

Physical Education In The U.S.

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Physical activity has been around for as long as people can remember. Staying in shape, trying to get into shape, and making sure a person does not lose their shape is what society tends to focus on. Everyone has different opinions on their bodies and how they take care of their body. More so, what do kids think? These days in America, children of all shapes and sizes are seen, whether one is bone small or abnormally heavier. To hear about kids worrying about their health in America is almost normal in this day and age, but to hear that their [physical education classes](#) are getting taken away is not (*Obesity Facts / Healthy Schools / CDC*). Children have been becoming obese because of the lack of physical activity, kids' energy is becoming less focused in school, and the world needs to focus on our future.

To begin, America is known for having so many obese adults and young children, so why would schools think it is okay to eliminate or make it an option to take physical education or not? Whereas some schools don't even have a mandatory recess for kids to go out and get the exercise that they need. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "In the U.S., the amount of youngsters and students affected by P.E. or obesity has been boosted three times since the 1970s (*Obesity Facts / Healthy Schools / CDC*). Statistics from 2015 depict that every one in five school-age children and youngsters (6 to 19 years) in the United States are suffering from childhood obesity." Kids are not out running around outside like they used to be; they are more conflicted with television, video games and other things of that sort.

Almost one in every three U.S. kids is overweight, but in Alabama, Mississippi, Illinois, Iowa, Georgia, and North Carolina, there are standards provided by the National Association of Sports and Physical Education that schools should observe at least 150 minutes of P.E. a week (Rochman). But, in Delaware, Nebraska, and Virginia, there is a standard of 20 20-minute compulsory breaks every day. Researchers from the University of Illinois evaluated the outcomes from a survey conducted in Hawaii, Wyoming, and Alaska, which included administrators from 1700 schools and 700 school districts, and were asked questions about P.E. and the activities of nutrition they were using at their institutions (Rochman). Then, their responses were correlated with the government laws and school practices related to Physical Education and school time recess.

The states and school facilities that observed the P.E. guidelines were included in the "strong" category, while those facilities that didn't observe the suggestions of the guidelines were classified as "weak". The total result showed that more schools fell in the "weak" category as there were no regulations followed (Rochman).

A healthy and physically active child is more likely to produce academic results and be successful. Many health institutions recommend that children take part in a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity (like sports, etc.) to prevent childhood obesity and other health issues (Iii, Allen and Johnson,

2015). In this regard, the U.S. government has taken action to lift the mandates of schools, which will include the daily P.E. requirements to be met by the schools. In some state districts, where P.E. is not a routine class, a lot of parents have been complaining about the tough choices they have to make in terms of resources found in the institutions.

Round Lake Community Unit School has been producing low scores and facing other challenges from the parents, but Heather Bennett, the spokeswoman from the school, says, "We are looking to find ways to introduce P.E. as a routine exercise, and we believe physical education is important for effective learning of students (Iii, Allen and Johnson, 2015). The reason for the lack of physical education in schools is that the focus is only on textbook learning and not physical learning. As a result, students tend to acquire a daily routine where no physical activity is involved, which results in overweight and obesity. It is human nature that when a person is accomplished to do something, he/she will achieve it, but the first step has to be taken (Hoelscher et al., 2015).

Researchers have found that 4% of the institutions from the six-strong states were practising at least 150-minute recess. Meanwhile, 29% of the schools did not practice any specific recess. 67% of school districts had zero P.E. policies set up for their students et al., 2015). Regarding mandatory recess in schools, five states were ranked below average, while 39 states had no break laws. 19% of schools followed daily recess of 20 minutes, while 17% practised recess, which was not more than 20 minutes a day, and 64% of the institutions had no recess structure at all (Hoelscher et al., 2015). This causes a lot of kids to be focused only on textbook learning, which should not be the only reason a child is going to school. It also establishes a culture where no physical activity is introduced in schools, and children from a very early age have no exposure to any sports or physical education.

However, it is not surprising that the schools do not focus on physical education, as there are few hours in school for students, and the budgets are restricted by the authorities (Ogden et al., 2015). So, the issue of physical education is not considered important by the school officials. It directly affects the health of a child, as he/she becomes obese and lazy in work and learning. The benefits of providing physical education are not considered important in most U.S. schools, and this creates hurdles in student learning.

The most important factor which lies in the concern is the skill development of the child. A child who is having textbook learning along with some physical activity tends to produce more effective results than a child who is not exposed to physical learning. Along with primary learning, physical education in a student grooms his/her interpersonal skills and produces more effective grades than a normal student (Ogden et al., 2015). Healthy activities tend to provide nutrition in a child and improve his/her health, whereas a student seems to be more fit from a younger age. It also creates a habit of practising sports and healthy activities in children outside of the school facility. Children with obesity issues have more chances of adhering to chronic diseases, and any severe health issues might occur in students (Ogden et al., 2015). It also creates long-term emotional, social, and physical effects on children from a very early age. According to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, childhood obesity can result in adult obesity as well, which is most dangerous for the health of an

adult and a child as well (*Obesity Facts / Healthy Schools / CDC*).

Dr Kristine Madsen, Editor at the University of California, proposes that the absence of physical education is a greater problem than childhood obesity (*Physical Education / The Importance of P.E.*). However, it is hard to argue that these two are not engaged. To produce more money to be funded for P.E. classes, there should be a legal duty on junk food and beverages that are available at schools and facilities, as a large amount of consumption of these things is the leading reason for childhood obesity. The solution to this issue rests at the local, state or government level, which should be catered to provide better P.E. (*Physical Education / The Importance of P.E.*). The school facilities should also focus on making the standards of P.E. a mandatory class for every child to groom the skills of children and decrease the threat to their mental and physical health.

Work Cited

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