



Health News from your Physical
Education Teacher
MARCH
TRAIN YOUR BRAIN

**When we move, we grow. Our body
grows in muscle strength and endurance.
Our heart muscle grows in strength and
endurance. Our brain grows in neurons!**



THE AMAZING HUMAN BRAIN



In celebration of Brain Awareness Week this month, let's learn about the benefits of exercise and mindfulness for the brain. Did you know these facts about the brain?

- The weight of the human brain is about 3 lbs.
- The brain is made up of about 75% water.
- The brain uses 20% of the total oxygen in the body.

Find out how much you know about the brain by taking this quiz:
[Web MD Brain Quiz.](#)

EXERCISE CHANGES THE BRAIN



There are numerous benefits to exercise. While most of us know the benefits of exercise for the body, are we aware of the benefits of exercise for the brain? Exercise helps the brain because...

- Increases production of BDNF in brain, which improves neuron functions and encourages neuron growth.
 - Increases blood flow and oxygen to the brain.
- We also can exercise for the brain because exercise: 1) Improves long-term memory 2) Improves reasoning 3) Helps you problem solve 4) Treats depression and dementia and 5) Reduces risk for Alzheimer's. John Medina explains it best: Rule #1: Exercise Boosts Brain Power! For more information, visit: [Brain Rules](#). "Our brain developed while working out, walking as many as 12 miles a day." – John Medina

MINDFULNESS CHANGES THE BRAIN

There are also many benefits to mindfulness practice. While many of us may feel the positive effect of relaxation after a mindful practice, are we aware of how our brain changes when we practice mindfulness? Mindfulness helps the brain because...

- Activates the hippocampus, which is very important in learning and memory.
- Activates the prefrontal cortex, which is very important in emotional regulation and decision-making.
- Decreases the size of the amygdala, which is where emotions like fear and anxiety are.

**Watch your thoughts, they
become your words.
Watch your words, they
become your actions.**

**Watch your actions, they
become your habits.**

**Watch your habits, they become your character.
Watch your character, it becomes your destiny.**



MINDFULNESS: USE TECHNOLOGY MINDFULLY

Can you bring awareness to how you use technology?

We must face it. Technology and electronics are a part of 21st century living. There are both positives and negatives to technology. While technology helps us communicate faster and get places faster, it also requires our brains to multi task. In the book *Brain Rules*, John Medina also explains Rule #4 on Attention, "The brain is not capable of multi-tasking. We can talk and breathe, but when it comes to higher level tasks, we just can't do it." The Sleep Foundation explains that both the light exposure from our devices and the mental activity to use them promote wakefulness. This is why it is important to keep electronic devices outside the bedroom. For more information, please visit [National Sleep Foundation](#). In today's technology-driven world, it can be challenging to practice mindfulness. It may help us to be more mindful by trying out some of these ideas suggested by Meena Srinivasan in her book *Teach Breathe Learn*:

- Use alarm clocks to set alarms instead of cell phones
- Leave your phone at home if you are playing, walking or biking in the beautiful outdoors
- Take a technology break for 24 hours one day a week
- Eat one meal a day totally technology free
- Set times to use technology so it is not used all day

FUN FAMILY CHALLENGE: With your family, can you eat one meal together a day free of technology?

FITNESS CHALLENGE: TAKE A BRAIN BOOST BREAK!



Can you take at least one brain break at school and at home each day? Try one of your favorite dances from PE class as a brain break. Try short workouts, like a JAM Workout (Just-A-Minute Workout). Complete each exercise for 20 seconds each, for a total of Just A Minute. 1) Jumping Jacks 2) Elbow to Knee (Opposite) and 3) Hand to Toes (Opposite). Try cross-lateral movements to get the different hemispheres of your brain communicating and working together! For examples, see page two.

NUTRITION CHALLENGE: EAT BRAIN FOOD!



Can you eat foods to maintain a healthy brain? These are healthy eating habits that improve the health of your brain. To learn more, visit [Web MD Brain Foods](#).

- Healthy breakfast improves short-term memory, focus and attention throughout the day.
- Fish has been linked to lower the risk for dementia.
- Nuts and chocolate are full of powerful antioxidants that support focus.
- Avocados and whole grains help reduce plaque build up and improve blood flow to the brain.
- Blueberries protect the brain from the danger of free radicals and improve learning.



Happy St Patrick's Day everyone!

