

Physical Activity and Mental Health in Youth with Visual Impairment

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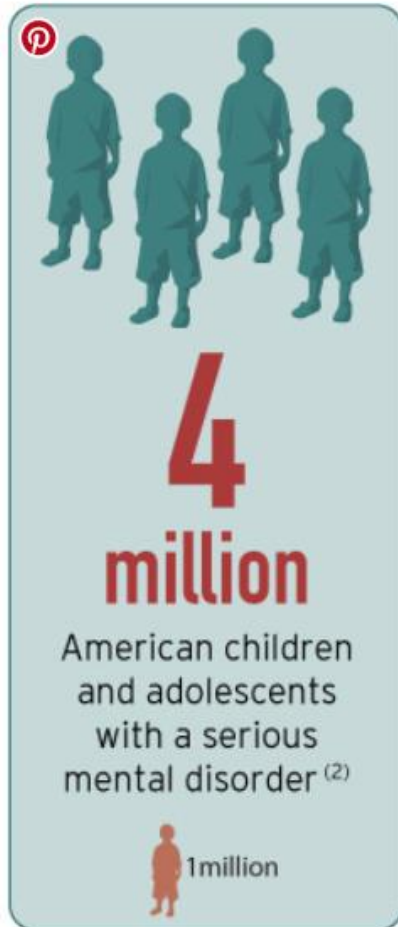
**Institute of Movement Studies for
Individuals with Visual Impairments**



Who are
you?



Prevalence of Mental Health Issues in Youth



Mental Health and Disability

- Teens with disabilities are up to five times more likely to suffer from mental, emotional and behavioral health disorders than adolescents without disabilities
- Youth with visual impairments have higher levels of depression and anxiety than their sighted peers (Demmin et al., 2020) as well as poorer body image (Pinquart & Pfeiffer, 2012).
- Myopic children, specifically, have higher depression and anxiety scores, and those with other causes of vision impairment have higher anxiety scores. Additionally, it was shown that children who receive corrective strabismus surgery have improved depression and anxiety symptoms.

Signs of Mental Illness

Nine signs of mental illness

healthdirect

What are the symptoms of a mental illness? If a friend or loved one doesn't seem themselves, how do you spot the difference between a bad mood and something more serious?



