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National Association for Sport and Physical Education

an association of the American Alliance for Health,
Physical Education, Recreation and Dance

NASPE Sets the Standard

1900 Association Drive
Reston, VA 20191

Phone: 703-476-3410

Fax: 703-476-8316

Email: naspe@aahperd.org

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Why Children Need Physical Education

Physical education is an integral part of the total education of every child in Kindergarten through Grade 12.

Quality physical education programs are needed to increase the physical competence, health-related fitness, self-responsibility and enjoyment of physical activity for all students so that they can be physically active for a lifetime. Physical education programs can only provide these benefits if they are well-planned and well-implemented.

Improved Physical Fitness

Improves children's muscular strength, flexibility, muscular endurance, body composition and cardiovascular endurance.

Skill Development

Develops motor skills, which allow for safe, successful and satisfying participation in physical activities.

Regular, Healthful Physical Activity

Provides a wide-range of developmentally appropriate activities for all children.

Support of Other Subject Areas

Reinforces knowledge learned across the curriculum. Serves as a lab for application of content in science, math and social studies.

Self Discipline

Facilitates development of student responsibility for health and fitness.

Improved Judgment

Quality physical education can influence moral development. Students have the opportunity to assume leadership, cooperate with others; question actions and regulations and accept responsibility for their own behavior.

Stress Reduction

Physical activity becomes an outlet for releasing tension and anxiety, and facilitates emotional stability and resilience.

Strengthened Peer Relationships

Physical education can be a major force in helping children socialize with others successfully and provides opportunities to learn positive people skills. Especially during late childhood and adolescence, being able to participate in dances, games and sports is an important part of peer culture.

Improved Self-confidence and Self-esteem

Physical education instills a stronger sense of self-worth in children based on their mastery of skills and concepts in physical activity. They can become more confident, assertive, independent and self-controlled.

Experience Setting Goals

Gives children the opportunity to set and strive for personal, achievable goals.