

Physical Education and Physical Activity in Schools

Audio Descriptive Text

Title: Chapter 2. Healthy School Environments; Physical Education and Physical Activity in Schools. Graphic of recommendation for student to do 60 minutes (1 hour) or more of physical activity daily with the reality that many students are not getting opportunities to be active: over half of all schools have 10% or less of their students walking or biking to and from school; only 45% of all schools provided opportunities for students to participate in classroom physical activity breaks; less than 4% of schools require daily physical education; and only 55% of all schools offer opportunities for student to participate in physical activity class or intramural sports programs. Graphic of the Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program wheel, showing slices for Physical Education; Physical Activity Before & After School; Family & Community Engagement; Staff Involvement; and Physical Activity During School. Image of Active Child icon.

Video Summary

- The federal Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend that children and adolescents do 60 minutes or more of physical activity daily.
- The CDC recommends a Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP) that provides opportunities for students to be physically active before, during, and after school.
- The foundation of a CSPAP is for schools to have physical education classes that help students gain knowledge and skills to establish and maintain physically active lifestyles.

Audio Script

The federal *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* recommend that children and adolescents do 60 minutes or more of physical activity daily. The CDC and other national organizations recommend a comprehensive, schoolwide approach to physical activity that provides opportunities for students to be physically active before, during, and after the school day. This is called a Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program.

A Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program has five components:

- Physical education,
- Physical activity during school,
- Physical activity before and after school,
- Staff involvement, and
- Family and community engagement.

The foundation of a Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program is for schools to have physical education classes that help student's gain the knowledge and skills needed to establish and maintain physically active lifestyles throughout childhood and adolescence and into adulthood.

In addition to physical education classes, recess and classroom physical activity breaks are other opportunities for students to be physically active during the school day and help students get 60 minutes of daily physical activity. Recess is a planned time within the school day for free play and supervised physical activity. Classroom physical activity includes any physical activity done in the classroom during the school day, in which teachers incorporate physical activity into planned academic lessons and/or provide short breaks in class.

Schools can also provide opportunities for physical activity before and after school to help students achieve the 60 minutes of physical activity they need each day. Before and after school physical activity could include walking and biking to school programs, physical activity clubs, intramural programs, informal play on school grounds, physical activity in before- and after-school care programs and interscholastic sports. Schools can encourage physical activity before and after school by allowing students, their families, and others in the community to use school facilities such as the track, gym, or fields. In addition other organizations can establish a joint use or shared use agreement with schools that allows them to use school facilities for physical activity opportunities or events.