Feeling anxious or worried



Feeling depressed or unhappy



Emotional outbursts



Sleep problems



Weight or appetite changes



Quiet or withdrawn



Substance abuse



Feeling guilty or worthless



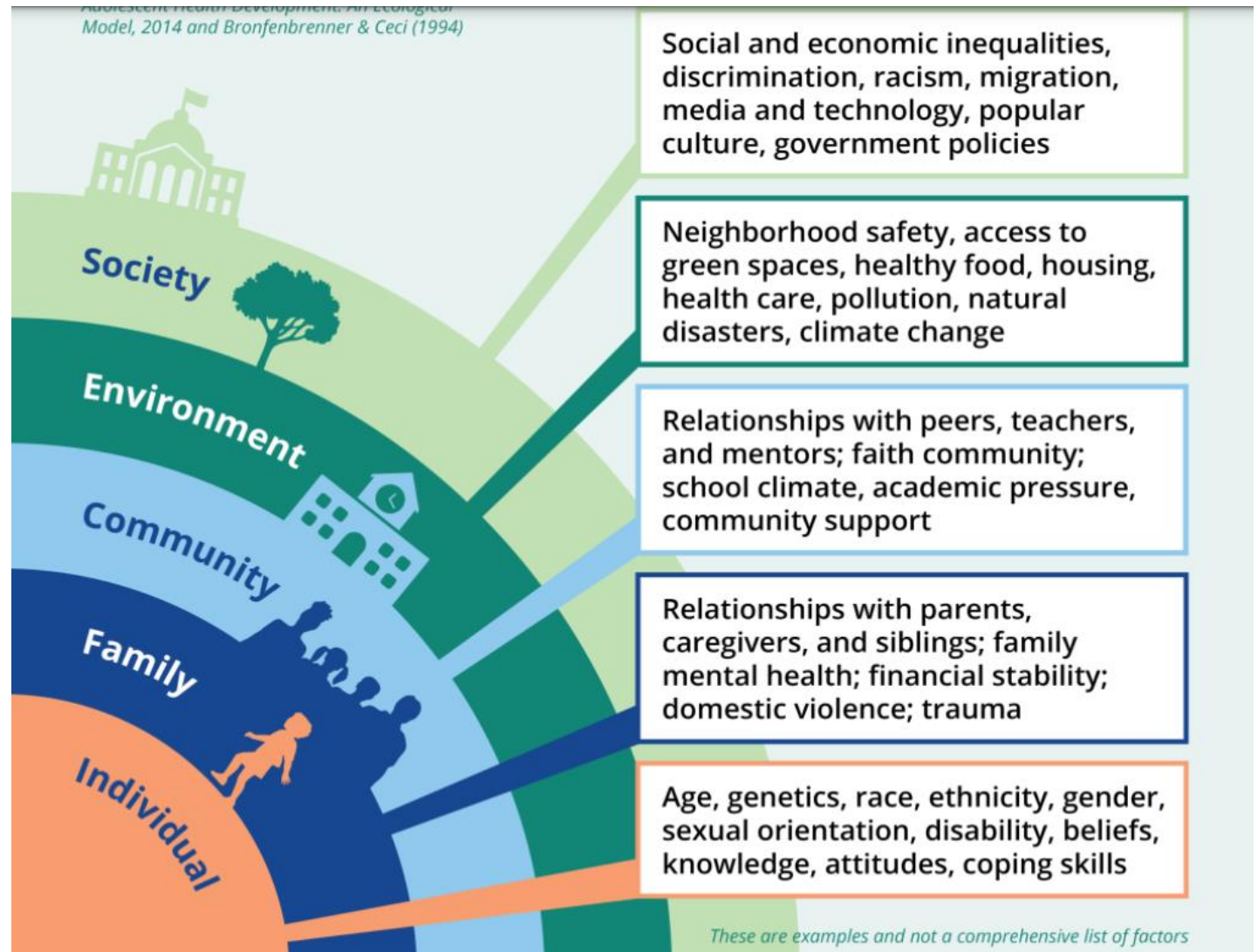
Changes in behaviour or feelings



If you think there is an immediate risk of suicide or self harm, dial triple zero (000)

If you're concerned about a friend or loved one, ask them how you can help. The first step for them should be to see a doctor or other healthcare professional.

Factors that Shape the Mental Health of Young People





Factors Impacting Youth with VI

- Students with visual impairments may be more likely to experience anxiety due to factors such as navigating social and physical environments and accessing materials.
- Students may miss unseen messages such as facial expressions, eye contact, and gestures which could lead to confusion and cause anxiety.

Physical Activity and Visual Impairment

Youth with visual impairments have lower levels of physical activity and higher levels of sedentary time than their sighted peers (Brian et al., 2018)