**Enjoy each and everyday in the best way for your
body, brain and heart.**



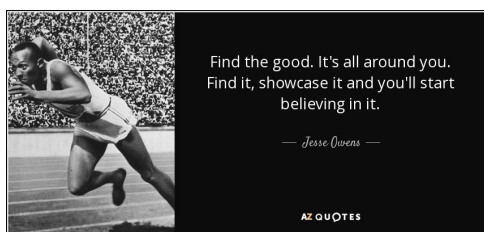
Health News from your Physical
Education Teacher
MARCH
TRAIN YOUR BRAIN



SPORTS NEWS: SPIRIT OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES

With the Summer Olympics just months away and the new movie "Race" recently released, we are reminded of a famous legend: Jesse Owens.

Jesse Owens was a black American Track and Field Athlete who won 4 gold medals in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Owens became the first American to win four track and field gold medals at a single Olympics (100m, 200m, 4x100m relay and long jump), a record that remained unbroken for 48 years. During college he also earned 3 world records and tied 1 at the Big Ten Championship in Ann Arbor MI in 1935. Jesse Owens is also well known for another reason. When Jesse Owens was in Berlin he was received positively by athletes but not by Hitler. This was prior to World War II. At a time when Hitler was trying to prove that one race was the dominant race, Jesse Owens proved him wrong. Jesse Owens won 4 Gold Medals in the 1936 Olympics. To learn more about this inspirational Olympian, please watch this video: [Olympics Jesse Owens](#).



NATIONAL SPORTSMANSHIP DAY: MARCH 1, 2016



March 1st is National Sportsmanship Day. Let's celebrate this day by "doing the right thing" on and off the court. We can take some inspiration from famous athletes and coaches who exhibited standards for Sportsmanship. "What

you are as a person is far more important than what you are as a basketball player." – Coach John Wooden. For more information about Sportsmanship Day or to participate in an essay contest, please visit this website: [International Sport](#).

FITNESS: CROSS LATERAL MOVEMENTS

A cross lateral movement is when one side of the body crosses the midline to the other side of the body. These movements are linked to better brain communication, better brain coordination and better academic performance. For more information, please visit [Livestrong Article: Cross Lateral Exercises](#). Here are a few examples of cross laterals:

- Hand to Opposite Knee
- Hand to Opposite Toe
- Hand to Opposite Heel
- Elbow to Opposite Knee

NUTRITION: EXTRA, EXTRA READ ALL ABOUT IT!



Recently, the nutrition advisory panel that helps create the country's dietary guidelines reviewed research studies and agreed that, "Americans were eating too much salt, sugar and saturated fat, and not enough foods that fit a 'healthy dietary pattern,' like fruits, vegetables, nuts, whole grains, fish..." The panel specified that we are eating too much sugar, clearly stating, "There is a striking excess of added sugar intake in all age groups across the population." The article also explains that Americans are allowed 12 teaspoons of sugar per day, but are in fact eating 22 to 30 teaspoons of sugar a day. Yikes! That is a lot! The panel suggests several ideas such as removing sugary drinks from schools. As we begin National Nutrition Month, we all need to stop and take a look at the foods we are eating and how many sugars we are adding to our bodies and brains each day. Let's support each other by eating meals together that bring us good health and good energy. For more information, visit: [NY Times Wellness Article](#).

NUTRITION CHALLENGE: EAT A RAINBOW A DAY!

Can you eat one meal a day with all the colors of the rainbow? This month, we celebrate National Nutrition Month. Different colors of fruits and vegetables have different benefits.

Color	Benefit
Red	Healthy heart
Orange/Yellow	Healthy vision
Green	Strong bones
Purple	Good memory
White	Healthy immune system

RHYTHM AND MOVES: MUSIC INSPIRES!



The National Association for Music Education has officially designated March as the observance of Music In Our Schools Month® (MIOSM). This is a time of year when music education becomes the focus of schools across the nation. MIOSM began as a single statewide celebration in 1973, and has grown over the decades to become a month long celebration of school music, supported by students, teachers, musicians and music supporters. The purpose of MIOSM is to raise awareness of the importance of music education for all children – and to remind citizens that schools are where all children should have access to music. MIOSM is an opportunity to remind everyone of the benefits that music at school brings to students of all ages. Schools and communities throughout the country and overseas celebrate MIOSM with concerts and other [activities](#) based on the year's theme, which is "Music Inspires" this year. How does music inspire you? Make a list with your family of the ways music inspires you every day. This might be during your daily workout, your drive to school, your class at school, or your weekly religious service. Bring your list to your Rhythm and Moves teacher for a special MIOSM treat!



Happy St Patrick's Day everyone!
Enjoy each and everyday in the best way for your
body, brain and heart.