

Minnesota Department of Health
Statewide Health Improvement Program



Active School Day

Guide to Implementation

Fiscal Years 2012 and 2013

Table of Contents

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Page(s)</u>
Overview	3-4
Description and Scope	
Outcomes	
Requirements	
Target Populations	
Recommended Partners	
Planning and Assessment for <i>Active School Day</i>	5
Implementing <i>Active School Day</i>	7
Sustaining Long-Term <i>Active School Day</i> Changes	8
Appendices	9-19
Appendix A: Active Classroom	
Appendix B: Active Recess	
Appendix C: Quality Physical Education	
Appendix D: Active Recess Best Practices Check List	

Active School Day

Implement policies and practices that create active schools by increasing opportunities for physical activity throughout the school day including; school transition times, active classrooms, active recess, and quality physical education.

Description and Scope

Active school day provides safe and convenient opportunities for students to be physical active throughout the school day while enhancing academic performance. Active school day strategies incorporate short activity breaks during the school day including during transition time, within classrooms and during recess. These physical activity breaks can improve students' concentration skills and classroom behavior while increasing activity level for all students.

In addition to increasing opportunities for physical activity, this strategy also can be used to implement policies and practices that support quality school-based physical education (PE). Quality PE is curriculum and instruction that teaches the understanding and development of motor skills and movement, achievement, maintenance of physical fitness, and regular participation in physical activity. Along with meeting the National Standards for Physical Education, quality PE strives to meet the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) guidelines of a minimum of 150 minutes per week of PE instruction for elementary students and 225 minutes per week for middle and secondary schools. Additionally, quality PE promotes enjoyable participation in physical activity and helps students develop the knowledge, attitudes, motor and behavioral skills, and confidence needed to improve physical fitness and adopt and maintain a physically active lifestyle. The activity levels of PE classes can be enhanced by adopting new curricula, extending course offerings, incorporating active time teaching practices, and/or changing policies.

Implementing this strategy will be unique to each school based on the amount of PE class time available, facilities available, and school and community demographics. All strategies can provide adequate tailoring to accommodate age and developmental differences allowing for implementation at all grade levels.

Outcomes

Standardized outcomes for required strategies are still under development. Strategies will be measured primarily on policy, systems and environmental change outcomes and health behavior change outcomes and then linked through literature projections to health care cost savings.

Evaluation Measures		
Policy, Systems, Environmental Changes Existing tools or MDH database	Health Risks and Behavior Change Existing tools or medical records	Cost Savings Actual savings or literature projections

Requirements

- School Health Council (SHC) convenes and conducts a needs assessment.
- SHC selects strategies based on the needs assessment as well as including: Local Public Health (LPH) and/or tribal support, administrative support, teacher/student/parent buy-in, and feasibility within their specific setting and time frame.
- SHIP schools must select one strategy from Physical Activity Environment and Healthy Food Environment.
- SHIP focuses on policy, systems, and environmental changes that are sustainable.

Target Populations (Disparate/high priority groups are **bolded** below)

- **Students attending schools that serve a high percentage of free/reduced lunch.**
- **Students attending schools with limited or no offerings of extracurricular activities for non-athlete students.**
- **Girls not participating in sports.** The 2010 Minnesota Student Survey (MSS) results show 9-12th grade girls as having the lowest percentage of physical activity minutes per week compared with 9-12th grade boys and 6th grade girls.
- Students attending schools within the CHB and tribal government geographic boundaries.

