



Building Resilience

# Keeping active



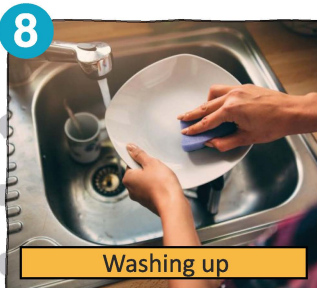
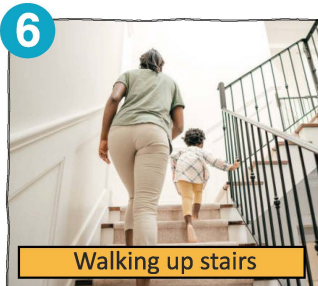
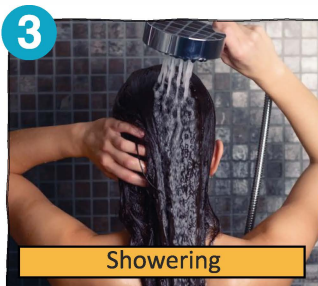
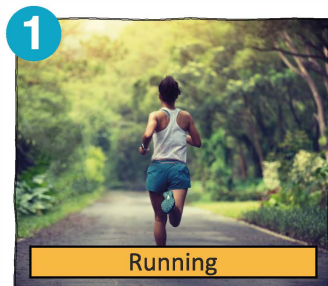
Mental Health  
Foundation

CITY  
BRIDGE  
TRUST



# What is 'keeping active'?

Which of the pictures below are of people keeping active?



# How did you get on?



Most people will have chosen the jogging, hiking and swimming as these are activities we tend to associate with being active and keeping fit. In fact all show people keeping active, but to different levels and intensities.

There are **four types of activity**.

**1. Activities of daily living:** activities done on a daily basis.

**2. Exercise:** purposeful activity carried out to improve health or fitness.

**3. Play:** unstructured activity that we do for fun or enjoyment

**4. Sport:** structured and competitive activities. Many activities fall into several categories.

# Examples of the four activity types



## **Activities of daily living:**

Bathing  
Showering  
Dressing  
Toileting  
Using the stairs  
Vacuuming  
Preparing meals  
Cleaning

## **Exercise:**

Jogging or running  
Fast walking  
Cycling  
Swimming  
Aerobics  
Zumba  
Hiking

## **Sport:**

Tennis  
Swimming  
Gymnastics  
Wrestling  
Martial arts  
Football  
Cycling  
Track and field

## **Play:**

Unstructured activity for fun  
and enjoyment

Write down the activities you do in the boxes you think they fit in.

**Activities of daily living**



**Exercise**

**Sport**

**Play**

# Exercise: what counts?

Adults should aim to be active for 20 minutes daily, adding up to 150 minutes a week (that's 2.5 hours).

For most people the easiest way to get moving is to make activity part of everyday life, like walking or cycling instead of using the car.

For activity to benefit your health, you need to be moving quick enough to raise your heart rate, breath faster and feel warmer.

When an activity requires you to work even harder, it's known as 'vigorous activity'. It causes you to breathe hard and fast, your heart rate to increase a lot and you to not be able to say more than a few words without pausing for breath. There is substantial evidence that vigorous activity brings you more health benefits than moderate activity.

# How exercise benefits physical health



**Good for the heart**  
Lowers the risk of coronary heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes.

There is strong scientific evidence that being physically active can help you lead a healthier and even happier life.

**Strengthens your bones**

Regular exercise keeps bones strong, reducing the risk of osteoarthritis and fractures as you get older.

**"If exercise were a pill, it would be one of the most cost effective drugs ever invented."**

*Dr. Cavill, Health Promotion Consultant*



Helps maintain a healthy weight and ability to preform everyday tasks with ease.

**Reduces the risk of some cancers**

People who exercise regularly have a lower risk of developing some cancers, such as colon and breast cancer.





# How exercise benefits mental health

## **Depression**

Studies have shown that exercise can help treat mild depression.

Exercise promotes changes and activity in the brain which releases powerful chemicals called endorphins. They energise you and make you feel good.

## **Anxiety**

Exercise is a natural anti-anxiety treatment.

