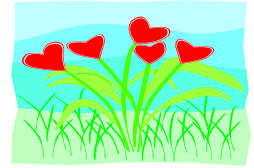


# "CORE"tastic Kids Newsletter



## Get Moving!!!

Statistics prove that teens who engage in physical activities score higher on exams and are less likely to smoke, drink alcohol and engage in other dangerous behaviors. Becoming physically fit lifts their mood, boosts self-esteem, reduces stress and sets the foundation for a lifetime of good habits, which encourages healthy management of their lives.

Research shows that keeping fit through regular exercise and maintaining age-diversified, social connections are vital for continued mental and physical well-being. Social interaction facilitates the ability to become great communicators and problem solvers. It is one of the most important activities that teens can be involved in. It teaches them the rights and wrongs in their community, helps them to build relationships and teaches them how to cope in group situations. Social interaction settings are sites where teens are encouraged to communicate. This improves feelings of acceptance and understanding, which leads to positive development in mental health.

While the majority of fitness research focuses on the physical benefits of exercise, there is growing information demonstrating how exercise promotes overall wellness and mental health. One of the most exciting changes that exercise causes is neurogenesis, or the creation of new neurons. The new neurons are created in the hippocampus, the center of learning and memory in the brain. Exercise also releases endorphins in the brain, which in turn cause us to experience feelings of joy and euphoria. Endorphins are the body's natural feel good chemicals, and when they are released through exercise, your mood is boosted naturally. As well as endorphins, exercise releases adrenaline, serotonin, and dopamine. These chemicals work together to make you feel good. Physically active people recover from mild depression more quickly and physical activity is strongly correlated with good mental health as people age.

As children enter the teen years, they find themselves faced with more choices and opportunities than they had in childhood. While many of these opportunities can be beneficial, (studying for important tests or taking extra classes to prepare for college) this can also lead to a decrease in physical activity levels. Physical fitness is important as it helps keep our body free from illness. Physical fitness makes our body more energetic, which in turn helps us to carry out our daily activities without getting tired or fatigued. It increases metabolism to burn fat and process food more efficiently.



*Where performance meets potential.*

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### Calendar of Events

March for Meals  
March 5, 2011  
Riverbanks Zoo

Next series of  
Group Classes Begin  
March 28, 2011

## Exercise of the Month: February 2011

Spring is approaching fast, which means warmer weather for playing outside. What better way to prepare your children than by building stronger bodies. A great way to get stronger children is to strengthen their muscles one area at a time. Let's start by strengthening their leg muscles. A fun and exciting way to do this is by turning your children into an artist. How is that related to exercise you might ask? It's simple, sit down on the floor with your hands behind you and lean back a little bit. Make sure your legs are straight out in front of you. Start with your right side and lift your right leg in the air. Start drawing pictures in the air using just your right foot and leg. Then switch to the left side. Once you have done both sides you will be an accomplished "foot artist". Have your child take turns with you or a sibling and try to guess what the "foot artist" is drawing. The children will be having so much fun, they won't even realize they are exercising and building stronger muscles. Stronger, Smarter, Better, Go!



# Body Works — From the Inside Out

## Is Running Really Good for You?

Check out this article titled [It's All Good](#) from the February 2011 issue of Runner's World by Amy Rushlow. More evidence that exercise is great for your brain and your body!

Scientists have discovered the fountain of youth—it's running. Studies continue to find that hitting the roads improves health and well-being. "The biggest benefits come from vigorous exercise like running," says JoAnn Manson, M.D., chief of preventive medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital. Here are the latest reasons to lace up.

### LOOK AHEAD

People who run more than 35 miles a week are 54 percent less likely to suffer age-related vision loss than those who cover 10 miles a week.

### KEEP THE BEAT

Runners who log a weekly run of 10 miles (or more) are 39 percent less likely to use high-blood-pressure meds and 34 percent less likely to need cholesterol meds compared with those who don't go farther than three miles.

### FUNCTION WELL

Men who burn at least 3,000 calories per week (equal to about five hours of running) are 83 percent less likely to have severe erectile dysfunction.