Recommended Partners

- Parents and guardians
- Tribal governments
- Community partners
- School partners:
 - SHCs/School health teams
 - Administration
 - Transportation
 - Nurses
 - Support staff
 - Teachers
 - Students
 - Before and after school program staff
 - School patrol
 - Policy makers
 - School board members

Planning and Assessment for *Active School Day*

1. **Convene a School Health Council (SHC) and conduct a needs assessment.** Refer to the School Setting Overview Guide for more details.
2. **Connect with MDH on specific strategy selection** so that networking can start occurring on relevant topics.
3. **Review existing school physical activity practices and policies.** Familiarize yourself with current PE class offerings, recess guidelines, and other physical activity opportunities available to students. Review student requirements for credits in the area of PE.
4. **Meet with school staff** responsible for school physical activity programs, including PE specialists, playground supervisors, administration, SHC member and other staff interested in physical activity opportunities for students.
5. **Engage school and community stakeholders** (including students) and decision makers in discussion of school based physical activity opportunities.
 - A. Review the following document to establish a good working knowledge of this planning step: Partnership for Prevention. *School-Based Physical Education: Working with Schools to Increase Physical Activity among Children and Adolescents in Physical Education Classes – An Action Guide* (CDC 2009). To access online visit: <http://www.prevent.org/data/files/initiatives/schoolpe.pdf>
6. **Conduct an additional school assessment of physical activity and its promotion in the school environment.**
7. **Review literature and resources** on the following Active School Day sub-strategies:
 - A. Active Classrooms (Appendix A)
 - B. Active Recess (Appendix B)
 - C. Quality Physical Education (Appendix C)
8. **Develop an action plan** designed to implement active school day strategies and/or quality PE. Prioritize based on feasibility, cost, resources, and sustainability. See *SHIP school setting guide* for a sample action plan worksheet.
 - A. Tribal grantees may need to engage their tribal governments throughout the planning and implementation of this strategy, or parts of this strategy, depending upon your particular environment.

Potential Milestones for Planning and Assessment

- Needs assessment completed
- Additional physical activity assessment/survey completed
- Action plan identified

Evaluation Tools for Planning and Assessment*

School Health Index (SHI)

Description: The School Health Index is a self-assessment and planning tool that enables schools to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the school's policies and programs that promote health and safety. The SHI has two versions, Elementary and Middle/High School. Both versions are available free of charge, online and in print form. The SHI consists of eight self-assessment modules and a planning for improvement process. The assessment process involves members of the school community, parents, students, and the community to improve school policies, programs, and services. The SHI is a nationally-recognized, researched-based assessment tool recommended by the CDC. Many schools are familiar with this tool. Training for the proper use of the SHI will be available through the Coordinated School Health Program at MN Department of Education and MN Department of Health.

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/SHI/index.htm>

**This section is currently under development. MDH will be providing additional tools for the standardized evaluation of required strategies at a later date.*

Implementing *Active School Day*

1. Meet with school staff responsible for school wellness, transportation, administration, and physical education to review the proposed action plan to address physical activity within the school day.
 - A. Gather additional input from key stakeholders.
 - B. Finalize action plan so next steps are clearly identified. Action plans should clearly identify goals, steps, responsible party, timeline, budget, resources, and outcome measures, including plans for sustainability.
2. Work with school staff, teachers, and other community partners to attend training opportunities based on needs identified and prioritized action plan.
 - A. Refer to the SHIP calendar for technical assistance (TA) that MDH might be able to provide on selected strategies.
<http://www.health.state.mn.us/healthreform/ship/calendar/index.html>
 - B. Educate school staff on SHIP strategies selected to implement, getting staff “buy-in” is equally important as administrator support.
 - C. Generate excitement over selected SHIP strategies.
3. Network with other SHIP grantees
4. Engage students in the promotion of selected physical activity practices.
5. Hold follow-up meetings with school and community stakeholders to review action plan and priorities and identify barriers and next steps.
6. Present action plan to school administration, school board, tribal council and other community elected officials, key decision makers, and community groups.
7. Implement school policies that have been identified in the action plan supporting active school day practices.

