

## *Teens Involved in Team Sports in School Have Better Mental Health*



School sports are very crucial for every child as it helps creating a healthy experience for them. Researchers at the University of Toronto found that adolescents who take part in team sports from grades 8-12, experience less stress and have better mental health.

"It is important that school administrators recognize the importance of sport participation and physical activity," said lead author Catherine M. Sabiston, Ph.D., of the University of Toronto. "The associations we have found show a long term impact. School sport from ages 12 to 17 protects those youth from poor mental health four years later."

According to the researchers, nearly 23-40 percent of youth experience high stress and report feeling depression. In this study, the researchers look at whether participating in school sports help curb depression and stress among youth.

For the study, researchers surveyed 850 students from Canadian schools in each grade during the five years of secondary school. They enquired about their participation in school sports like basketball, soccer, track and field, wrestling and gymnastics. Once the students graduated after three years, they were asked to rate at which they experienced depression symptoms, the amount of stress in their lives and also how they rated their mental health on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 was poor and 5 was excellent.

The researchers observed that the students who were involved in school sports had better scores on three mental health test when compared to those who did not play sports at all. There was a strong association between school sports during adolescent years and lower symptoms of depression, lower perceived stress and higher self-rated mental health in young adulthood.

Several research pieces focused on the benefits of physical activity during childhood and adolescent period. It is proved that physical activity helps build bones and muscles, helps control weight and also helps students perform well in studies.

"There is surprisingly little known about school sport, so we can only speculate as to the unique effects, but we suspect it might be due to school sport providing adolescents with opportunities to bond with other students, feel connected to their school, interact with their peers and coaches, thus, really providing a social and active environment," said lead author Catherine M. Sabiston.

Source; <http://www.scienceworldreport.com/articles/15827/20140704/teens-involves-in-school-sports-have-better-mental-health.htm>