

[IMAGE]

Brain Health Starts Early

By Editorial Staff

Think you only have to worry about brain health when you're older? Think again. Not only does a growing body of evidence suggest keeping your brain healthy during your adult years influences brain health in your senior years; new research findings also suggest brain health may begin much earlier in life with a simple activity: consistent exercise.

Researchers found that among more than 200 adults (ages 26-69) who completed questionnaires regarding their physical activity levels (specifically structured exercise, such as participating in athletics) during childhood and adulthood, and participated in several tests to evaluate cognitive function and other indicators of brain health, indicators of adult cognitive function were stronger among those who reported exercising as children (up until age 12). As noted in the study, "Exercise participation during childhood and adulthood was defined as continued participation in exercise, such as a structured physical activity program, for more than 1 year."

kids exercising - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Interestingly, this association was *not* noted in people who reporting exercising after age 12, suggesting early exposure to structured exercise – specifically before the start of one's teen years – may be a critical time frame for planting the seeds of lifetime brain health. As the study authors, writing on their findings in the research journal *NeuroImage*, conclude: "These findings suggest that early life exercise could contribute to life-long cognitive function and brain health."

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