

Article: Mental Health

Content notes:

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AUDIENCE	Australians across life stages, from parents of young children to older adults.
COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES	White label content: Encourage regular movement as a foundation for mental wellbeing at every age.
MESSAGE	Physical activity supports mental health, no matter your age or fitness level.
INSIGHTS	2 in 3 adults and 1 in 4 children aren't active enough, increasing mental health risks.
ASSOCIATED ASSET/S	TAL Health Connector
CTA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Speak to your GP or explore support options through TAL's Health Connector or Headlight. <div>IMPORTANT: If you'd like to feature Headlight for your members during Mental Health Month, please ensure that you use your existing unique URL. If you don't have one currently, please contact your TAL Partnership Manager to obtain a unique URL. We'll only be able to provide member access reporting where a unique URL is used.</div>

Staying active for mental health at any age

You've probably heard that being active is good for your mental health. But the level of physical activity you need can depend on your age, lifestyle and overall health. But no matter where you're at in life, moving your body can make a big difference to your physical and mental wellbeing.

Why physical activity matters

Research shows that more than half of adults and 7 out of 10 children are not getting enough physical activity for good health.¹ And the effects can add up, increasing the risk of mental health conditions.

The good news is that it's never too early – or too late – to start moving more. No matter your age, staying active keeps you strong, reduces health risks and improves your mental health and quality of life.

Here's what that can look like across the ages.

FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS (5–17 YEARS)

¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Physical activity across the life stages*, 2023.

Movement is essential for healthy growth and development. At least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise each day is recommended, which should include activities that strengthen muscles and bones, like running, climbing or sports.²

Being active boosts kids' confidence, sharpens focus, and helps them handle stress, especially in school. And it lays the foundation for a healthy adulthood.

FOR ADULTS (18–64 YEARS)

A busy work schedule or family duties can make it hard to stay active. But just 2.5 to 5 hours of moderate exercise each week (like brisk walking or cycling) can really help.³

Include muscle-strengthening activities, such as lifting weights or yoga, at least two days a week. Aerobic and resistance exercises are linked with significant reductions in depressive symptoms.⁴

FOR OLDER ADULTS (65+ YEARS)

As we age, staying active helps maintain independence, balance and cognitive function. Older adults should aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most days. This includes exercises that strengthen muscles, improve balance and enhance flexibility.³

Gentle activities such as tai chi, walking or gardening help you stay active, while reducing symptoms of anxiety, depression and delays the onset of dementia.⁵ Doing these activities as part of a group can also keep you socially connected.

SUPPORT TO GET STARTED

It's okay if you're not where you want to be right now. Everyone starts somewhere, and doing some physical activity is better than doing none. If you have a health condition, it's worth speaking to your GP before starting a new activity.

TAL's Health Connector can also help by connecting you to free or low-cost government and community services to support your health goals.

Want more tips on getting active safely? Visit health.gov.au or talk to your healthcare professional.

You can also explore **Headlight** — a free, confidential mental health screening survey developed by TAL in collaboration with the University of Sydney Brain & Mind Centre.

Headlight helps you identify mental health blind spots and provides access to tailored, evidence-based resources and recommendations, based on your wellbeing score, to encourage positive action.

DISCLAIMER [please add to your post]

(Insert disclaimer)

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² Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, *Physical activity and exercise guidelines*, 2021.

³ Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, *Physical activity and exercise guidelines*, 2021.

⁴ Black Dog Institute, *Lifestyle*, 2025.

⁵ World Health Organisation, *WHO guidelines on physical activity and sedentary behaviour*, 2020.