Potential Milestones for Implementing *Active School Day*

- Trainings/workshops on selected active school day strategies attended
- Decision makers involved with active school day practices being implemented
- Promotion of active school day strategies to all school partners

Sustaining Long-Term *Active School Day* Changes

1. Review the following: Susan R. Weisman, Public Health Law Center, *In Pursuit of an Active Education: Policy Challenges and Opportunities for Improved Physical Education and Physical Activity in K-12 Schools* (2009).
<http://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/phlc-policy-active-education.pdf>
2. Continue to train staff on active school day practices being implemented.
3. Actively promote active school day practices to students, staff, parents, and the community.
4. Update action plan and conduct an evaluation on implementation of active school day strategies, gathering feedback from students, staff, and parents.
5. Develop future plans and funding proposals to further advance active school day practices. This could include future teacher workshops on related topics, expansion of active school day practices, aligning with community physical activity events and/or opportunities.

Potential Milestones for Sustaining Long Term *Active School Day* Changes

- Active school day practices implemented by school staff and recognized by students, parents, and the community.
- Active school day policy adopted.
- Future action plan completed.

Appendix A: Active Classrooms

Incorporating physical activity throughout the school day is an effective way to build upon physical education class time and provide an outlet for students who spend most of their day sitting. Incorporating physically activity provides youth with additional active minutes during the school day as well as the related fitness and academic benefits.

The goal is to have schools build into their daily schedule at least two 10 minute physical activity breaks, not including PE or recess, that are led by the classroom teacher. These regular breaks improve learning because they give students time to make sense of information. Research shows that children need breaks for learning to be effective.

Implementing active classrooms helps meet NASPE Standard 3: Participates regularly in physical activity. Adopting active classroom practices helps meet the adoption of National Physical Education Standards and is part of the Healthy Kids Legislation Bill passed in 2010.

Resources

- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. **Guide to Physical Activity in the Schools.** <http://dpi.wi.gov/fscp/pdf/neschphyed.pdf>
- Michigan Department of Education. **Brain Breaks.** Provides physical activity ideas to K-6 classroom teachers. <http://www.emc.cmich.edu/BrainBreaks/>
- Mississippi Office of Healthy Schools. **You've Gotta Move.** An activity based program designed and delivered as an engaging combination of dance, activity, and music for grades K-2. http://www.healthyschoolsms.org/ohs_main/youvegottamove.htm
- **Jammin' Minute.** One-minute fitness bursts that include 5 very simple exercises students (and staff) can do while either standing at their desk or sitting in a chair. Included on this site is a weekly communication piece listing a health tip that teachers can easily incorporate into their instruction to promote healthier habits. <http://www.jamschoolprogram.com/>
- **KidsRunning.com.** Read all about the strategies that a creative teacher has developed to incorporate healthy snacking and physical activities into elementary and special education classrooms. <http://www.kidsrunning.com/columns/whatkidsneed2.html>
- **Active Academics.** A website developed to provide practical ideas to classroom teachers for integrating physical activity throughout the school day. Lesson ideas are short "10 minute or less" activities that get students moving while practicing content standards in a variety of subject areas. <http://www.activeacademics.org>
- **Take 10.** Offers a searchable database of classroom-based physical activity lessons for K-5. <http://www.take10.net/whatistake10.asp?page=new>

- **Winter Kids Outdoor Learning Curriculum.** Provides interdisciplinary lessons in a variety of subjects for grades K-12 (with a complete adapted component for disabled children) and aligned with National Education Standards. <http://www.winterkids.org>
- **Kidsrunning.com.** Lists creative strategies that a teacher has developed to incorporate healthy snacking and physical activities into elementary and special education classrooms. <http://www.kidsrunning.com>
- **YogaKids International.** Tools for Schools Program. A program aimed at integrating yoga across K- 5 curricula in the modern day classroom. No yoga experience is needed for students or staff to successfully incorporate this program. <http://yogakids.com/toolsforschools/tfs-overview.htm>
- **Activity Bursts for the Classroom.** Shows elementary schools how to restructure physical activity into multiple, brief episodes throughout the day without taking away valuable time for classroom instruction. <http://davidkatzmd.com/abcforfitness.aspx>
- **SPARK.** Spark offers curriculum guides and training not only for physical education educators but also provides lessons that can be incorporated cross-curricular. <http://www.sparkpe.org>
- **Coordinated Approach To Child Health (CATCH).** CATCH coordinates four component areas of coordinated school health including physical activity classroom curricula and teaches skills and behaviors associated with maintaining healthy lifestyles. http://www.catchinfo.org/aboutcatch_csh.asp
- **Tips for Teachers: Motivating Movement.** The Alliance for a Healthier Generation generated a list of easy to follow tips for classroom teachers of all grades and subjects. <http://healthiergeneration.org/schools.aspx?id=4425>
- **Fun Songs to Keep you Moving.** A list of high-energy songs that may motivate students to get up and move. It is recommended to preview songs for lyrics and grade level appropriateness ahead of time. <http://www.getupanddosomething.org/index.php/separator/physical-activity-songs>
- **Lets Move In School.** An initiative supported by Michelle Obama to ensure that every school provides a comprehensive school physical activity program. <http://www.aahperd.org/letsmoveinschool/>

