

Physical activity and mental health

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Learning objectives

- Increased knowledge of:
 - Links between physical activity and mental health
 - Building emotional resilience
 - Ideas for promoting mental wellbeing through physical activity in school

Discussion

What is mental health?

Mental health

- We all have mental health; it is a positive concept
- Mental health relates to how we think, feel and behave
- Mental health problems are disturbances in those things
- 11% 5-15 year olds with diagnosable mental disorder

Links between physical activity and mental health

- Mental health impacted by physical health and vice versa
- Physical activity linked to reduced anxiety and happier moods, partly due to production of endorphins
- When fitter, body can better regulate cortisol (stress hormone), reducing risk of anxiety and depression
- Increased self-esteem
- Treatment for depression
- Social benefits

Resilience

Resilient children 'can resist adversity, cope with uncertainty and recover more successfully from traumatic events or episodes'.
(Newman, 2002)



Resilience strategies

- 5 ways to wellbeing
- Gratitude
- Relaxation



Character strengths

<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/strength-cards/>



Activity

How to incorporate emotional resilience building into physical activity

Notice, give, learn, connect, gratitude, relaxation, mindfulness, character strengths

Your ideas

- Notice = celebration assembly
- Learn = showing/sharing, teach/model with each other, self/peer assessment
- Connect = with other schools, clubs, subjects
- Gratitude = shake hands after a game, guard of honour
- Relaxation = yoga
- Character strengths = climbing wall, residential trips, sports days/weeks, mojo active
- Connect/notice/learn = watch a team, matches against other schools, famous sports personalities
- Notice = someone doing well
- Daily Mile in groups

- Go noodle mindfulness
- Breathing, wake and shake
- Supermovers
- Cosmic yoga
- REAL PE
- Learning behaviours at beginning of every lesson
- Write one thing in journal that they or a friend did well that day
- Compliment board (character strengths)
- Brain Gym between lessons or when lacking motivation
- Going outside little and often
- Notice: feelings before and after; awe/wonder of outdoors
- Give = praise to others, yourself for effort
- Gratitude = ability of self

My ideas

- Notice: how we feel, emotionally and physically, before and after physical activity
- Notice: (outdoors activities) the weather, natural environment
- Learn: a new physical activity e.g. ultimate Frisbee
- Give: help another child with an activity
- Connect: work with someone new
- Gratitude: name 3 things you liked about the physical activity
- Breathing and progressive muscle relaxation: before and after an activity
- Mindfulness: body scan before and after an activity
- Character strengths: which are useful for sport and physical activity, and how

Thank you for attending

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