



The Brain-Changing Benefits of Physical Activity for Kids

What's the most transformative thing that you can do for your child's health today?

Help them move more!

For decades, we've known that physical activity improves heart health, helps maintain healthy body weights and builds strong bones and muscles in kids. Now, we know that it can positively affect children's brains as it relates to thinking, learning, and mental health.

Moving > Cramming

Students who are active before a test show stronger brain function than those who are less active.

Busy Bodies = Bigger Brains

Getting physically active can boost kids' and teens' memory, including children with brain-based disabilities (e.g., ADHD, autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy). Evidence shows that kids who are more active have larger regions of the brain that are linked to memory (like the cerebellum).

↑ Active Bodies = ↑ Innovative Ideas

Active kids are better equipped to get creative. They are better able to think quickly on their feet, strategize, solve a math problem or act as team leaders.

Zooming Around Helps Them Zoom In!

Kids who participate in physical activity have longer attention spans and are more focused, compared to their less active peers.

Breaking A Sweat Releases Happy Hormones ∴ Kids Who Move Feel Great!

Getting active releases the brain's happy hormones (serotonin and dopamine). Kids who move more benefit from this rush of chemicals and experience fewer depression-related symptoms and better moods.

↑ Movement = ↓ Anxiety

Evidence suggests that physical activity may decrease feelings of anxiety. Dance and team sports may be especially effective for children with brain-based disabilities.

↑ Movement = ↓ Stress

Physical activity is an effective tool in alleviating social and academic stress in kids and teens. It also allows them to be more resilient as they appear to recover from stressful situations better.

↑ Movement = ↑ Self-esteem

Social media plays a major role in self-esteem for kids and teens. Getting active in real-world situations can be a protective tool to bolster kids' self-esteem, confidence and self-worth.



The Science Is In.

KIDS + STEPS + SWEAT = HEALTHIER BRAINS.

Learn how physical activity can help your child reach their mental, emotional and intellectual potential.

Read the 2018 ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth.
participACTION.com/reportcard

