**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

We have been discussing results from a recent science report titled ‘What science has shown can help young people with anxiety and depression: identifying and reviewing the 'active ingredients' of effective interventions’ [1]. The next part of this series that we will discuss is ‘Physical activity’.

What is physical activity?

Physical activity includes many types of movement, from those of daily living, to exercising, to even just moving one’s body to a state above rest [2].

Why is physical activity important?

Young people who experience anxiety and depression tend to be less physically active than those who don’t, so there is potential that improving physical activity may have other mental health benefits.

What did the research show?

The researchers conducted a big study where they integrated lots of data from other smaller studies. They found that there are promising results that being more physically active could help with symptoms of depression and anxiety in young people, to a level similar to other treatments such as psychological ones.

What did young people think about physical activity?

Some young people with anxiety and depression said it was important that young people had choice when it comes to the types of activities they choose to do, and how long they do them for.

How could a young person could try physical activity?

If you are feeling down or anxious, it might help to get up and move your body, either by going for a walk or run, or even by just doing the dishes or another activity.

Are there any other resources to help with planned exposure?

The following website has some good resources to help with being physically active, including yoga, dance and physical exercise: <https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/confronting-your-fears/>

**References**

1. Wellcome. *Report summary: What science has shown can help young people with anxiety and depression*. 2022; Available from: <https://wellcome.org/reports/what-science-has-shown-can-help-young-people-anxiety-and-depression>.

2. Bailey, A.P., et al., *Treating depression with physical activity in adolescents and young adults: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials.* Psychol Med, 2018. **48**(7): p. 1068-1083.