

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



Physical Education & Physical Activity is one of the ten components represented in the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model. Research overwhelmingly shows physical activity 1) can positively affect concentration, memory, and classroom behavior, 2) is associated with lower levels of stress and anxiety, 3) reduces the risk of developing obesity and risk factors for diseases, and 4) can improve standardized test scores. In addition, studies show recess offers students opportunities to interact and develop social skills, such as negotiating and cooperating. Also, intramural and interscholastic sports can help students further develop the knowledge, attitudes, motor skills, behavioral skills, and confidence needed to adopt and maintain physically active lifestyles.



A comprehensive school physical activity program (CSPAP) is the national framework for physical education and youth physical activity. It reflects strong coordination across five components: physical education, physical activity during school, physical activity before and after school, staff involvement, and family and community engagement. Physical education serves as the foundation of a CSPAP and is an academic subject characterized by a planned, sequential K-12 curriculum that is based on the national standards for physical education. Physical education provides cognitive content and instruction designed to develop motor skills, knowledge, and behaviors for healthy active living, physical fitness, sportsmanship, self-efficacy, and emotional intelligence. A well-designed physical education program provides the opportunity for students to learn key concepts and practice critical skills needed to establish and maintain physically active lifestyles throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Teachers should be certified or licensed, and endorsed by the state to teach physical education.

~ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

**For a Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program to be successful, strong coordination is required throughout these component areas:**

**Physical activity during school**  
**Family and community engagement**  
**Staff involvement**  
**Physical Education**  
**Physical activity before and after school**

*A whole child approach, which ensures each student is healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged, sets the standard for comprehensive, sustainable school improvement and provides for long-term student success.*

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Ways the **WHOLE SCHOOL, WHOLE COMMUNITY, WHOLE CHILD** components can support physical education & physical activity in your school

## 1 HEALTH EDUCATION

- Teach students and staff about the importance of, and integrate essential topics on, physical activity (e.g., how physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight and academic learning process)
- Integrate physical activity into classrooms: brain boosts, morning warm-ups, and scheduled school-wide physical activity breaks
- In a health education curriculum, address how to overcome barriers to physical activity such as resisting peer pressure that discourages being active

## 2 PHYSICAL EDUCATION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Physical education teachers can:

- Work with administrators to offer the recommended minutes of physical education class (150 for elementary and 225 minutes for middle/high spread over at least three days per week, with daily class preferable)
- Advocate for students to earn grades that carry the same weight as grades do for other subjects toward academic achievement (e.g., honor roll and class rank)
- Keep students moderately to vigorously active for at least 50% of the time during most or all classes

## 3 NUTRITION ENVIRONMENT & SERVICES

- Advocate for recess before lunch
- Communicate messages about “fueling” the body with healthy foods

## 4 HEALTH SERVICES

- Provide resources about the positive impact physical activity has on overall health and athletics safety requirements (e.g., heat stroke, exhaustion, dehydration, sprains, strains)
- Collaborate to support students with special health care needs and chronic health conditions (e.g., asthma, diabetes) to be physically active
- Encourage students who need it to actively engage in self-monitoring (e.g., using a peak flow meter, recognizing triggers) in physical education class or on playing fields

## 5 COUNSELING, PSYCHOLOGICAL & SOCIAL SERVICES

- Educate students and staff about the positive effects of physical activity on the brain
- Support physical activity as a recommended strategy to improve mood and reduce stress

## 6 SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL CLIMATE

- Reinforce social emotional skills being taught in physical education
- Encourage “walk and talk” breaks (student pairs discuss what they’ve learned after a lesson)

## 7 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- Create infrastructure to support physical activity opportunities in and around school facilities (e.g., install bike racks to encourage bicycling to school; designate safe routes to school to promote walking to school)
- Provide access to indoor and outdoor physical activity facilities outside school hours and make sure the physical activity facilities are adequate (e.g., accessible for those with disabilities)
- Ensure the school building, playgrounds, and playground equipment are secure and meet all established safety and environmental standards

## 8 EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

- Conduct physical activity challenges and other fitness programs for staff and students
- Serve as a role model to students

## 9 FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

- Participate in physical activities during classroom and school events
- Encourage students to be physically active at home, after school, and on weekends

## 10 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Promote student participation in a variety of physical activity options and resources in the community
- Lead physical activity opportunities before, during, and/or after school

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

## Maintaining Administrator Support for Physical Education and Physical Activity in the School

Ensure the Colorado Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Standards are implemented

Offer ongoing professional development on this topic

Create a Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program that integrates physical activity throughout the school day

Provide information and materials to help teachers deliver high quality physical education

Offer a physical education course for each grade and every student with an adequate student/teacher ratio that's comparable to other classes, and prohibit exemptions and waivers

Only licensed teachers certified or endorsed to teach physical education should teach classes

## Ways to Engage Students

- Volunteer to work with teachers to plan and lead physical activity breaks, and design and implement individualized physical activity and fitness plans as part of the physical education program
- Positively reach out to all students, especially those not involved in athletics, and encourage them to join clubs that facilitate physical activity (e.g., walking clubs, Girls on the Run)



- ✓ Don't try to take on everything at once!
- ✓ The focus of the School Health Improvement Plan should be on the health needs/highest priorities identified through the assessment (School Health Index or Smart Source).
- ✓ Get input from other individuals in your school on how to best address your school's physical education and physical activity needs.
- ✓ Meet regularly with your school health team and monitor School Health Improvement Plan implementation progress.
- ✓ A final consideration: If you shared the School Health Improvement Plan with someone unfamiliar with it, would they understand the purpose, SMART objective, and action steps necessary to achieve the objective? Would they understand what the school health team is trying to accomplish? If not, add more details!

