

California Launches First Annual California Moves for Physical & Mental Fitness Month

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA , UNITED STATES, May 2, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- To help increase the health and wellness of more than 40 million Californians, chronic disease organizations, mental health advocates, the fitness industry and policymakers today came together at the State Capitol to kick off California's first annual California Moves for Physical and Mental Fitness

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*California First Partner
Jennifer Siebel Newsom*

Month. Joined by special guest First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom, the event highlighted the importance of movement for the overall health and well-being of all Californians.

“Regular exercise has been proven to decrease chronic illness and improve mental well-being,” said Francesca Schuler, president of the California Fitness Alliance. “We are so pleased to work with the First Partner and the state to make sure more Californians are aware of this and can access ways to get fit and healthy.”

In California, [40% of adults](#) report having at least one of five chronic conditions including high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes or asthma. And according to the Kaiser Family Foundation, in 2021 more than 32% of adults reported symptoms of anxiety or depression. Regular exercise can help prevent and alleviate these conditions. Research shows that by incorporating more exercise and making other healthier lifestyle changes, it is possible to prevent up to 80% of heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes, and more than 30% of cancers. And a [UCLA study](#) has shown that fitness can greatly improve psychological distress, with regular exercise reducing poor mental health days by more than 40%.

“Physical and mental health are inextricably linked and both are essential for our well-being. By helping Californians of all ages establish sustainable, healthy habits such as daily movement and mindfulness practices, we can reduce chronic disease and improve their overall quality of life,” said California First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom. “As co-chair of the Governor’s Advisory Council on Physical Fitness and Mental Well-Being, I am so excited to launch our Move Your Body, Calm Your Mind campaign (#MoveYourBodyCalmYourMind), and continue our partnership with Californians to lead healthier, happier lives.”

The event included a health and fitness fair where attendees were educated about and engaged

with proactive activities that – as part of a daily routine – can improve physical and mental health and help avoid and alleviate chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and depression, including yoga, dance, Zumba and exercises for children.

“As a former collegiate athlete and as someone who strives to be physically active in my day-to-day life, I can personally attest to the value of regular physical activity,” said Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin (D-Thousand Oaks), who introduced [ACR-55](#), declaring the month of May 2023 as California Moves for Physical and Mental Fitness Month. “The impact that physical activity can have on individual’s overall well-being is invaluable, and we should encourage all Californians to pursue regular physical activity in a way that is accessible to them. During this month we should all make a special effort to get our family, friends, and neighbors, into some form of physical activity.”

The event also highlighted pending legislation that will help bring better physical and mental health to underserved Californians. If passed, Assembly Bill 1338 (AB 1338), authored by Assemblymember Cottie Petrie-Norris (D-Irvine), will cover the cost of fitness memberships for Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

“I’m proud to help kick off California Moves Month! Access to quality fitness, recreational, and mental health services is key to a healthy California and should be available to all, regardless of income or zip code. That’s why I have introduced AB 1338, a bill that will expand access to fitness, physical activity, and recreational sports memberships and programs for our state’s most vulnerable population,” said Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris (D-Irvine). “Many private insurers already cover some portion of gym memberships nationwide. The reason is simple – access to fitness and wellness services improves physical and mental health, improves long term health outcomes, and lowers cost of care. It’s a win-win.”

By providing a safe and consistent place for more Californians to exercise, AB 1338 will help advance health equity, improve quality of life, and save on long-term health care costs for millions of Californians. A 1% reduction in weight, blood pressure, glucose and cholesterol risk factors through increased exercise would save \$83 to \$103 annually in medical costs per person. This could mean a cost savings for California taxpayers of up to \$135 million per year.

California Moves (CA Moves)

California Moves supports the mission of the Governor’s Advisory Council on Physical Fitness and Mental Well-Being to promote the physical fitness and mental well-being of ALL Californians at all ages. Learn more by visiting www.california-moves.org.

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