THE BENEFITS OF EXERCISE ON MENTAL HEALTH

@BELIEVEPHQ



REDUCED STRESS LEVELS



INCREASED WELL BEING



INCREASED ENERGY LEVELS



BOOSTS BRAIN POWER



REDUCED DEPRESSION



INCREASED CONFIDENCE



INCREASED MOOD



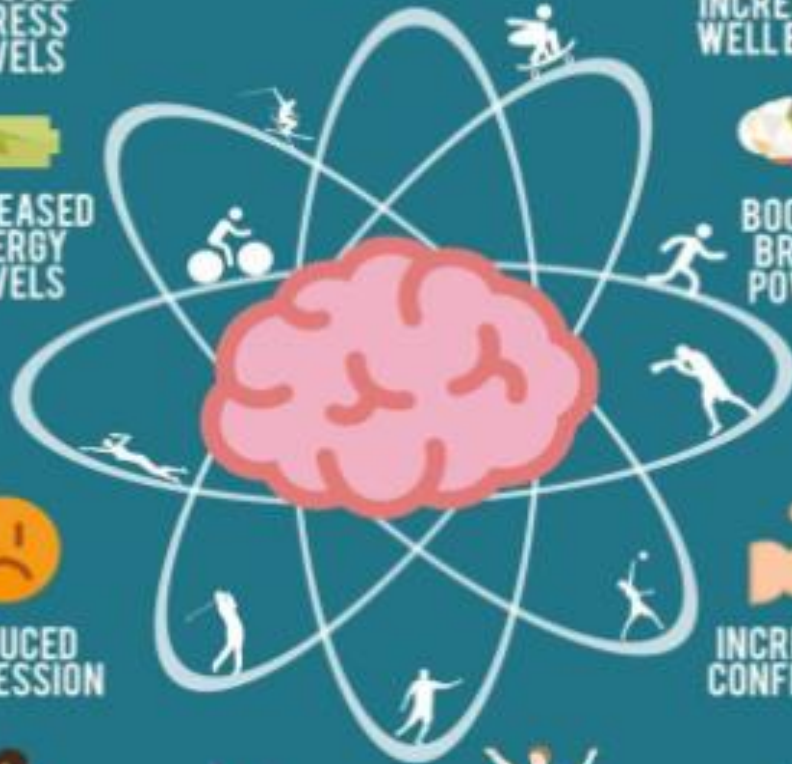
REDUCED ANXIETY



INCREASED SELF ESTEEM



IMPROVED SLEEP



Physical activity and mental health

Being physically active:



Protects against mental health problems



Is as effective as medication for mild to moderate anxiety and depression



Decreases depression in older adults



Improves self-esteem and cognitive function in young people



Playing sport reduces psychological distress by

34%

1-3 times a week



47%

4+ times a week



People who participate in sports clubs and organised recreational activity enjoy better mental health.

How Can You Help?

- Adults in a school environment may be the first to notice changes in a student's **attendance, behavior, and achievement.**
- **Good communication** between home and school can be the first defense in identifying when intervention is needed.
- Start by building **positive relationships** and having productive conversations with your students' families.
- Come from a place of **empathy and compassion** and keep the focus on working together to connect families with the best possible resources to help the student.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CAN HELP