### BUILD BONE

Running strengthens bones better than other aerobic activities, say University of Missouri researchers who compared the bone density of runners and cyclists. Sixty-three percent of the cyclists had low density in their spine or hips; only 19 percent of runners did.

### THINK FAST

British workers were surveyed on a day they worked out and a day they didn't. People said they made fewer mistakes, concentrated better, and were more productive on the day they were active.

### STAY SHARP

A study in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* reported that women who were active as teenagers were less likely to develop dementia later in life.

### SLEEP TIGHT

Insomniacs fell asleep in 17 minutes on days they ran, compared to 38 minutes on days they didn't. They also slept for an extra hour on days they exercised.

### SNEEZE LESS

People who exercise for an hour a day are 18 percent less likely to suffer upper-respiratory-tract infections than those who are inactive, according to a study from Sweden. Moderate activity boosts immunity.

### BREATHE EASY

Researchers had asthmatics do two cardio workouts and one strength session a week. After three months, they reported less wheezing and shortness of breath.

### LIVE LONGER

A review of 22 studies found that people who work out 2.5 hours a week are 19 percent less likely to die prematurely than those who don't exercise. A separate study found that active people have a 50 percent lower risk of premature death.



There are two lasting bequests we can give our children: one is roots, the other is wings.

Hodding Carter

### March for Meals 5K at Riverbanks

March 5, 7:30 AM.

5K course for runners and 3.2 or 1.5 miles course for walkers through beautiful Riverbanks Zoo and Gardens. **Adult runners \$20, adult walkers \$15 and children (12 and under) \$10 through February 15.** (Registration fees increase February 16)

Sign up online at the link below and enter "Core Institute" into the comments section to join our team and help us reach our goal of 50 team members!!!!

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## Brain Based Learning : Brain Based Education is here to stay!

Today, as a result of years of work by brain-based educators, educators are a far more informed profession. They are more professional, they look more at research, and they are increasingly more capable of understanding and incorporating new cognitive neuroscience discoveries than they were 10 years ago.

More schools of education are incorporating knowledge from the brain sciences than would have done so if we had followed the critics' advice and crawled into an intellectual cave for 25 years. Many forward thinkers have stayed tuned to such sources as Bob Sylwester's monthly column in *Brain Connection*, Scientific Learning's Internet journal that's regularly read by thousands of educators and parents. Sylwester, formerly a professor at the University of Oregon and a widely published authority on brain-based education, has been "connecting the dots" for educators for a decade.

10 years after the mudslinging criticism of brain-based education, **it's appropriate to say, "We were right."** In fact, because of the efforts of the brain-based community to inform educators, thousands are currently using this knowledge appropriately to enhance education policy and practice. There are degree programs in it, scientific journals, and conferences; and peer-reviewed brain-related research now supports the discipline.

There are countless neuroscientists who support the movement, and they demonstrate their support by writing and speaking at educational conferences. As an author in the brain-based movement, I have reminded educators that they should never say, **"Brain research proves . . ."** because it does not prove anything. It may, however, suggest or strengthen the value of a particular pathway.

What educators should say is, **"These studies suggest that XYZ may be true about the brain. Given that insight, it probably makes sense for us, under these conditions, to use the following strategies in schools."** This approach, which is a cautionary one, sticks with the truth. When one is careful about making causal claims, the connections are there for those with an open mind. The science may come from a wide range of disciplines. **Brain-based education is not a panacea or magic bullet to solve all of education's problems.** Anyone who claims that is misleading people. It is not yet a program, a model, or a package for schools to follow.

The discussion of how to improve student learning must widen from axons and dendrites to the bigger picture. That bigger picture is that our brain is involved with everything we do at school. The brain is the most relevant feature to explore, because it affects every strategy, action, behavior, and policy at your school. New journals explore such essential topics as social conditions, exercise, neurogenesis, arts, stress, and nutrition. A school cannot remove arts, career education, and physical education and at the same time claim to be doing what's best for the brains of its students. These are the issues we must be exploring, not whether someone can prove whether a teacher's strategy was used before or after a neuroscience study provided peer-reviewed support for that strategy.

