



Importance of physical education in today's schools

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Abstract

Being physically active is one of the most important steps to being healthy. Schools are an ideal setting for teaching youth how to adopt and maintain a healthy, active lifestyle. Schools can help youth learn how to be physically active for a lifetime. Participation in regular physical activity promotes normal growth and development by helping youth build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints. There are various factors which are diminishing the interest of students in physical education activities. Although the physical education is being taught as a part of curriculum in all the schools but lack of adequate time and trained teachers, good facilities are responsible for little interest in this field. Physical Education should practically be considered as a part of general education in schools.

Keywords: physical education, students, health, schools, physical activity

Introduction

There are many benefits physical education provides today's students and society. Within a school setting, a physical education program can serve society in many ways if implemented and utilized appropriately. There are many areas physical education can serve and positively affect students and society. One is overall physical fitness. For example, physical education helps students and society improve skill-related components such as speed, agility, reaction time, balance, coordination, and basic movement patterns. Physical education helps students and society improve upon are strength, endurance, flexibility, and cardiovascular/respiratory activities. The American Heart Association (AHA, 2010) recommends that if children and adolescents want to increase their life expectancies, they need to eat healthier and become physically active. Doing those two things will help children and adolescents defend against certain diseases and other health problems. Hence, the question: why is there little emphasis on the importance of physical education in today's schools.

According to the latest Shape of the Nation Report (NASPE, 2012), both the National Association of Sport and Physical Education and the American Heart Association believe physical activity achieved through participation in physical education improves one's overall well-being and is one of the best preventers of significant health problems linked to many chronic diseases (e.g., obesity, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol). No other school subject has the potential to fulfill these health needs. If schools are to make a positive impact on our children's' health now and in the future, physical education must be present in schools, be taught by qualified teachers, and focus on healthy behaviors

The Purpose of the Study

- To study characteristics of an effective physical Education.
- To study importance of physical education in school level for students.

Why Should Schools Provide Physical Activity Programs

- Youth who are physically active get physical and mental health benefits.
- Comprehensive school-based physical activity programs can help youth meet most of their physical activity needs.
- School-based physical activity programs benefit communities as well as students and schools.

How Does Physical Activity Help

- Builds strong bones and muscles.
- Decreases the likelihood of developing obesity and risk factors for diseases like type 2 diabetes and heart disease.
- May reduce anxiety and depression and promote positive mental health.

Importance of Physical Education in School Level for Students

- It's a program for muscle strength and fitness. Physical education develops the students' motor skills and hand-eye coordination. It also develops the upper body muscles through activities like doing push ups as well the lower body muscles through stationary jumping jacks, 3min running and jumping exercises. Programs usually have core training exercises also like doing abdominal crunches.
- It's a preventive measure against disease. Many doctors today agree that obesity is a serious health risk. Without any form of diet management and control with the numerous processed food students intake everyday compounded by a sedentary lifestyle, a student's health can easily be at risk to many diseases like chronic heart disease, hypertension and diabetes. Physical education in school is a preventive measure to teach students the value of regular exercise.
- It develops cooperation, teamwork and sportsmanship skill. Most physical education programs are holistic. The program allows student to interact together to a common goal and that is to win and excel physically. It brings out

the competitive sides of students working both body and mind but also promotes sportsmanship.

- It's a link to good health. The value of physical fitness can never be overstated. It's only in physical educational classrooms that students learn the value of taking care of themselves thru proper grooming, healthy eating and regular exercise.
- It promotes academic learning. Physical health allows students to function even better in classrooms. A good cardiovascular system developed from regular exercise promotes excellent blood and oxygen circulation. This means more nutrients circulate through out the body, which includes the brain. This circulation produces longer attention span during classes allowing longer concentration and absorption.
- It builds self-esteem. Students who are active in physical activities like basketball, volleyball, martial arts and running just to name a few are more confident with themselves according to most social school studies. It's probably because of the self-discipline and dedication to excel in a sport that brings out the best in students. In school, the physical education program introduces these sport activities to students allowing them to make choices to which sport areas they want to get involved in.
- It promotes a physically active lifestyle. The purpose of physical education is to instill in students, at an early age, the value of self-preservation and choosing a lifestyle that is good for both the mind and body.

Role of physical education on health living

(A) Physical Education have a positive effect on children's physical health

- Physical education plays an important role in promoting healthy behaviors. Students in physical education, when compared to those who are not in physical education, are more physically active, eat more fruit, and watch less television (Tassitano *et al.*, 2010)
- When meeting national recommendations, participation in physical education diminishes the potential for future body mass increase among children (Fernandes & Sturm, 2011)^[2].

(B) Physical Education promotes lifelong physical activity and provide opportunities for frequent physical activity

- Quality physical education creates experiences which will enable students to transfer skills learned during physical education to their future. (McKenzie & Lounsbury, 2014)
- We have evidence from multiple large studies that the HOPE (Health Opportunities through Physical Education) can improve physical activity and academic outcomes. (Sallis *et al.*, 2012)^[3].

Characteristics of an Effective Physical Education

Children who are physically active are more focused, better prepared to learn, and more emotionally and socially resilient. A successful physical education experience reverberates through his or her other classes, and contributes to a healthy

school environment.

- The teacher is qualified, enthusiastic, prepared.
- Lessons are well-planned, incorporate a wide range of activities, and meet provincial curriculum learning outcomes.
- The teacher uses a variety of assessment and evaluation strategies.
- There is an emphasis on student learning, personal success, fair play, and personal health.
- Activities are appropriate to the age and stage of development for each student.
- All students look forward to physical education class.
- Provincial safety guidelines are followed.
- The school is fulfilling the minimum time mandated by your province for physical education.
- There are opportunities to be physically active beyond the physical education time (intramurals, extracurriculars, and school wide initiatives such as daily physical activity).
- There are opportunities for student leadership development.
- The school has the facilities, equipment and teaching support to provide a quality program.
- Recognition through PHE Canada's Quality Daily Physical Education Award Program.

Conclusion

Physical education are opportunities for student leadership development. Participation in regular physical activity promotes normal growth and development by helping youth build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints. Physically active are more focused, better prepared to learn, and more emotionally and socially resilient. There are various factors which are diminishing the interest of students in physical education activities. Although the physical education is being taught as a part of curriculum in all the schools but lack of adequate time and trained teachers, good facilities are responsible for little interest in this field.

Reference

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