**Exercise relieves tension and stress and boosts energy.**

## **Stress**

Physical activity relaxes muscles and relieves tension in the body.



## **PTSD**

Evidence suggests that exercise can help with managing the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.

## **ADHD**

Exercise improves concentration, motivation, memory and mood.

**Physical activity boosts the chemicals in the brain that help with focus and attention.**

So we all understand that keeping active is important and good for our overall health and wellbeing.

But it is easier said than done, isn't it?

Especially when you're on benefits, living in temporary accommodation, homeless or lacking motivation.

**“We need expensive running trainers, gym memberships and money”**

**“I’ve already got enough to worry about, keeping fit is the last thing on my mind!”**



**Do you agree with these statements? What do you think gets in the way of keeping fit and active?**

Write your answers below.

Many who try to increase their activity fail or give up.

Some research suggests that 80% of people who join the gym in January as a new year resolution will have quit within five months.

So it would seem that money, time and circumstances aren't always what's holding us back.

It could be motivation and willpower, but perhaps it's something

## Discussion

Do we aim too high and have unreasonable expectations of ourselves?



Does keeping fit always have to involve the gym?



**Do you agree with these statements?**

**What do you think gets in the way of keeping fit and active?**

Write your answers below.

Have a look at the examples in the activities of 'daily living' section. Could any of them be moved into the exercise, or other sections? An example might be walking to the shops. If walked a little faster and perhaps to a shop further away, the walk could turn into a moderate intensity activity.

There are lots of things we do on a daily basis that could increase our fitness, such as taking the stairs instead of the lift, walking instead of getting the bus. Keep this in mind whilst exploring what you do on a day-to-day basis.

It's also important to remember that sometimes we might just want to do something that's fun, such as having a kick about, or going for a cycle ride. These activities will help your fitness and wellbeing.

If you haven't been active for a while, you can put yourself at risk of injury or accidents to just start exercising intensely.

It's important to start small and make sure your body is functioning as it should.

**It's a good idea to book a GP check up to test your blood pressure, heart rate and blood sugars.**

**What other body parts might need a check up?**



## Healthy feet

It's important to look after your feet. Never ignore foot pain, which can be caused by common problems such as ingrowing toenails and infections. Wash and dry your feet regularly and cut your toenails, or book a chiropodist appointment.



## Teeth and gums

When our heart rate increases, we can experience pain in our teeth if we have cavities or infections. This is caused by blood flowing into the inflamed areas. Brush your teeth twice a day and book a dentist appointment for a check up.



## Eye health

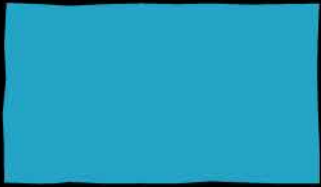
Sometimes we may experience headaches and tiredness if we can't see properly. Our eyes can also be affected by Diabetes and Glaucoma. Book an eye test at the opticians for a check up. See the Groundswell health action updates for more information: [groundswell.org.uk/health-guides](https://groundswell.org.uk/health-guides)



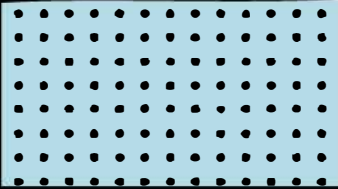
## Homeless health

Groundswell Homeless Health Peer Advocates work to improve the health of people experiencing homelessness.

