

Dance boosts young girls' mental health

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Young girls can dance their way to better mental health. Symptoms like depression, stress, fatigue, and headaches are alleviated with regular dancing. This is shown in a study run by Anna Duberg, a physical therapist at Örebro University Hospital and a doctoral candidate at Örebro University in Sweden. Regular dance training can thereby be regarded as a strategy for preventing and treating low spirits and depression. Dance also brings enhanced self-esteem and a greater capacity to deal with everyday problems.

The dance study included 112 Swedish girls 13 to 19 years of age. On multiple occasions, these girls had gone to see the school nurse for symptoms such as [anxiety and depression](#), fatigue, headaches, and back, neck, and shoulder pain. In the study, 59 of the girls were randomized to a group that regularly danced together two days a week and 53 girls to a control group where the girls did not change their living habits.

The study results indicated that the girls in the dance group, despite all the challenges entailed by being a teenage girl, increased their self-esteem compared with the [control group](#). The positive effect persisted at follow-ups four and eight months after the dance training ended. Fully 91 percent of the girls in the dance group felt that the [dance](#) study had been a positive experience. In the long run this may also lead to a more healthful lifestyle.

More information: Influencing Self-rated Health Among Adolescent Girls With Dance Intervention A Randomized Controlled Trial is published in the journal *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*

(*JAMA*) and is available in its entirety at
[archpedi.jamanetwork.com/artic ... px?articleid=1390784](http://archpedi.jamanetwork.com/artic...px?articleid=1390784)

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