## Writing a SMART School Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)

### Sample SMART Objective

By May 15, 20XX, Blue Middle School will implement a sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national or state physical education standards in grades 7-8.

By May 15, 20XX, the number of Sky Elementary students participating in the walking school bus program will increase from 100 to 175.



## SMARTness

To ensure your SHIP is SMART, be sure it includes:

- A SMART objective based on the priority identified from a school health assessment tool
- Action steps that are clear, complete, and in chronological order
- Action steps on data collection, team and grant responsibilities, and sustainability efforts
- A realistic budget aligned with the SMART objective
- Shared responsibility among all team members

For more information on School Health Improvement Plans, refer to the Destination <http://tinyurl.com/orq4pyu>

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



## Physical Education: Prohibit using and withholding physical education class or other physical activity opportunities as punishment for misbehavior and for other reasons (e.g., inclement weather, make up for lost instructional time)

SHAPE America opposes using and withholding physical activity as a form of punishment and/or behavior management. Physical activity opportunities include physical education class, before and after school programs, recess, and physical activity boosts in the classroom. To provide meaningful physical activity experiences as a way to ensure that children and youth develop positive attitudes about being active, teachers need to stop viewing physical activity as a means of punishment and/or behavior modification or withholding physical activity for other reasons. This practice can contribute to negative consequences that prevent students from enjoying a lifetime of healthy physical activity.

### Suggested action steps for your School Health Improvement Plan:

- Complete a baseline assessment of current practices
- Review local wellness policy and/or other policies that may address these practices

- Work with administrators to draft a policy to prohibit using and withholding physical activity opportunities as punishment or for other reasons
- Solicit feedback on proposed policy from teachers, school staff, and parents
- Develop alternative consequences and solutions with input from teachers, school staff, and parents
- Advocate for implementation of policy
- Research best practices and success stories of other schools implementing this practice
- Provide resources to teachers on classroom management (e.g., harmful effects of extended sitting)
- Share progress and outcomes of implementing this policy within the school community

## Physical Activity: Incorporate physical activity boosts in the classroom

Brain Boosts, also called Classroom Energizers or Brain Breaks, are active movements designed to help students refocus for learning. Evidence shows participation in brief classroom physical activity boosts (5-10 minutes) are associated with improved cognitive performance (e.g., attention, concentration), classroom behavior (e.g., on-task behavior), and educational outcomes (e.g., standardized test scores, reading literacy scores, math fluency scores) among students. Students are more ready to learn after the boost.

### Suggested action steps for your School Health Improvement Plan:

- Share best practices around physical activity, and the link between health and learning, with classroom teachers and school staff
- Provide brain boost resources and small equipment to classroom teachers
- Invite the PE teacher to demonstrate brain boosts for classroom teachers and school staff
- Encourage classroom teachers to incorporate short brain boosts into the school day
- Post information on brain boosts on the school's website, Facebook page, or other social media
- Share a brain boost success story in the school newsletter
- Survey staff about the use of brain boosts including success, challenges, and the activities staff and students most enjoy
- Discuss results of the staff survey at a School Health Team meeting



## PE/PA Resources

- [Alliance for a Healthier Generation. Schools:](http://tinyurl.com/qa4d4s4) <http://tinyurl.com/qa4d4s4>
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Healthy Schools:](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/) <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/>
- [Colorado Department of Education. Physical Education:](http://tinyurl.com/gtImqpg) <http://tinyurl.com/gtImqpg>
- [Colorado Education Initiative:](http://tinyurl.com/otugoeg) <http://tinyurl.com/otugoeg>
- [Learning Landscapes Toolkit:](http://tinyurl.com/o8mberf) <http://tinyurl.com/o8mberf>
- [Playworks:](http://tinyurl.com/j2ele7e) <http://tinyurl.com/j2ele7e>
- [SHAPE America:](http://www.shapeamerica.org) <http://www.shapeamerica.org>

- [SHAPE Colorado:](http://www.shapeco.org) <http://www.shapeco.org>
- [Special Olympics Colorado:](http://tinyurl.com/j2t7soe) <http://tinyurl.com/j2t7soe>
- [Wellness Training Specialists:](http://www.welltrain.org) <http://www.welltrain.org>

## Brain Boost Resources

- [GoNoodle:](https://www.gonoodle.com) <https://www.gonoodle.com>
- [JAMmin' Minutes:](http://tinyurl.com/3s6w7s2) <http://tinyurl.com/3s6w7s2>
- [Teacher Toolbox for Physical Activity Breaks in the Secondary Classroom:](http://tinyurl.com/p4stbwo) <http://tinyurl.com/p4stbwo>