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Summertime Traveling: For Fun and For Health

By Henna Hundal



Express Yourself! Teen Radio Reporter and Be the Star You Are! volunteer, Henna Hundal, is a 12th grader on a mission to empower the younger generation to lead active, healthy lives.

traveling could actually have healthy effects on your body," she says. "I'll definitely be keeping that in mind when I travel this summer." Junior Sami R. is equally amazed by the facts. "Preventing heart attacks is a huge concern in our country right now, and everyone's trying to find solutions," she notes. "It's neat that traveling might be one of the answers."

But that's not all. The poll results further suggest that traveling has the capacity to brighten an individual's overall mood, as 86 percent of the people from the survey who travel feel content with their prospects in life, as opposed to the 75 percent of non-travelers who feel the same way. Some researchers speculate that the spontaneity inherent in vacations nurtures a latent side of oneself and expands one's mind to take on new challenges.

Junior Andrew B. recognizes the strong correlation between going on trips and emotional well-being in his own life. "I always feel better after I take a break from my normal life and go somewhere fun," he says. "It's cool that there's actual science that supports this because I've personally felt these effects for a long time." Freshman Tia R. is also able to understand the beneficial ramifications of excursions. "When I'm on vacation I've never really thought about this stuff, but looking back I can see how it plays a role," she admits. "It's like, who isn't going to just feel happier when you get to try out new things?"

Clearly, if components of both physical and mental health are boosted through traveling, then no doubt this poll gives us more reason to treat ourselves to some form of respite. In the summertime in particular, don't be afraid to escape the mundane daily routine for the chance to embrace fresh experiences. The odds say, not only will you find yourself having a fabulous time, but you'll be reaping some considerable health benefits as well.

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Around this time of year, the days of endless sunshine and cool summer breezes infuse a new type of energy in us. We get a little more invigorated, adventurous, and ready to leave our comfort zones. Whether it consists of taking small day trips or going on grand vacations, some form of traveling is bound to be on many folks' agenda this summer. Traveling is a great diversion, after all. But did you know vacations are healthy for you?

In December of last year, the U.S. Travel Association, in conjunction with the Global Commission on Aging and the Transamerica Center for Retirement Studies, conducted a comprehensive poll, which found that women who vacation at minimum twice a year have a notably lower risk of developing a heart attack or coronary death compared with women who travel less frequently. In addition, the results suggest that men who don't opt to travel at least once a year have a 30 percent increased chance of death from heart disease.

These statistics indicating a solid link between travel and wellness surprised high school sophomore Emma T. "I wasn't aware before that

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