Talking Points

- Nearly one third of children and teens, more than 23 million kids, are overweight or obese. Physical inactivity is a leading contributor to the epidemic (Lee et al. 2007).
- Nationwide, an estimated 19 percent of children (ages 6-11) and 17 percent of adolescents (ages 12-19) were measured and categorized as obese in the 2003-2004 NHANES study (CDC 2003-2004).
- NAPSE has issued physical activity guidelines suggesting that children should have an accumulation of more than 60 minutes and up to several hours of physical activity each day to promote health and well-being. (National Association for Sport and Physical Education, 2004).
- Adding physical activity during the day in 5-10 minute increments was effective for increasing daily in-school physical activity and improving on-task behavior during academic instruction (Mahar et al., 2006).
 - A 12-week research project conducted in North Carolina in 2006 evaluated the effects of providing elementary-school students with a daily 10-minute activity break. Among 243 students in kindergarten through grade 4, a break without physical activity decreased on-task behavior, but a daily physical activity break increased on-task behavior significantly- by an average of 8 percent. Among the least on-task students, activity breaks improved on-task behavior by 20 percent (Mahar et al., 2006).
- For children, physical activity and movement enhances fitness, fosters growth and development, and helps teach them about their world (Elliot and Sanders 2002).
- It is imperative that schools increase the amount of physical activity opportunities that children have during the school day. Being physically active not only provides important health benefits, but also provides children opportunities to learn through movement (Nichols 1994).
- Adding time during the school day for physical activity does not appear to take away from academic performance (Active Living Research, 2007).

References

- Active Living Research. 2007. *Active Education: Physical Education, Physical Activity and Academic Performance*.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey Data. 2003-2004.
- Elliot E., Sanders, S. (2002). *Children and Physical Activity: The Importance of Movement and Physical Activity*. PBS Teachers. Retrieved June 22, 2011, from <http://www.pbs.org/teachers/earlychildhood/articles/physical.html>
- Epstein, L.H., Valoski, A.M., Vara, L.S., McCurley, J., L. R. (1995). Effects of decreased sedentary behavior and increasing activity on weight change in obese children. *Health Psychology* 14: 109-115.
- Gurley-Calvez ,T. and Higginbotham, A. “Childhood Obesity, Academic Achievement, and School Expenditures.” *Public Finance Review*. 38.5 (2010): 619-646.
- Lamprecht, Clinton. 2004. *Teaching Expertise*. Optimus Professional Publishing.
- Lee S, Burgeson C, Fulton J, et al. “Physical Education and Physical Activity: Results from the School Health Policies and Programs Study 2006.” *Journal of School Health*, 77(8): 453-463, October 2007.
- Mahar, M., Murphy, S., Rowe, D., Golden, J., Shields, T., Raedeke, T., (2006). Effects of a classroom-based program on physical activity and on-task behavior. *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*. 38 (2): 2086-94.
- National Association for Sport and Physical Education. *Physical Activity for Children: A Statement of Guidelines for Children Ages 5-12*.
- Nichols, B. (1994). *Moving and Learning: The Elementary School Physical Education Experience*. St. Louis: Mosby.