## Homeless Health Peer Advocates will help you get your health problems sorted by:

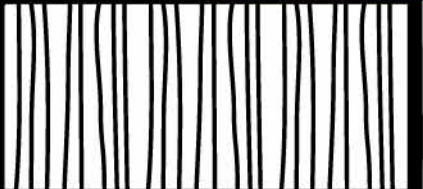


1 Helping you make health appointments



2 Going with you to health appointments

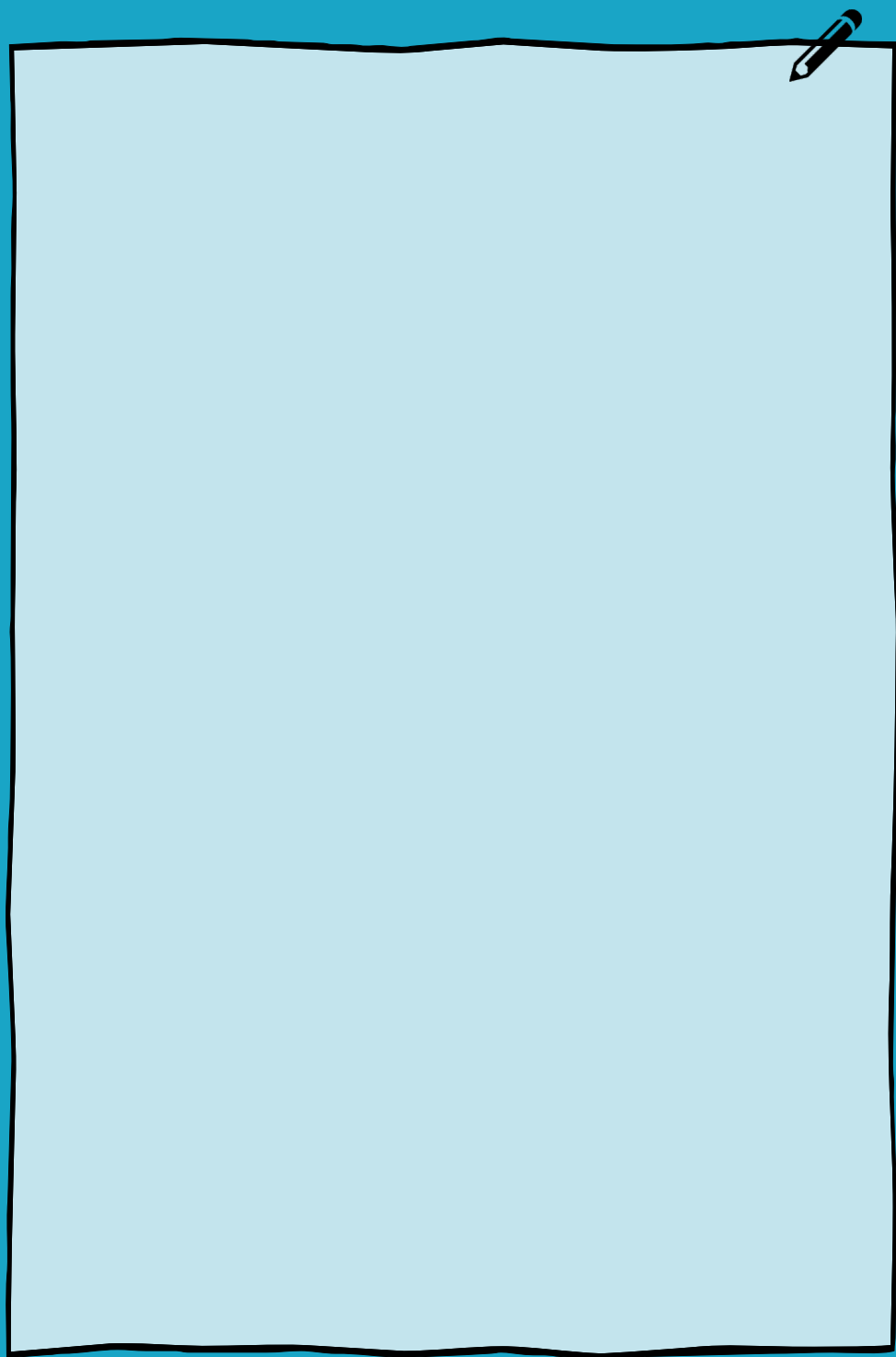
3 Supporting you to have your say about the type of health care you get



4 Paying for your travel fares if needed

5 Supporting you to make sense of health jargon and treatment options

Homeless Health Peer Advocates all have personal experience of homelessness and have been trained by Groundswell. They are available in many London boroughs and some other areas of the country. Ask a support worker whether they are available in your area. More information including how to refer: [groundswell.org.uk/what-we-do/homeless-health-peer-advocacy/](https://groundswell.org.uk/what-we-do/homeless-health-peer-advocacy/)



**Groundswell**  
Out of homelessness



020 7725 2851



[www.groundswell.org.uk](http://www.groundswell.org.uk)