

# Scientists say the ocean makes people happier

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A boy plays with a ball on a beach in Cancun, Mexico, Aug. 14, 2015. REUTERS/Edgard Garrido

Everyone knows a trip to the ocean is fun. We can splash in the water. We can play in the sand. Being by the water makes you feel happy.

The ocean is not just fun. Scientists say it is good for you too.

## **Keeping Brains Healthy**

The ocean is good for your mental health.

A person with good mental health is happy most of the time. They do not get angry or sad that much. They are not afraid of things all the time.

Many people have some kind of mental illness. They feel unhappy, or angry. They are afraid of things they do not need to be afraid of.

## **Studying Happiness In Wellington, New Zealand**

Scientists wanted to find out if living by the ocean makes people happier. They studied the city of Wellington, New Zealand. Wellington is next to the Pacific Ocean.

Wellington is a big city. Only some people live near the ocean. The scientists wanted to see if those people had better mental health.

It turns out they do. They are happier than people in other parts of the city.

They do not even have to live right on the ocean. Just seeing the ocean from their house makes them mentally healthier.

### **What Is So Special About The Ocean?**

The scientists are still not sure why the ocean is so healthy. Is it something about water?

If so, living by a large lake should be just as good for you. The scientists do not know if it is. They have not tested that.

Maybe water is not what makes the ocean so healthy.

It could be the "sound of waves," the scientists said. It could be "the smell of air passing over the ocean." Maybe those things make people feel calmer and happier.

### **Time For A Vacation**

The scientists say cities should build more houses near the water. They say doing that could help. It might make more people mentally healthy.

Just taking a trip to the beach could help too. It would be both fun and healthy.

## Quiz

- 1 Which sentence BEST states a main idea of the entire article?
- (A) The sounds and smells of the ocean usually make people feel calm and happy.
  - (B) In Wellington, New Zealand, the people who live near the ocean are the healthiest in the city.
  - (C) A new study shows that living near the ocean is good for people's mental health.
  - (D) To help people have better mental health, cities need to build more houses by the ocean.
- 2 Read the section "Studying Happiness In Wellington, New Zealand." What is this section mostly about?
- (A) Scientists studied happiness in a city in New Zealand that is next to the Pacific Ocean.
  - (B) People living near the ocean in Wellington are happier than those living in other parts of the city.
  - (C) People living in the city of Wellington are happier than people in other parts of New Zealand.
  - (D) People who live right next to the ocean are happier than people who can only see the ocean from their house.
- 3 Read the section "Keeping Brains Healthy." Then fill in the blank in the sentence below.
- Based on the article, a person with good "mental health" .....
- (A) usually feels calm and happy
  - (B) does not get sick very often
  - (C) never gets scared or angry
  - (D) likes to have fun and relax

- 4 Read this paragraph from the section "What Is So Special About The Ocean?"

*If so, living by a large lake should be just as good for you. The scientists do not know if it is. They have not tested that.*

What does the word "tested" mean in the paragraph above?

- (A) quizzed
- (B) decided
- (C) wondered
- (D) studied