Appendix B: Active Recess

Active Recess involves purposefully designing playground and recess activities to encourage physical activity for all students. Active recess provides children with a guarantee of play each day, utilizing equipment and supplies to be physically active on the playground. Active recess is not intended to replace physical education, but should be an additional opportunity for youth to accumulate 60 minutes of physical activity a day.

The goal is for schools build in a minimum of 20 minutes of recess each day in addition to physical education class for all students in elementary and middle school settings as recommended by the CDC. Active recess means that all students are engaged in physical activity through age appropriate games and activities for the majority of the twenty minute recess time.

Active recess may be enhanced by:

- scheduling it prior to lunch
- adopting the Minnesota Department of Education Recess Guidelines (due to be released in the Fall of 2011)
- having plans in place for inclement weather if outdoor recess is not an option, and
- having defined play areas (blacktop, grassy areas, and playground space).

Implementing active recess relates to NASPE Standards:

- Standard 3: Participates regularly in physical activity
- Standard 4: Achieves and maintains a health enhancing level of physical fitness; and
- Standard 5: Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical settings.

Resources

- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. **Guide to Physical Activity in the Schools.** <http://dpi.wi.gov/fscp/pdf/neschphyed.pdf>
- Montana Office of Public Instruction. **A Recess Before Lunch Policy Implementation Guide.** <http://opi.mt.gov/pdf/schoolfood/RBL/RBLGuide2008.pdf>
- **American Association for the Child's Right to Play.** Ideas on games to incorporate for elementary school recess. <http://www.ipausa.org/>
- National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE). **A position paper on elementary school recess.** <http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/standards/upload/Recess-for-Elementary-School-Students-2006.pdf>
- **Fitness Fun Forever.** This program is designed to allow recess instructors with little physical education training to easily and effectively implement fun physical activities with students. <http://www.uwf.edu/sryan/resources/contents.htm>

- **Peaceful Playgrounds.** This program introduces children and school staff to the many choices of activities available on playgrounds and field areas. <http://www.peacefulplaygrounds.com>
- **School playground design.** Information on the planning and design of playgrounds for varying ages, including resources on safety, accessibility, equipment, surfaces, and maintenance. <http://www.edfacilities.org/rl/playgrounds.cfm>
- **Ultimate Playground and Resource Game Book.** A resource for playground supervisors to incorporate in active recess. <http://www.gameskidsplay.net/>
- **Playworks.** A non-profit organization that provides trained, full-time program coordinators, or "coaches," at low-income urban schools to engage children at recess and during class game time, supporting youth leadership programs, and running non-school time programs and developmental sports leagues. This particular link within their site lists hundreds of games that will get kids off the sidelines and into the game. Whether you want to keep kids active for a full recess period, or just do a few minutes of ice breakers before an activity, there's a game here for your needs. <http://www.playworks.org/games>
- **Log it.** A pedometer recording program for 3rd grade and up. <http://www.peclogit.org/logit.asp>

Talking Points

- Children who receive more recess behave better and are more likely to learn efficiently (Huntington Learning Center, 2010).
- Recess contributes significantly to the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive (intellectual) development of the young child (Clements 2000).
- When students are given the chance to move around and be active, they return to the classroom more attentive and able to concentrate on the tasks presented. This change enables learning to take place more efficiently. Children who get at least 15 minutes of recess are also better behaved (Barros et al 2009).
- Recess should not be viewed as a reward but a necessary educational support component for all children. Students should not be denied recess as a means of punishment, or to make up work (NASPE 2006).
- Children can remember more, focus better, and regulate their own behavior better in play than in any other context (Guddemi et al 1999).

- Schools should provide the facilities, equipment and supervision necessary to ensure the recess experience is productive, safe and enjoyable (NASPE 2001).

References

Barros, R., Silver, E., and Stein, R. (2009). School Recess and Group Classroom Behavior. *Pediatrics* 123 (2):431-36.

Clements, R. (2000). *Elementary School Recess: Selected Readings, Games, and Activities for Teachers and Parents*. USA: American Press.