Today, there is still criticism, but the voices are no longer a chorus; they're a diminishing whine. **For the critic, it's still "my way or the highway."** That's an old, tired theme among critics; the tactic of dismissing another's research by narrowing the discussion to irrelevant issues, such as whether the research is cognitive science, neurobiology, or psychology. They're all about the mind and brain. The real issues that we should be talking about are what environmental, instructional, and social conditions can help us enrich students' lives. To answer that, it's obvious that everything that our brain does is relevant and that's what should now be on the table for discussion.

Yes, we are in the infancy of brain research — there's so much more to learn. But dismissing it is not only shortsighted, it's also dead wrong. At this early stage, that would be like calling the Wright Brothers' first flight at Kitty Hawk a failure because it only went a few hundred yards. And let's remember, the Wright Brothers had no credibility either; they were actually bicycle mechanics, not aviators. The future belongs not to the turf protectors, but to those with vision who can grasp interdisciplinary trends as well as the big picture. Nothing is more relevant to educators than the brains of their students, parents, or staff.

[www.jensenlearning.com](http://www.jensenlearning.com)

## Reading Tips For Parents

A child's success as a reader begins much earlier than the first day of school. Reading, and a love for reading, begins at home. These tips can be used with children at various ages and stages — choose the ones that work best for your child!

**Read together every day.** Read to your child every day. Make this a warm and loving time when the two of you can cuddle close.

**Give everything a name.** Build your child's vocabulary by talking about interesting words and objects.

For example, "Look at that airplane!

Those are the wings of the plane. Why do you think they are called wings?"

**Read it again and again.** Go ahead and read your child's favorite book for the 100th time!

**Use your child's name.** Point out the link between letters and sounds. Say, "John, the word jump begins with the same sound as your name. John, jump. And they both begin with the same letter, J."

**Trace and say letters.** Have your child use a finger to trace a letter while saying the letter's sound.

Do this on paper, in sand, or on a plate of sugar.

**Once is not enough.** Encourage your child to re-read favorite books and poems. Re-reading helps kids read more quickly and accurately.

**Be patient.** When your child is trying to sound out an unfamiliar word, give him or her time to do so. Remind your child to look closely at the first letter or letters of the word.

**Talk, talk, talk!** Talk with your child every day about school and things going on around the house.

Sprinkle some interesting words into the conversation, and build on words you've talked about in the past.

**Write, write, write!** Ask your child to help you write out the grocery list, a thank you note to Grandma, or to keep a journal of special things that happen at home. When writing, encourage your child to use the letter and sound patterns he is learning at school.

**Be your child's #1 fan.** Ask your child to read aloud what he or she has written for school. Be an enthusiastic listener.



### Marker Box Fun!

Your toddler will surely enjoy this fun activity. All you need is a shoebox and markers. Take some scissors and punch holes in the bottom of the box. Take a marker and push it through each hole. (Depending on the depth of the box, you might need to cut a couple inches around the top so that when the markers are put in the hole they will hit the ground and stand upright as shown in the photo.) After you have created all the holes and put the markers in, let your toddler have fun taking them out and putting them back in again. Talk about the colors or turn the markers upside down so that the cap color is hidden, then play concentration and make a match!

[www.toddler toddler.com](http://www.toddler toddler.com)

### Math Activities: Newspaper Math (Grades K-2)

**Newspaper numbers.** Help your child look for numbers 1 to 100 in the newspaper. Cut the numbers out and glue them in numerical order onto a large piece of paper. For children who cannot count to 100 or recognize numbers that large, only collect up to the number they do know. Have your child say the numbers to you and practice counting up to that number. OR, collect only numbers within a certain range, like the numbers between 20 and 30. Arrange the numbers on a chart, grouping all the numbers with 2s in them, all the numbers with 5s, and so on.

**Counting book.** Cut out pictures from the newspaper and use them to make a counting book. Page 1 will have one thing on it, page 2 will have 2 things that are alike, page 3 will have 3 things that are alike, and so on. All the things on the each page have to be the same. At the bottom of each page, write the number of items on the page and the word for the item. Have your child tell you a story about what is on the page.

Find more at [www.math.com](http://www.math.com)