Physical Activity is for
EVERYbody



Resources

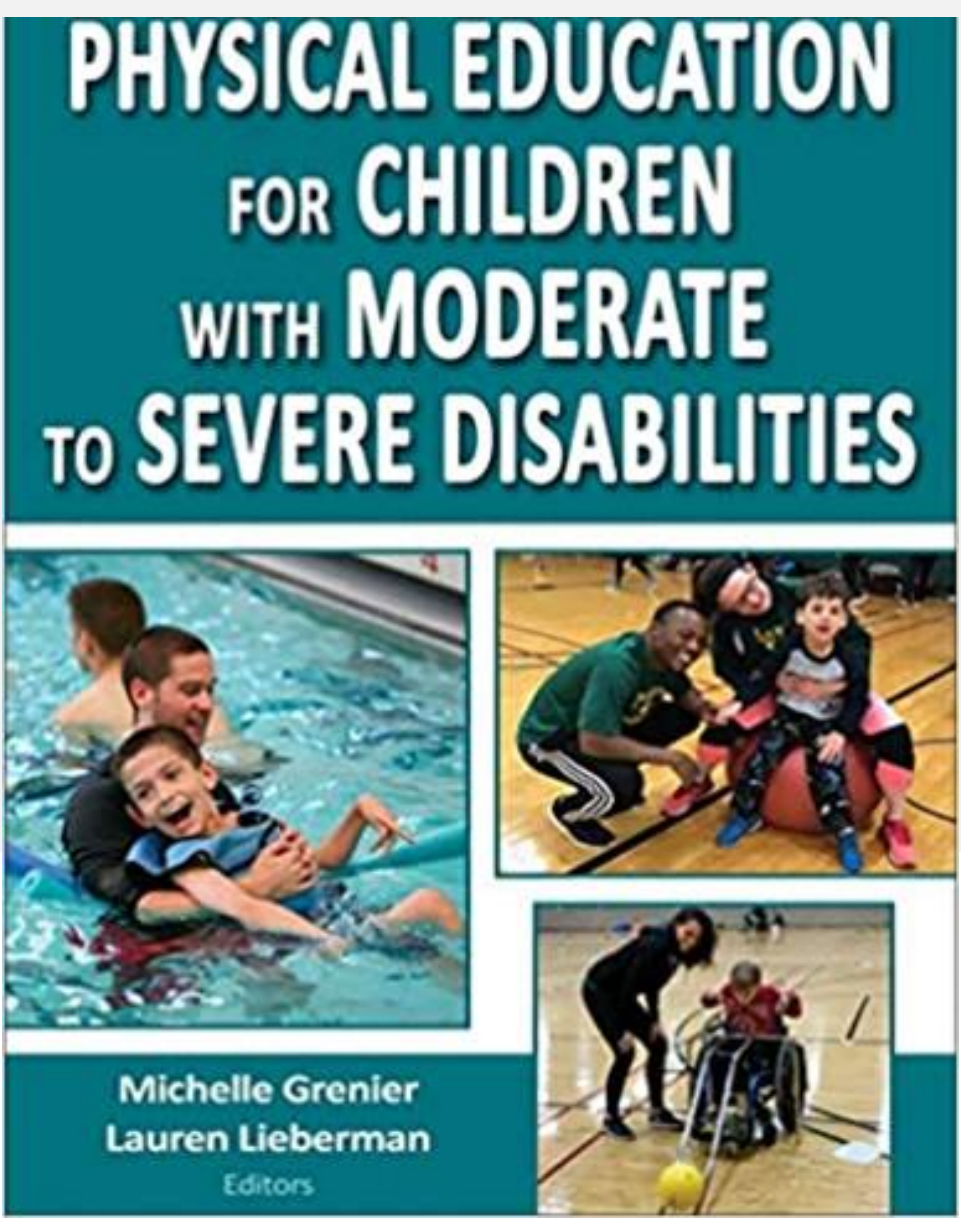
Books, Websites, Videos

Physical Education and Sports for People with Visual Impairments and Deafblindness: Foundations of Instruction

Lauren J. Lieberman, Paul E. Ponchillia,
and Susan V. Ponchillia



Physical Education and Sports for People with Visual Impairments and Deafblindness



Physical Education for
Children with
Moderate to Severe
Disabilities

Sport Inclusion Video Series

- Track
- Cross Country
- Swimming
- Basketball
- Soccer
- Wrestling
- Tennis
- Beep baseball and Kickball
- Volleyball

Supported by Lavelle Foundation

<http://www.campabilities.org/instructional-materials.html>





Outdoor Adventure Series

- Paddle Boarding
- Rock Climbing
- Kayaking
- Fishing
- Biking
- Hiking

<http://www.campabilities.org/instructional-materials.html>

Websites

- [The American Printing House for the Blind](#)
 - Books, products, equipment, and videos
 - www.aph.org/pe
- Possibilities: Recreation Experiences of Individuals who are Deafblind www.aph.org/pe/stories
- Camp Abilities-educational sports camps for children who are visually impaired or deafblind
 - Videos and web sites for other camps around the world
 - Tip sheets
 - www.campabilities.org (Instructional Materials)
- Perkins School for the Blind
 - Videos and books about how to teach children who are deafblind
 - www.Perkins.org
- United States Association for Blind Athletes-sport opportunities, adaptations for sports, and videos
 - www.usaba.org

Contact Information

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