Guddemi, M., Jambor, T., and Skrupskelis, A. (1999). *Play in a changing society*. Little Rock, AR: SECA.

Huntington Learning Center Glendale Feb. 1, 2010- Global Press Release Distribution citing a 2009 study at Yeshiva University's Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE). (2006). *Recess for elementary school students* [Position paper]. Reston, VA: Author.

National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE). (2001). *Recess in elementary school students* [Position paper]. Reston, VA: Author.

Appendix C: Quality Physical Education

Quality school-based physical education (PE) is curriculum and instruction that teaches the understanding and development of motor skills and movement; achievement and maintenance of physical fitness; and engages all students in regular participation in physical activity. Research has shown that specific enhancements to PE classes can effectively increase levels of physical activity and improve physical fitness among children and adolescents in the areas of flexibility, muscular endurance, and exercise-related knowledge and motivation.

According to the National Standards for Physical Education, as identified by NASPE, qualified physical education specialists should provide a developmentally appropriate program with instructional periods totaling a minimum of 150 minutes per week for elementary age students and 225 minutes per week for middle and secondary students.

The activity levels of PE classes can be enhanced by changing curricula, teaching practices, or policies. Specific strategies for creative more active PE classes include:

- increasing the duration or level of physical activity in existing classes by altering the rules of game or using teaching techniques to keep all students engaged and active
- adding PE classes to the school day or week
- extending the length of PE class time.

The goal is to improve the quantity and quality of physical activity within the school setting and build a foundation for lifelong physical activity.

Resources

- **National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE).** This national organization provides a wide variety of resources supporting quality school-based PE including National Standards for Physical Education and other background materials, training, and grant opportunities. <http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/>
- **Sports Play And Recreation for Kids (SPARK).** SPARK is a research-based organization dedicated to creating, implementing, and evaluating programs that promote lifelong wellness. SPARK strives to improve the health of children, adolescents, and adults by disseminating evidence-based programs to teachers and recreation leaders serving Pre-K through 12th grade students. <http://www.sparkpe.org/>
- **PE Central.** Information on physical education and health for teachers, students, and parents. Includes curriculum assessment, adapted PE, and other useful teaching tools. <http://www.pecentral.org>
- **PE4Life.** Sponsors training institutes for physical education and health teachers and provides online resources for schools to enhance physical education. <http://www.pe4life.org>

- **CDC. The Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (PECAT)** developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention helps school districts conduct a clear, complete and consistent analysis of written physical education curricula based upon national physical education standards. <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/PECAT/>
- **President's Challenge.** A fitness program used by many schools across the country. The test is made up of five events and students can earn an award for meeting qualifying standards in each of the five events. <http://www.presidentschallenge.org/index.shtml>
- **Minnesota Department of Education.** FAQs about the 2010 Healthy Kids Bill. <http://education.state.mn.us/mdeprod/groups/Communications/documents/FAQ/018685.pdf>
- **Fitness Gram.** FITNESSGRAM was developed by the Cooper Institute is evidence-based health-related fitness assessment to use criterion-referenced standards, called Healthy Fitness Zones, to determine students' fitness levels based on what is optimal for good health. <http://www.fitnessgram.net/home/>

Talking Points

- There is a relationship between habits in early life and physical activity in adults. Providing young people with quality physical education to improve their skills and confidence appears to have positive consequences for later activity (Taylor et al 1999).
- Children today find themselves more often in sedentary alternatives. For example, children ride in a car or bus to school, have less physical education, watch more television, play more sedentary games such as computer games, and do not have as much freedom to play outside on their own. Consequently, there is mounting evidence that even our young children are becoming less physically active and more overweight and obese (Epstein et al. 1995).
- Physically unfit children have an increased risk of obesity and are more likely to suffer health problems as adults. Unfit children are more likely to be unfit adults (Masuier & Corbin, 2006).
- Research suggests that children who are active in physical education are more likely to be active in non-school settings. Increased enrollment of students in physical education taught by physical education specialist will increase the physical activity levels of American children (Masuier & Corbin, 2006).
- Physical education teaches self-management and motor skills that help children adopt healthy living practices and manage their day-to-day activities (Masuier & Corbin, 2006).
- Scarcity of resources, efforts to improve academic testing scores and lack of time threaten physical education. Taking time from physical education does *not* result in more learning

in other areas and a number of students show that bouts of physical activity have a positive effect on cognitive performance and a relationship between physical fitness and performance on standardized academic tests (Masuier & Corbin, 2006).

