

The Faith Health Link



Sowing Seeds of Wellness

Loudon Avenue Christian Church

Disciples of Christ (DOC)

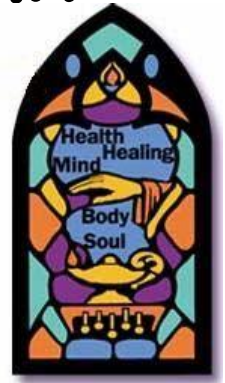
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Why Should I Take Good Care of Myself?

We are God's temple, His house. And if you are God's house, then you should be taking good care of yourself!"

If Jesus is living in your heart that means that your body is Jesus' home.
Take good care of Jesus' house!

This edition of The Faith Health Link Quarterly newsletter from The Faith Health Ministry highlights the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of our youth. To begin, consider Brian's story and reflect on whether he is caring for his body, which is referred to as God's temple—a place where God resides if you are saved.

Brian finds himself at soccer practice, feeling completely exhausted. Although this isn't their first season playing, after the previous season ended, Douglas' coach advised everyone to maintain healthy eating habits and stay active. Brian, however, spent the off-season lounging, watching TV, and snacking on cheese puffs. Now, running laps around the field is a struggle. While discussions at church often center on caring for our hearts and souls, we sometimes overlook the importance of caring for our bodies. After salvation, it is said that Jesus resides in our hearts, making us God's temple. As God's house, we should strive to take good care of ourselves. This includes choosing nutritious foods, exercising regularly, and avoiding harmful substances. God loves you and wants you to look after yourself.

*If Jesus is living in your heart that means that your body is Jesus' home.
Take good care of Jesus' house!*

Faith Health Ministry

Mission

Our mission is to develop a culturally, competent, Biblically informed, wellness ministry to meet the physical, mental, social-emotional, and spiritual needs through education, outreach and counseling that is affordable, accessible, and available.

Vision

The vision of Loudon Avenue Christian Church Faith Health Ministry is to address the needs of the congregation and community that promote wellness of the Body, Mind and Spirit, based upon the will of God in our lives.



*You are fearfully and
wonderfully made.
Psalm 139:14*

Eating a healthy diet is crucial for teens to support growth, development, energy, and long-term health. Physical Growth and Development



Adolescence is a period of rapid growth, including increases in height, weight, muscle mass, and bone density. Teens require **adequate**

calories, protein, vitamins, and minerals to support these changes, particularly iron for tissue growth and calcium for bone development. A balanced diet helps ensure that organs like the heart, brain, and liver develop properly and that teens maintain a healthy weight

Cognitive and Emotional Health

Nutrition directly affects **brain function, concentration, and mood**. Eating a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and protein-rich foods provides essential nutrients that support learning, memory, and emotional well-being. Skipping meals or consuming excessive processed foods can lead to fatigue, irritability, and difficulty focusing.

Long-Term Health Benefits

Establishing healthy eating habits during adolescence reduces the risk of **obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and certain cancers** later in life. Consuming a variety of nutrient-dense foods also supports a positive body image and helps prevent eating disorders.

Practical Tips for Healthy Eating

- Include **at least five portions of fruits and vegetables** daily, aiming for a variety of colors
- Base meals on **starchy foods** like wholegrain bread, pasta, rice, or potatoes.
- Include **protein sources** such as meat, fish, eggs, beans, and lentils.
- Consume **dairy or alternatives** for calcium and vitamin D.
- Limit **ultra-processed foods** high in sugar, salt, and unhealthy fats.
- Encourage **regular meals**, including breakfast, to maintain energy and concentration.

By following these guidelines, teens can support their **physical growth, mental performance, emotional health, and long-term well-being**, while developing habits that promote a healthy lifestyle into adulthood.

Youth fitness and why it is important



Exercise is one of the best ways for children and teens to stay healthy and maintain an optimal weight. According to the guidelines set by the American College of Sports Medicine,

children and teenagers ages 6-17 should be getting 60 minutes a day of moderate to vigorous activity, mostly aerobic exercise such as running, biking, or swimming.

It is also recommended to incorporate muscle and bone-strengthening exercises three times a week. A well-designed and supervised resistance training program can be safe and effective for children and adolescents.

Most healthy children and teens should not have restrictions on exercising if they have guidance to perform the exercises safely. However, anyone with medical issues or concerns should [consult with a doctor](#) before exercising.

Less time on the screen, more time moving
Besides the health benefits of exercise itself, getting more physical activity often means less screen time and less time spent being sedentary. Benefits of exercise include maintaining a healthy weight, better bone and heart health, and a reduced risk of depression. The more children exercise, the stronger their muscles and bones become, which can lessen the risk of injury.

Make it fun

Exercise for children and teens should be something they enjoy that is developmentally appropriate. Whether it be an organized sport, playing at the playground, gymnastics class, or playing tag at recess, the more your child enjoys it, the more they are likely

to do it! Finding activities that children and teens can do with friends or family can also encourage physical activity. Adolescents who are not used to physical activity should start with shorter, less challenging intervals of exercise and work up to longer, more vigorous activities.

