Today’s piece was prepared by Alyssa Blumenfeld, MD based on a NY Times article [The Benefits of Exercise for Children’s Mental Health](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/02/well/family/the-benefits-of-exercise-for-childrens-mental-health.html?searchResultPosition=1).

This article discusses benefits of even a small amount of exercise for teenagers and the specific role that exercise can play in preventing anxiety and depression, sensitive to the challenges to teens to adhere to WHO recommendations for 1 hour daily of vigorous or moderate exercise.. The author, Dr. McMahon, states that studies in adults have “suggested that exercise may offset the genetic tendency toward depression,” and goes on to demonstrate, through citing multiple scientific studies, how “there’s good evidence that this same association holds in adolescents. Dr. McMahon places a call for action in reference to schools and elements of their environments that could use some reshaping with an eye toward integration/inclusion, likely of benefit broadly to all children, including neurotypical children. The article is clinically relevant, addressing IEPs, 504 plans, and other means to help children who struggle in school.

This article is relatively impartial and scientifically balanced, referencing scientific articles and siting expert opinions. However, the article is geared more towards medical professionals and could have the tendency to be misleading for the general public, in that Dr. McMahon often uses phrases that may require some understanding of biostatistics, as well as the fact that while much of the evidence she cites acknowledges correlation between exercise and decreased depression and anxiety, there is no causation link established.

**RESOURCES FOR ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, & ADVOCACY:**

[Washington Youth Suicide Prevention Program](https://www.sprc.org/grantees/washington-youth-suicide-prevention-program-2) *Early intervention strategies grounded in public/private collaboration in 3 regions in WA State*[Worry Wise Kids](http://worrywisekids.org/) *Sponsored by the Children’s and Adult Center for OCD*[Understood.org](https://www.understood.org/about) *For families, educators, and young adults, with a focus on empowering people who learn and think differently and those who support them, offering customized, accessible resources and a compassionate community.*

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!