be the equivalent of a sleeping pill, even for people with insomnia. Moving around five to six hours before bedtime raises the body's core temperature.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IMPROVES MEMORY

Regular physical activity boosts memory and ability to learn new things. Getting sweaty increases production of cells in hippocampus responsible for memory and learning. For this reason, research has linked children's brain development with level of physical fitness.

In conclusion, we can say that physical activity promotes children's and young people's health and well-being in many ways. Physical activity supports children's physical, psychological and social growth and development but also to each one who do physical activity, moreover it is also promotes health, well-being and learning. Engagement in physical activity is recognized as a contributor to a range of positive outcomes in physical and mental health, social well-being and cognitive and academic performances. Regular physical activity is also linked with important health outcomes

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