



Exercise and Mental Health

Mental Health Monday

May 11th, 2020

Exercise is not just about fitness goals and gaining muscles. Sure, exercise can improve your physical health and help you maintain a healthy weight, but that's not all that should motivate you and your family to exercise!

Here are some of the mental and emotional benefits of exercise:

Sharper memory and thinking: Exercise can help you concentrate and feel mentally sharp for tasks at hand. Exercise also stimulates the growth of new brain cells and helps prevent age-related decline.

Higher self-esteem: Regular activity is an investment in your mind, body, and soul. You'll feel better about your appearance and, by meeting even small exercise goals, you'll feel a sense of achievement.

Better sleep: Even short bursts of exercise in the morning or afternoon can help regulate your sleep patterns.

More energy: Increasing your heart rate several times a week will give you more get-up-and-go.

Stronger resilience: When faced with mental or emotional challenges in life, exercise can help you cope in a healthy way, instead of resorting to negative behaviors that ultimately only make your symptoms worse. Regular exercise can also help boost your immune system and reduce the impact of stress.

And the good news is, you don't have to be a fitness fanatic to reap the benefits! Research indicates that

modest amounts of exercise can make a difference. No matter your age or fitness level, you can learn to use exercise as a powerful tool to feel better! You can reap all the physical and mental health benefits of exercise with 30-minutes of moderate exercise five times a week. Two 15-minute or even three 10-minute exercise sessions can also work just as well. Even a little bit of activity is better than nothing. The key is to commit to some moderate physical activity—however little—on most days. As exercising becomes habit, the benefits of exercise will begin to pay off.

Some tips to stay motivated and have fun:

Focus on activities you enjoy: Don't force yourself to do activities that you don't like, find the ones you like, whether that's walking the dog, playing catch with your family, gardening or shooting hoops and make sure you make time for them.

Make exercise a social activity: Exercising with a friend, your kids or your spouse will not only make exercising more enjoyable, but it can also motivate you to stick to a routine.



Make it a habit: Build exercise into your everyday life. Take the stairs, walk or bike instead of drive, and make sure to get up and move around often if sitting for long periods of time.

For more information and tips, check out <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/the-mental-health-benefits-of-exercise.htm>



Sincerely,

FVSD Connection Team

The Fort Vermilion School Division Connection Team works in the schools of our communities to support students in a variety of ways. For more information about our services and resources, please visit the FVSD website (<https://www.fvsd.ab.ca/>) or contact your child's school.