

Impact of Quality Physical Education

Physical education is a key prevention tool

Quality physical education (such as EPEC – the Exemplary Physical Education Curriculum) equips students with the knowledge, skills, competence and confidence to be active for life.

EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

- Obese children miss four times as much school as normal-weight children. They often suffer from depression, anxiety disorders, poor self-esteem, and bullying from their peers. (State Education Standard, National Association of State Boards of Education, 2004)
- 21% of Detroit high school students are obese, and 20% are overweight. 55% of Detroit high school students did not attend physical education classes in an average week when they were in school.

Some people think physical education class is a place to exercise, when in fact, it is a place to learn.

– John Todorovich, 2010 president of the Florida Physical Education Association

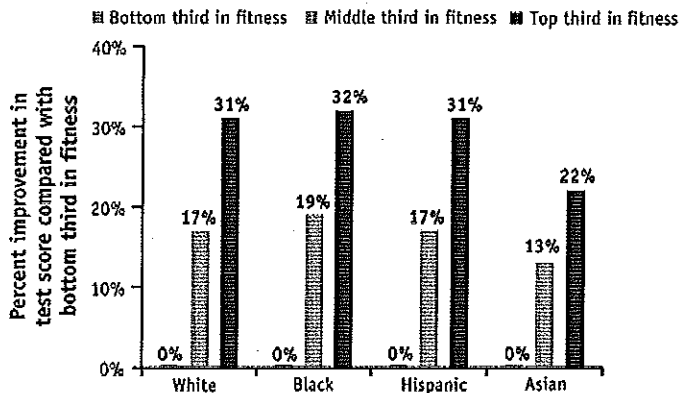
- The CDC has found substantial evidence that physical activity can help improve academic achievement, including grades and standardized test scores. (2010 F as in Fat Obesity Report)
- Physically active and fit children tend to have better academic achievement. More time in physical education and other school-based physical activity does not adversely affect academic performance. (Active Education, Physical Education, Physical Activity and Academic Performance Research Brief, 2009)
- A 2007-08 study of more than 2.4 million Texas students found that students who were physically fit were more likely to do well on the state's standardized tests and have better school attendance records and fewer disciplinary referrals than students who were not physically fit.

After one year of learning with EPEC in physical education class: "I was more active than I was before, so I just felt a whole lot better."

– Eric, 6th grade student

Students with better physical fitness have higher academic test scores

Percent improvement in academic test score by NYC FITNESSGRAM score, by race, fourth–eighth grade, 2007–08



- Academic test scores* increased with higher NYC FITNESSGRAM scores across all racial and ethnic groups.
- Students in the top third of NYC FITNESSGRAM scores had, on average, higher academic test scores than students in the bottom third of NYC FITNESSGRAM.

* Academic test score is an average of a student's NYS Standardized English Language Arts (ELA) and NYS Standardized Math test percentile, as measured by grade level.

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ECONOMIC IMPACT

- The total economic cost of overweight and obesity in the United States and Canada caused by medical costs, excess mortality and disability is approximately \$300 billion per year. (Society of Actuaries, 2010)
- From the periods 1979-1981 to 1997-1999 annual hospital costs related to obesity among children and adolescents increased from \$35 million to \$127 million. (CDC 2010)
- The total annual obesity cost for Flint, Mich. (34% of population obese) is \$205,419,575. (Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index, 2011)
- Of the more than \$1.7 trillion in health care spent nationally every year, less than four cents of every dollar is spent on prevention and public health. (Prevention Institute, 2007)

PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT

- Obesity is a major risk factor linked to cardiovascular disease, certain types of cancer, type 2 diabetes and early death. (American Heart Association)
- School-based physical education plays a key role in curbing obesity and improving fitness among adolescents from low-income communities. Clearly, physical education in schools is an underutilized tool in our efforts to reduce pediatric obesity. (Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, 2009)
- The return on investment for community-based disease prevention programs does not just defer high health care costs to end of life. By increasing physical activity and good nutrition and decreasing smoking and other tobacco use, we are ensuring that more people will be healthier for longer periods of their life. (Trust for America's Health 2009)
- School-based physical education has many benefits, increasing physical activity and improving physical fitness and muscular endurance. Increasing physical activity through physical education is a public health strategy for reducing childhood obesity. (NASPR, 2009)

Given the strong scientific basis that supports physical activity and the associated role in the prevention of chronic illness and disease, it should be no surprise that with limited to non-existent opportunities to learn how to competently and confidently move, there exists a higher incidence of chronic illness, disease, overweight and obesity within the United States.

- Tony Moreno, School of Health Promotion and Human Performance, Eastern Michigan University