The Benefits of Exercise & Physical Activity

Toolkit for PPE Presentation for Teens

**Introduction**: Engage the audience by asking how many people aerobically exercise at least 30 minutes a day, 3 to 5 days a week. To make it more interesting, pick a few random people who raise their hand to share what type of exercise activities they do.

**Purpose of this presentation**: Many people who regularly exercise do it to attain or maintain a lean physique or “sculpted bod,” or maybe to excel on a sports team. We’re also told that keeps your heart and cardiovascular system healthy, reducing the chances that you’ll have a heart attack or stroke one day. But there are many other underlying benefits of engaging in regular exercise that you guys might not be aware of that directly affect you now and in the near future. What are some aspects of your life that you think it might improve?...

**“Core Points” of the presentation**:

* It helps you to maintain a healthy body composition
  + We have two main categories of tissue that compose our body: our “fat mass” and “fat free mass” (or lean body tissue)
  + The more you exercise and strengthen your muscles, the more lean body tissue you have. Since muscle mass is a metabolically active tissue, this improves your body’s ability to burn calories even while you are at rest! We call this your basal metabolic rate.
  + So that means that if you spend some of your free time exercising, you can be burning more calories just by sitting in this classroom.
* Weight bearing exercises, such as jogging or dancing, improves your bone density
  + Our bodies reach their peak bone mineral density between the ages of 20 and 30, depending on the individual
  + This means that it is crucial for you to develop your bones to the greatest of your ability, especially throughout your teens, so that you decrease the risk of becoming frail from conditions such as osteoporosis as you age
  + Especially for the young women in the room! Because of our female hormones, we are more susceptible to loss of bone mass
  + The great part is that it is in YOUR control. If you engage weight bearing exercises (make it fun with your friends!) and also consume foods that are good sources of Vitamin D, Vitamin K and Calcium, you can accumulate greater bone mineral density to sustain you throughout your lifetime
* What some people might not know is that exercise has been scientifically proven to improve other important aspects of your life…such as your mood, your stress levels, your brain function & memory stores, AND even your skin complexion!

You could then ask them what they are most interested in. Depending on the time allotted for this presentation, you could have them choose one or two of these aspects, or go over all of them. Here are facts to provide about each one:

* MOOD:
  + Some of you may have heard of the word endorphins (a hormone produced by your body) or of the term “runner’s high”
  + The “runner’s high” refers to positive thoughts & feelings that individuals experience during or after exercise
  + This happens because exercise triggers the production and release of endorphins
  + The neurotransmitter serotonin is also linked to your mood; low levels are associated with depression
    - (If they’re wondering how…)
    - Exercise boosts the rate at which serotonin “fires” within your brain
    - It has also been found to also increase the amount of tryptophan that is made in your brain…and tryptophan is used to make serotonin
  + STRESS: while boosting your mood, exercise is also known to relieve stress
    - It results in a slower resting heart rate and lower blood pressure. These mechanisms keep your body in a more relaxed state on a daily basis.
    - Engaging in regular exercise also helps you maintain and healthy and consistent sleep cycle
    - Not to mention, exercise is a great way to let out any frustrations from the day!
* MEMORY & BRAINPOWER:
  + ? Anytime you engage in aerobic exercise, you increase the blood circulation throughout your body so that you can deliver oxygen to your muscles that are hard at work
  + The increased blood flow also flows quicker through your brain while exercising!
  + When this happens, your brain receives more oxygen and nutrients which allows it to increase its production of brain chemicals called growth factors
    - Growth factors help you to create new brain cells and make connections between them
    - This is especially true if you engage in sport activities that require strategizing and cognitive skills, like playing tennis or dancing
  + It has also been proven by researchers that moderate exercise produces a stress hormone that can protect the brain from enduring memory changes linked to diseases such as Alzheimer’s
    - So it not only improves your focus and “brain power” now, but it protects your aging brain down the road!
* SKIN:
  + Everyone’s body is different, but exercise has been proven to influence a better skin complexion. How great is that? It’s a natural and FREE skin treatment!
  + How does it do this?
  + Because of the increased blood flow you experience during exercise (as we just talked about), your skin also receives oxygen and nutrients that are floating around your body
  + Furthermore, the increased blood flow cleanses your skin “from the inside out”
    - it helps to rid of waste products floating around in your body
    - sometimes this “detoxing” can enhance your skin’s glow
  + One important thing to remember is to maintain good hygiene as well! Washing your face before a makeup to remove any dirt or makeup keeps your pores clear, which is important if you’re about to sweat!

**CONCLUSION**:

* So why would we take the time to teach you all of this? You’re at an age when your body is undergoing a lot of changes and everything that you do today influences your health and the person you are in the future
* It’s really easy to forget to take care of yourself amidst all the responsibilities and commitments that pile up on your plate as you get older.
* But even just taking 30 minutes out of your daily routine to build in some “you” time to engage in exercises that you enjoy results in all of the great benefits that we discussed. Not to mention, usually a boost of self confidence
* So now that you know why you should get out and exercise, what are some great and fun ways for you to do this on a daily basis? (ask the audience)

<http://health.usnews.com/health-news/diet-fitness/slideshows/7-mind-blowing-benefits-of-exercise>

http://www.webmd.com/skin-problems-and-treatments/acne/acne-care-11/exercise