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## Why employers should incorporate physical activity to improve workplace mental health

Workplace mental health is continuously in the spotlight, and this [World Mental Health Day](#), Exercise Right is urging employers to consider the value of exercise and physical activity to boost workplace mental health.

“The focus on workplace mental health is increasing, and rightly so,” says Accredited Exercise Physiologist, Jacinta Brinsley.

“Almost half of all Australians will experience a mental illness in their lifetime, with 1 in 5 adults affected every year, so it’s an issue that’s likely to affect most workplaces and their employees.”

Research shows that [1 in 5 Australians](#) has taken time off work in the past 12 months because they felt stressed, anxious, depressed or mentally unhealthy. The financial toll on companies and organisations adds up, with mental health conditions estimated to cost the Australian business over [\\$10 billion dollars](#) every year.

In response to this, a large majority of business owners and organisational leaders are starting to drive policies and practices that promote a positive culture and support mental health in the workplace.

“A really simple way to establish and maintain positive workplace mental health is through physical activity interventions. Building physical activity into workplace culture helps with relationship building and improving social cohesion,” says Jacinta.

“It can also boost work performance by improving cognition, mental flexibility and memory, whilst reducing stress and anxiety. Research also shows that as little as one hour of exercise a week can help to protect against depression.”

This World Mental Health Day, we’re urging Australian workplaces to not only talk about mental health and to break down the stigma attached, but to be proactive in their approach by promoting active workplaces.

There are easy ways for management to introduce more physical activity in the workplace, including:

- Encouraging walking or stand up meetings
- Allow flexible work hours to provide employees the chance to make time for physical activity
- Educate staff as to the benefits of a healthy lifestyle
- Invest in standing desks

Exercise Right offers a [range of resources](#) to help employees understand how to be more active in their respective industry.



# MEDIA RELEASE

We also encourage business to get in touch with their local accredited exercise professional to offer education and/or physical activity sessions to their staff. Exercise & Sports Science Australia (ESSA) [offer a search function](#) to help companies find an appropriately qualified expert in their area.

For more tips on being active at work, visit [exerciseright.com.au](http://exerciseright.com.au).

**For more information:**

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## About Exercise Right

Exercise Right is the public awareness vehicle of Exercise & Sports Science Australia (ESSA). Exercise Right aims to inspire and educate all Australians to be healthier and more active. Exercise Right is expertly compiled by professionals and thought leaders in the field, making it a trusted source of information amongst consumers.

## About Exercise & Sports Science Australia (ESSA)

Exercise & Sports Science Australia (ESSA) is the peak professional body for exercise and sports science in Australia. ESSA provides national leadership and advocacy on key issues and supports its members and the community through fostering excellence in professional practice, education and training, and research.