



Life Long Learning: A Boost at Any Age

Every fall the “Back to School” theme dominates promotional sales, work and personal schedules. As parents and grandparents we approach and finally settle into our routines by the beginning of October after sending college students to their future or watching as the youngest in our families take that all important first school bus ride.

But new experiences and learning are not just for the young. In fact, research proves that keeping your mind active throughout life by engaging in learning situations will help you maintain a healthy brain. Wikipedia defines this process as **Life Long Learning (LLL)** and provides a very detailed description of just what this term means. In a nutshell, it’s learning by engaging in new activities and keeping your mind and body active at any age!

Experts such as the *Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives*, human resource gurus and educators list the benefits of **LLL** and its effects on our overall health and wellness. *The Alliance*, a nonprofit organization of more than 250 leading neuroscientists, have participated in the AARP Stay Sharp program and are committed to advancing public awareness about brain research and helping to dispel all too familiar cliché that you “can’t teach an old dog new tricks.”

Medical technology has greatly advanced what scientists have learned about the effects of aging on the brain. We know that these changes vary greatly from person to person and are influenced by many factors. And, we also know that by learning new skills you can increase your confidence, build on skills you already have, and enjoy a feeling of accomplishment.

Here are a few tips to keep your brain healthy and ready for your **Life Long Learning!**

- Exercise your mind and body regularly; learn new things and stay involved.
- Stay socially involved with family and friends to keep your mind stimulated.
- Maintain control of your life, which leads to a positive attitude.
- Eat brain healthy foods, including those rich in antioxidants and omega-3 fatty acids.
- Keep an eye on your weight, blood pressure, cholesterol and blood glucose.
- Get enough sleep.
- Schedule regular check-ups with your doctor and report any sudden mental/memory changes you have experienced.
- Learn about any potential effects of your medication and talk to your physician about any possible drug interactions that could affect your memory.

For more information about **Life Long Learning**, brain health or the AARP Staying Sharp program, visit http://www.aarpmagazine.org/health/stay_sharp_longer.html.

To learn more about the resources available in your community, contact Dana O’Donnell R.N., Director of Liberty at Home, at 215-643-6496 or visit www.libertyathome.org.