

# Physical Activity Is Key

## Quality Physical Education

Quality Physical Education focuses on health and skills that help an individual be physically active throughout their life. The goal is individual improvement.

According to the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) guidelines, a high quality physical education program includes:

### Opportunity to learn

- At least 150 minutes per week for elementary students and 225 minutes per week for middle and secondary students
- Developmentally appropriate activities
- Adequate equipment, facilities and qualified instructors

### Meaningful content

- Skills needed for physical activities throughout life
- Knowledge that helps students improve and maintain their physical health
- Social and cooperative skills

### Appropriate instruction

- Inclusion of all students
- Opportunities for all students to practice skills
- No use of physical activity for punishment

## Active Recess

Recess does not substitute for physical education, but it can make significant contributions to children's minutes of physical activity

Recess is a less structured time when children are provided choices, work out rules for play, develop social skills like cooperation and negotiation, and burn up energy.

Here are some ideas to encourage children to be active during recess.

- Teach children playground games.
- Paint paved areas with game patterns for hopscotch, four square and other games.
- Provide equipment like balls, Frisbees, skipping ropes, and sidewalk chalk.
- Encourage students to walk and talk and give them a way to keep track of how far they walk over the week or month.

## **Physical Activity in the Classroom**

Short physical activity breaks – 10 minutes or less – can be included in the classroom throughout the day. They help promote healthy behaviors, help children learn about the importance of physical activity and balanced nutrition, and contribute substantially toward the goal of 30-60 minutes per day of physical activity. Many of the programs developed include other classroom content with the movements to enhance learning along with activity.

## **Physical Activity Terms**

### **Physical Activity**

Physical activity includes any movement caused by your skeletal muscles that uses energy. There are countless ways to be physically active like walking, jumping, dancing, running, swimming, and biking.

### **Exercise**

Exercise is a more structured form of physical activity. It is designed to enhance fitness and can include physical activities like jogging, swimming, hiking, weight lifting, dancing, walking, jumping and biking.

### **Fitness**

Fitness level is a measure of how well you are perform certain types of physical activity, and is related to overall health.

### **Physical Education**

Physical education programs include instruction in movement skills, health and fitness concepts, and social skills. It is designed to prepare students for a lifetime of physical activity and fitness.