

DAILY EXPERIENCES AND HEALTH STUDY

Hello!



We have officially completed the first year of our Daily Experiences and Health Study! Welcome and thank you to new participants for joining the study as well as our returning participants for your continued involvement.

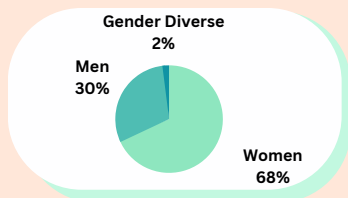
What this newsletter will cover:

1. Study Updates
2. Lab Member Spotlights
3. Five Evidence-Based Tips for Building Health Habits

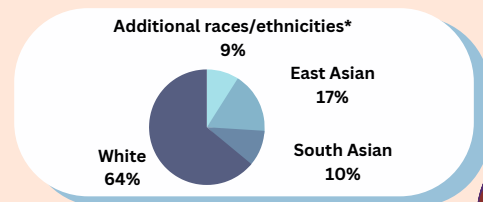
UPDATES FROM THE STUDY

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

GENDER



SELF-IDENTIFIED RACES/ETHNICITIES



AGE

People in our study are aged between **25 to 88 years** old, with the **average age around 47 years** old

*Additional races/ethnicities in our study include Egyptian, Eurasian, Jewish, Latin American, Métis, Southeast Asian, and West Asian (in alphabetical order)



DAILY EXPERIENCES



STRESSFUL EVENTS

POSTIVE EVENTS



HEALTH BEHAVIOURS

On average, our participants reported about **1 stressful event per day**, although this varies from person to person.

Our participants also report **1-2 positive events per day**.

On average, people in our study sleep **7.5 hours per night** and engage in **moderate-vigorous physical activity for around 24 minutes per day**.

LAB MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS



American Psychosomatic Society Conference (APS)

Our lab will be presenting at the APS conference about daily stress, sleep, expectations of daily events, and cognitive health.



Patrick K.
Graduate Student

Patrick has recently started a new job as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Developmental Psychology at Tilburg University in the Netherlands. In this new role, he studies how positive aspects of daily life support people during life transitions in older adulthood (e.g., becoming a grandparent, retirement).



Nicole S.
Graduate Student

Nikki successfully defended her master's thesis on physical activity and cognitive functioning a few months ago. For her PhD work, she will be focusing on physical activity as a buffer against stress-related decline in cognition.

5 EVIDENCE-BASED TIPS FOR BUILDING HEALTH HABITS

Research has shown that the beginning of the year is a time when many people have renewed commitments to goals. We would like to share five evidence-based tips to help you with changing and maintaining health-promoting behaviours.

1

Choose behaviours that have personal value or are rewarding to you

- Habits that are meaningful and rewarding to you (such as stress reduction) are much easier and more rewarding to initiate and maintain.

Keller et al. (2021). Habit formation following routine-based versus time-based cue planning: A randomized controlled trial. *British journal of health psychology*, 26(3), 807-824. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjhp.12504>



Start small and build up

- Small behaviour changes are easier to initiate and maintain than large ones. If you have a larger goal, try breaking it up into smaller achievable steps to build momentum.
- For example, some studies have found that short bursts of exercise (e.g., 2-5 minutes) throughout the day are helpful for building exercise habits.

Godinho, C et al. (2014). Will is not enough: Coping planning and action control as mediators in the prediction of fruit and vegetable intake. *British Journal of Health Psychology*, 19(4), 856-870. doi:10.1111/bjhp.12084.



2

3

Ground your habit in a specific routine

- Try pairing a habit with a specific part of your schedule. Your body will naturally get used to this pattern over time, which will help solidify this in your routine.
- Research studying the formation of fruit consumption habits found that when people set up a routine and ate fruit after a specific meal in a day, they successfully consumed fruit more frequently.

Diefenbacher, S et al. (2022). Habit formation in context: Context-specific and context-free measures for tracking fruit consumption habit formation and behaviour. *British Journal of Health Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjhp.12637>



Everything is better with a friend

- Friends can provide encouragement and motivate you to stick to your new habit.
- By having a support network and people around you who also know about your goal, they can help you stay accountable and monitor your progress with you.

Gruber, K. J. (2008). Social support for exercise and dietary habits among college students. *Adolescence*, 43(171), 557.



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5

Hope for the best, prepare for the worst

- Everyone encounters challenges. Identify any potential barriers that will stop you from successfully maintaining a new habit and make plans to overcome them.
- For example, if you struggle with exercising on your own, consider signing up for group fitness sessions or arranging to meet with friends for walks.

Kilb, M., & Labudek, S. (2022). Effects of behavioral performance, intrinsic reward value, and context stability on the formation of a higher-order nutrition habit: an intensive longitudinal diary study. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, 19(1), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12966-022-01343-8>

