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Live longer, healthier – new video highlights health benefits of City recreation programs

From pain relief to skydiving – older adults consistently say better physical and mental health is what they get from the City’s fitness classes at the Sportsplex and Community Centre.

In *Be Fit for Life*, a new video that highlights the health benefits of recreation programs, six Campbell River residents share their stories. One features Diane Work, a Fit for Life participant who lived in pain for years, was depressed and didn’t feel like moving.

“Coming (to class) on a regular basis, the pain started to dissipate, and I have small flare ups but never any large ones. I have been able to do so many amazing things. Like last year, for my birthday, I went sky diving with my son!” she says.

The video project showcases how Fit For Health, Fit for Life and the Total Body Fit classes can help older adults improve and maintain physical health, create social connections and get pain relief.

“Video interviews told story after story about how attending recreation classes helped participants heal from depression, recover from surgery, make new friends and continue to do the things they love to do,” says recreation program coordinator Linda Nagle. “Sharing these personal experiences backs up the research that clearly shows that exercise and physical activity are the key to living longer, healthier and more independently. Plus, the strong social connections that come with social activity increase happiness.”

Along with Diane Work, the City thanks the other participants who shared their health journey in this video: Dianne Dennis, Hazel Lawrence, Magda Lussin, Dianne Nelson and Ken Nowoselski.

Hear all the stories in the *Be Fit for Life* video through the City of Campbell River You Tube Channel, on the City website www.campbellriver.ca/fit-for-life or on Facebook.

For more information on the Recreation and Culture fitness classes go to www.campbellriver.ca/recreationguide

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Background:

From: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/healthy-living/physical-activity/benefits-physical-activity.html>

- Social isolation, particularly among seniors, is a factor in the development of chronic illness and is as strong a factor in early death as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.
- By 2031, Statistics Canada indicate that almost 25 per cent of British Columbia’s population will be over the age of 65 (close to 1.5 million residents).
- For adults (18 to 64 years):
 - Physical activity has been shown to reduce the risk of more than 25 chronic conditions, including coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension, breast cancer, colon cancer, Type 2 diabetes and osteoporosis.
 - Regular physical activity and higher levels of fitness allow daily tasks to be accomplished with greater ease and comfort and with less fatigue.
 - Research shows that as much as half the functional decline between the ages of 30 and 70 is due to inactivity rather than aging.