

An acute bout of moderate-intensity exercise improves mood and self-esteem and reduces anxiety, which may also play a role in reducing perceived mental stress to a cognitive stress task after exercise.

Of course, walking to school isn't the only way for kids to get moving. But it can be one of the simplest -- and one of the cheapest. The walk to school is also one obvious example of an American pastime that we simply don't engage in as often as we used to. Today just 13% of U.S. kids regularly walk to school, according to the federal Department of Transportation, down from roughly half of all kids in the 1960s. Even among kids who live within a mile of school, more children today get a ride each morning than walk.

So, parents, if you do live in an area where it's safe for children to walk the streets, don't be afraid to let (or even make) your kids trek to school. And don't forget, either, that there's plenty of evidence to support the stress-busting benefits of exercise for adults as well. You wouldn't let a family dog stay indoors all day without getting out for a walk now and then. Allow yourself some time to get out of the house and the office once in a while too.



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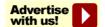
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