

ВСЕРОССИЙСКАЯ ОЛИМПИАДА ШКОЛЬНИКОВ ПО АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ
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9-11 класс

Listening (Script)

Part 1

Good morning. Today's lecture is about friendship and health, and specifically the health benefits of friendship. We all like spending time with friends and usually that puts us in a good mood, which is beneficial to our health. It's clear that this is understood by many people because they experience it daily. There may be times when we have disagreements with our friends but overall, our time spent with friends is positive.

In fact, there is research which demonstrates the health benefits of friendship and there's a very good reason why it's studied by health professionals. Our friends are connected to so many aspects of our lives - from our family to our work life and free time activities. This makes friendship unique and ideal to study. Doctors and researchers can analyse the effects of friendship on all these different areas. What they've noticed in various studies is how closely related friendship and well-being are.

So, I'm going to explain some of these studies in more detail so that you can understand the connection between friendship and health more thoroughly. Many of them have found that having strong friendships can improve people's overall health. One of the biggest issues in our lives besides serious illness is stress, which can be caused by many factors in our lives. However, people with strong friendships tend to be able to cope with stressful events more easily. According to one study, this is a result of people talking to their friends about their problems, which can reduce the amount of stress in their lives. It seems that people who do this are less likely to suffer from all sorts of health problems from the common cold to more serious illnesses.

It is important to point out though, that friendship is different for everyone. While some people like to have a lot of friends or one large group of friends that all know each other, for other people who are more introverted, having a few close friends is preferable. What does seem to be key for most people is to maintain regular contact with their friends. A study of over 300,000 people around the world found that an active social life was more important than exercise for keeping people healthy. The researchers also suggested that having an active social life was as important as giving up smoking for helping people to improve their health.

These studies are useful because they can enable doctors to better understand how to diagnose patients. If we know that socialising with friends or support groups can be used as a way to prevent

or reduce health issues then doctors are better equipped to discuss lifestyle changes with their patients. Friendship and social support can be used in addition to medication and could result in better outcomes for the individual as well as for society as a whole.

This connection between friendship and lifestyle habits has been widely researched in recent years. In particular, scientists have studied how friends often influence each other's healthy living behaviour. For example, if someone is trying to exercise or eat more healthily, having sporty or vegetarian friends can increase their likelihood of success because they have better role models.

Another aspect of this which is interesting is the role of technology and online social communities. Nowadays, there are a large number of online forums which offer support to all sorts of groups of people who share the same hobbies or interests. These online communities are important for two reasons. Firstly, they enable people to increase the number of friends they interact with, but more importantly, they help people who are less able to get out and meet others. So, we can see how technology and social media can contribute to the role of friendship in healthcare. Okay, so those are some of the key points and research.

Part 2

Now, I'd like to move on and talk about friendship in relation to mental health. Before we look at some of the key points, I'd like to briefly talk about how psychologists believe that friendship is an integral part of our development from children into adults.

As children, we make friends based on shared time, space and activities with other children. It's important for children to understand that sharing is a key skill in our relationships with others. In addition, it's interesting to note that from an early age, children will automatically demonstrate a desire to be friends with other children who have the same interests as them, but also those who are kind. This attitude and approach continue into adulthood too. Adults often have friends that are interested in the same hobbies so that they can have fun together. Sharing activities with friends boosts our confidence in our abilities to do things well and work with others.

It's therefore not surprising that friendships play an important role in promoting good mental health in adulthood. As I mentioned earlier, we know that people with stable, supportive friendship networks in their lives are more likely to manage stress more effectively. I'd like to finish by saying that people don't always need to meet face-to-face to benefit from friendship. Long distance friendships via email or social media are just as good at supporting our mental health.

