

News & Announcements

Books on Exercise

Move Into Life. Baniel, Anat. 2009. Harmony Books: New York.

Teenage Body Book. McCoy, Kathy and Charles Wibblesman. 2008. Hatherleigh: New York.

Middle School Study Skills

Colquitz Middle School hosted a 2-hour study skills workshop for parents and students Feb 24, 2010.

Parents and students studied separately and then joined together to practise some of the skills they had learned.

Some feedback from the workshop:

"It's been helpful to have an opportunity to have something the students can do themselves and then parents and students come together."

"I think it was very effective."

STR in the Community

STR runs workshops for middle school and high school level students, parents and teachers.

Workshop Topics Include:

- ▶ Study Skills
- ▶ Exam Preparation
- ▶ Memory Techniques
- ▶ Oceanography

If you are interested in hosting a talk by Smart Tutor Referrals, please contact us.

30-45 minute talks for peer tutors are offered free of charge as a community service to support students, tutors and schools.

Move It or Lose It:

How Exercise Boosts Creativity and Vitality

by *Dahlia Miller*

"Nothing happens until something moves."
Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

We all know being fit is good for us, right? Well it turns out that exercise is critical not only for the health of our bodies, but for the health of our minds as well. By introducing variation into the ways we think and move, we discover new ideas and solutions. This article offers tips on how we can build both vitality and creativity through exercise.

Exercise is good for our brains.

According to Anat Baniel in Moving Into Life, "Even with moderate athletic activity, or regular daily exercise, new brain cells start branching out, sprouting new neurons and establishing new connections with other groups of brain cells." (p.17)

Some Obvious Benefits of Exercise:
Aerobic exercise (with increased heart rate and breathing):

- ▶ Improves the body's ability to deliver oxygen to all the cells in the body (and provides fresh oxygen to the brain)
- ▶ Strengthens heart and lungs
- ▶ Builds bones
- ▶ Aids digestion – helping the body to make best use of the vitamins and minerals that you are eating

Strengthening exercise:

- ▶ Builds muscle and bone mass
- ▶ Tones muscles

Stretching exercise:

- ▶ Increases flexibility

Some Not-So-Obvious Benefits of Exercise:

- ▶ Increases self esteem

- ▶ Reduces stress
- ▶ Helps prevent anxiety
- ▶ Boosts the brain's rate of neuro-genesis (the rate at which new cells in the brain are generated)
- ▶ Enhances sleep
- ▶ Improves balance through core stability
- ▶ Enhances moods (through release of endorphins)
- ▶ Lowers blood pressure
- ▶ Decreases risk of diabetes
- ▶ Helps you to feel good about your body
- ▶ Decreases the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure and some forms of cancer later in life
- ▶ Boosts immune system
- ▶ Helps you to learn new skills
- ▶ Improves speed, balance, agility and coordination
- ▶ Builds a sense of accomplishment

While exercise has numerous proven benefits, just exercising isn't enough. ***We need to move with attention if we want to experience all the possible benefits from fitness.*** The brain craves new information (boredom, by the way, is a sign that our brain is lacking new stimuli).

"The more habitual our everyday movements, the less we are able to satisfy the brain's need for growth. As we introduce new patterns of movement, combined with attention, our brains begin making thousands, millions, and even billions of new connections. These changes quickly translate into thinking that is clearer, movement that is easier, pain that is reduced or eliminated, and action that is more successful." (Baniel, p.18)

So, if we challenge our bodies to move in new ways, and pay attention as we're doing it, life can become more interesting and exciting. When we continue to keep

About Us

We provide **1-on-1, in-home tutorial support** throughout Victoria, Saanich and Sooke.

STR was established in Victoria, BC in 2002 and has built a solid reputation for creativity and professionalism.

With over 50 tutors, we are able to find the best match for each student. Our tutors are certified teachers and professionals. They are carefully screened and chosen specially to match the needs and learning styles of each student.

Our goal is to enhance students' skills and to cultivate learning confidence through support that is truly individualized: matched specifically to each student's needs, recognizing each student's unique talents and abilities.

We support families in education.

For more information and resources, visit us on-line at:

www.SmartTutorReferrals.com

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active, curious, and creative, our brains continue to grow and create possibilities for us.

To get out there more, choose fitness activities that sound fun and exciting to you.

Common Fitness Activities:

- ▶ Fitness classes (pilates, yoga, kick boxing)
- ▶ Frisbee
- ▶ Free play
- ▶ Walking
- ▶ Jogging
- ▶ Running
- ▶ Bicycling
- ▶ Swimming/water sports
- ▶ Racquet sports
- ▶ Rock climbing
- ▶ Dancing
- ▶ Skating
- ▶ Outdoor sports (hiking, mountain biking, geo-caching)

Common Sense Exercise Caveats:

- ▶ Do proper warm up stretches and cool downs to avoid injury
- ▶ Wear proper shoes, clothing, and protective gear
- ▶ Learn proper techniques for safety
- ▶ Use your common sense and play safely
- ▶ Drink lots of liquid
- ▶ Eat a healthy, balanced diet to sustain your energy level

Some Not-So-Obvious Caveats:

- ▶ Check with your physician before beginning a new regime of exercise, especially if you have underlying medical problems. Doctors are handy and can tell you, for example, if you need to add weight to your frame before starting a sport (like football).
- ▶ Energy drinks often contain caffeine or ephedra, both substances which can over-stimulate the heart and leave you at risk if you then get your heart pumping through exercise.

Building Self-Motivation for Exercise:

- ▶ Choose fun activities for exercise
- ▶ Keep an exercise journal – set goals; set target dates for reaching these goals; check in to see if the goals have been reached and why or why not
- ▶ Consider what sports/activities you've always wanted to try – what's stopping you from trying them?
- ▶ Track changes you notice in strength, endurance, flexibility
- ▶ Track yourself with a pedometer
- ▶ If you are not in good physical shape currently, start with 10 minutes and build to 20-30 minutes for each time exercising

Motivation Tips for Parents

- ▶ Offer praise and support
- ▶ Get kids off the TV by showing the listings and asking them to highlight the shows they want (limit TV & computer use to 1-2 hours per day); turn the TV or computer on when it's time to use it and off when the time is up
- ▶ Have fun activity equipment on hand: skipping ropes, balls, kites, badminton racquets, frisbees, hula hoops, roller blades, etc.
- ▶ Suggest some sneaky exercises: raking, lawn mowing, shopping, dog walking, shoveling snow, walking to school
- ▶ Keep an Activity Tracking Chart – star or sticker for each day engaging in an activity; set a goal; reward when the goal is reached
- ▶ Make fitness a family affair: take a golf lesson together, go to the swimming pool, go on a group kayak outing, play touch football
- ▶ Try new activities together: archery, fencing, juggling, curling, rock climbing
- ▶ Model an active lifestyle
- ▶ Remember you are trying to develop your child's lifetime love of exercise, not to get him or her on a national team
- ▶ Keep in mind that interest builds as skills improve and students are praised for their efforts

"Combine the body, the mind and the heart. And to keep them in parallel vigor one must exercise, study and love."

Karl von Bonstetten (1745-1832) Swiss writer