Staying Healthy

Finding a physical activity that is fun, engaging, and sustainable is key to keeping kids active, which can help keep their weight in a healthy range. Kids can get their 60 minutes by biking with friends, swimming, playing hopscotch, dancing, or partaking in any physical activity they enjoy! Other exercises that build muscle and bone strength can also be very beneficial. Kids can grow stronger by including jumping, climbing, and lateral movements into their activities.

Finding an activity that your child enjoys and can do consistently can make fitting in exercise easy!

<https://www.valleyhealth.com/trending/youth-fitness-and-why-it-important>

What is oral Hygiene?



Oral hygiene is the practice of keeping your mouth clean and disease free. It involves brushing and flossing your teeth as well as visiting your dentist regularly for dental x-rays, exams, and cleaning.

An optimal dental care routine takes less than 10 minutes a day and prevents cavities, gum disease, and bad breath. It requires four key steps: flossing, rinsing, brushing, and tongue scraping. Consistency is critical—following this regimen daily ensures long-term oral health.

The 4-Step Daily Routine

1. Floss First

- ✓ **Why:** Flossing before brushing dislodges food particles and plaque from tight spaces.
- ✓ **How:** Use about 18 inches of floss, curving it into a “C” shape around each tooth and gliding it gently beneath the gum line.

2. Rinse

- ✓ **Why:** Rinsing washes away the loose debris pulled out by flossing.
- ✓ **How:** Swish with warm water or an ADA-approved, alcohol-free mouthwash.

3. Brush Last

- ✓ **Why:** Brushing last allows the fluoride in your toothpaste to coat your teeth and remain undisturbed.
- ✓ **How:** Brush for **two minutes** using a soft-bristled toothbrush (manual or electric) and fluoride toothpaste. Use gentle, circular motions at a 45-degree angle toward the gum line. Do this twice a day.

4. Scrape the Tongue

- ✓ **Why:** Your tongue harbors a significant amount of bacteria that cause bad breath.
- ✓ **How:** Gently use a tongue scraper or your toothbrush from the back of the tongue to the front.

Best Practices & Maintenance

- ✓ **Wait to brush after eating:** Avoid brushing for at least 30 minutes after consuming acidic foods or drinks to protect your tooth enamel.
- ✓ **Replace your tools:** Swap out your toothbrush or electric brush head every 3 to 4 months or sooner if the bristles become frayed.
- ✓ **Stay hydrated:** Drinking water throughout the day helps wash away food particles and boosts saliva production, which naturally protects your teeth.

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Professional Care

Routine Checkups: According to the [American Dental Association](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/treatments/16914-oral-hygiene), you should visit your dentist regularly for professional exams and cleanings. While many people need cleanings every 6 months, your dentist may recommend more frequent visits if you are prone to cavities or gum disease.

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/treatments/16914-oral-hygiene>

What is Bullying?

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that happens on purpose, is repeated over time, and involves a power imbalance (like being bigger, stronger, or more popular). It is designed to hurt, scare, or exclude someone, leaving them unable to easily defend themselves. It is not a one-time argument.

Three Key Features of Bullying

- 1. Intentionality:** The behavior is **done on purpose** to harm or upset someone.
- 2. Repetition:** The behavior **happens more than once** or has the potential to be repeated.
- 3. Power Imbalance:** The bully **uses strength**, popularity, or embarrassing information to control or harm others.

Types of Bullying

- 1. Physical:** Hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, or taking/damaging personal items.
- 2. Verbal:** Name-calling, teasing, threatening, or making inappropriate comments.
- 3. Social (Relational):** Spreading rumors, leaving someone out on purpose, or embarrassing someone in public.
- 4. Cyberbullying: (Internet)** Using technology (phones, social media, and computers) to send mean messages, share photos, or spread rumors.

What Bullying Is Not

While rough play, mutual fighting, or a one-time argument between friends are unkind or inappropriate, they are generally considered conflict rather than bullying.

The Effects of Bullying

- ✚ Bullying may have many harmful effects. People who are bullied may become depressed or anxious. They may feel physically ill. Their school performance may suffer. In extreme cases, they may try to harm themselves.
- ✚ People who bully others are affected as well. They are more likely to have mental health problems as adults. They may have trouble forming healthy relationships. They also are at a higher risk of being convicted of crimes.

How to Help

If a child is being bullied, they should tell a trusted adult immediately—like a teacher, counselor, or parent—and try to walk away to a safe place.



Loudon Avenue Christian Church Youth
You are Fearfully and Wonderfully Made!

Do you ever feel like a dud—a failure? Even though God knows everything about you, including the ways you mess up, he still loves you because he made you. . God loves us even when we mess up. God wants us all to do better. He gave us the Bible, our parents, and our pastors to teach us right from wrong, and he gives us his Holy Spirit to guide our lives. But God doesn't expect perfection. He knows we're going to mess up, and when we do, and he still loves us.

"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well." Psalm 139:14 (NIV)