- A great majority of parents support the need for physical education in the schools. A survey report from the Harvard Health Forum indicated that 91 percent of parents feel that there should be more physical education for all students in grades K-12 and that regular physical activity helps children do better academically (Masuier & Corbin, 2006).
- Data indicates that additional curricular emphasis on physical education may result in small absolute gains in grade point average and strongly suggest a relative increase in performance per unit of academic teaching time (Trudeau, et al., 2008).
- The percentage of high school students who attended physical education classes daily decreased from 42% in 1991 to 25% in 1995, and has remained stable at that level until 2009 (33%). In 2009, 47% of 9th grade students but only 22% of 12th grade students attended physical education class daily (USDHHS 2008).
- Over half (56%) of high school students (72% of 9th grade students but only 44% of 12th grade students) attended physical education classes in 2009 (USDHHS 2008).

References

- Epstein, L.H., Valoski, A.M., Vara, L.S., McCurley, J., L. R. (1995). Effects of decreased sedentary behavior and increasing activity on weight change in obese children. *Health Psychology* 14: 109-115.
- Masuier G., & Corbin, C. (2006). Top 10 Reasons for Quality Physical Education. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance*. 77(6):44-53.
- Shephard, R. (1997). Curricular physical activity and academic performance. *Pediatric Exercise Science*. 9: 113-126.
- Taylor, W., Blair, S., Cummings, S., Wun, C., & Malina, R. (1999). *Childhood and adolescent physical activity patterns and adult physical activity*. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*; 31(1), 118-123.
- Trudeau, F. and Shephard, R. "Physical Education, School Physical Activity, School Sports, and Academic Performance." *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*. 5.10 (2008).
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Physical activity guidelines advisory committee report*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008.

Appendix D: Active Recess Best Practices Check List

Adapted from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction:

<http://www.dpi.wi.gov/sspw/pdf/>

Policy

- A minimum of 20 minutes of recess each day for students in elementary and middle school IN ADDITION TO physical education classes (CDC recommendation).
- Active recess is a school-wide practice available to all students; i.e. during all recesses.
- Avoid withholding recess from students who misbehave. Recess should never be denied, used as punishment or as time to make up incomplete academic work.
- Recess as a general practice should be provided before lunch (students play, then eat).

Programming

- A guarantee/option of non-structured play is offered each day; however, active recess incorporates several activity stations scattered around the playground and green spaces.
- Structured activities take place on a variety of playground areas: grassy areas, blacktop surfaces and play ground equipment.
- Allow students at a specific developmental level to have private use of playground equipment, so they are not competing with students in higher developmental levels.
- Necessary equipment for selected, structured activities is supplied and available.
- A locked, secure area for playground equipment is available.
- Explore hiring external, recess coaches when other staff is overburdened or unavailable. (An example of this type of organization is the non-profit Sports4Kids.)

Promotion

- All recess staff participate in the play and activity of children. Use creative ways to promote and orient students to active recess activities by involving other staff such as classroom teachers, physical education teachers, art teachers, school counselors and nurses.
- Develop an Active Recess Handbook for the school and orient playground supervisors.
- Provide a consistent set of rules for each playground area. Post them where all can see.

Physical Projects

- Assess and improve recess area if needed. Black top and grassy play area must be kept clean of debris. Painted lines on blacktop and pavement are clearly visible for playing games. Large equipment must be checked for safety seasonally. Any fencing must be routinely checked for safety.