



DID YOU KNOW?

Being Physically Active Can Prevent and Manage Stress

Physical activity gives us energy and increases the production of endorphins, which make us feel good. It also helps calm our brain and body when stressful things happen in our life.

It can be hard to find time in our busy lives to be physically active, but even walking, taking the stairs, and stretching at your home or workplace can help.

Check out the strategies below and see which ones might work best for you and the people you care about.



Talk to a doctor about how to exercise safely if you or the people you support have a health condition or injury.

Everyday Practices

Here are some easy ways to get physical activity to help prevent and lower stress:

- Be kind to yourself. It can be hard to find time to exercise, but you can do it.
- Make a plan and set goals for getting more physical activity. For example, start with two days per week and do different activities on each day.
- Aim to get 30 – 60 minutes of physical activity at least three times every week, but...

! Physical activity doesn't have to be a full "workout."

Take 5- to 15-minute breaks at school, work, and home throughout the day to:

- Take the stairs
- Take a walk down the hall and back
- Do 25 jumping jacks
- Pick up two water bottles and use them as weights for 10 minutes
- Stretch
- Play with your children
- Have a dance party
- Take a walk outside or at a park – meet up with friends or family to make it more fun.
- Do hopscotch or jump rope
- Go to a playground
- Ride a bike
- Join an activity or team at school or in your community, such as for sports or dance



Sometimes We Need *a Little* Extra Support

If you are feeling overwhelmed, these things can help:

- See if your local community center or neighborhood family center has classes or activities, such as dance, martial arts or yoga.
- Partner with a friend or family member to be physically active together.
- Use a phone app with reminders and encouragement.

Make it fun. Identify the type(s) of activities that you like.

- Walk in nature
- Dance
- Play a sport with friends, like soccer or basketball
- Do free, online exercise videos (e.g., on YouTube)
- Run
- Swim



Short activity breaks (even 2-5 minutes) can help your body process all that extra stress energy.

Do 10 jumping jacks, take a stroll around the block, or just wiggle and shake right where you are.

Sometimes We Need *a Lot* of Extra Support

When you are going through an extra tough time, these things can help:

- Activities that combine physical activity with breathing techniques, such as martial arts and yoga
- Support groups
- Exercise groups in your community
- Clinic-based exercise programs
- Weight management programs that combine mental health therapy with physical activity and nutrition guidance.

Ask your health care provider or your local community center about these programs.



SCREEN. TREAT. HEAL.

**FOR MORE WAYS TO
MANAGE STRESS:**

Visit [ACEsAware.org/ManageStress](https://www.acesaware.org/ManageStress) or
Talk to your health care provider