



National Association for Sport and Physical Education

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

Integrating Physical Activity into the Complete School Day

In 2008, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued physical activity guidelines for Americans, ages 6 and older. These guidelines recommend that children and adolescents should participate in **60 minutes (1 hour) or more** of physical activity daily. Students need access to physical activity throughout the school day to meet these recommendations.

Schools can integrate physical activity throughout the school day by scheduling physical activity breaks and including physical activities during academic classes, creating opportunities for students to be active between classes, and providing physical activity before, during, and after school and through organized programs such as intramurals and recess.

Physical activity breaks during the school day provide children and youth an opportunity to be active and take a break from sedentary activities in the classroom (e.g. sitting, reading). Physical activity breaks can increase daily physical activity levels of youth, and leave them more focused and ready to return to their academic studies.

Integrating physical activity into classroom learning provides another opportunity to infuse meaningful activity during the school day. Physical activity in the classroom helps activate the brain, improve on-task behavior during academic instruction time, and increases daily in-school physical activity levels among children. Classroom teachers have the potential to influence children's healthy behaviors and lifetime choices by including bouts of physical activity into the total learning experience, and in turn, maximize student learning during academic activities that are mostly sedentary.

Recess is a break period during the school day when children have freedom to choose what they want to do and with whom. Recess gives children and youth an opportunity for social interaction, vigorous physical activity, time to develop rules for play, and a chance to practice or use skills developed in physical education class. Recess can also be used to provide opportunities for students to accumulate meaningful amounts of physical activity.

The resources below provide physical activity ideas that students can engage in during small amounts of time, and can be used by classroom teachers, physical educators, and anyone wishing to encourage youth to be active. This document also provides links to guidance documents that support other types of physical activity throughout the school day.



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Resources for Physical Activity Breaks

[10 Simple Activities to Encourage Physical Activity in the Classroom](#)

[ABC For Fitness](#)

[Accelerated Learning Brain Breaks](#) - unusual brain break games.

[Active Academics](#) - activities integrate physical activity into lessons, by grade and subject.

[Activity Ideas for All Seasons](#)

[Behaviour Matters Brain Breaks](#) - brain break activities.

[Brain Breaks](#)- elementary level, organized by academic subject matter.

[California Project Lean-Jump Start Teens](#)

CDC [Health and Academics](#)

[Choosy Kids](#) – resources for nutrition and physical activity.

[CircusFit](#)

[Comprehensive School Physical Activity Programs](#) (2008)

[Dr. Jean Brain Breaks](#) - list of activities for younger children (pre-school and K).

[Dr. Jean Songs and Activities for Young Children](#)

[Energizers: Classroom Based Activities](#) –printable activity cards.

[Fit Kids Activities](#) - physical activities that integrate academics.

[Fitness Fun Forever](#)

[Game On! The Ultimate Wellness Challenge](#)

[Get Up And Go!](#)



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Resources for Physical Activity Breaks

[Implementing Classroom-Based Physical Activity](#)

[Instant Recess Lift Off!](#)- activity videos.

[Just-A-Minute \(JAM\) School Program](#)-fitness break activities, including monthly newsletter.

[Maximizing Opportunities for Physical Activity during the School Day](#)

[Mississippi's Health in Action Program](#)

[Mississippi's You've Gotta Move Program](#)

[Moving More Challenge](#) - fitness challenge program available to schools to encourage physical activity before/during/after school.

[NASPE's Teacher Toolbox](#)

[North Carolina Energizers](#) - download "booklets" of energizer activities for elementary and middle school classrooms.

[nrgBalance](#)

[nrgOutdoors](#)

[nrg Powered by Choice](#)-for teens and leaders.

[PE Central](#)

[Physical Activity Used as Punishment and/or Behavior Management](#) (2009)

[Ready, Set, Fit](#) –health and activity program for classroom teachers in grades 3 and 4.

[Take 10!](#)[®] - ties learning objectives to physical movement.

[U.F.A. Brain Breaks](#)- brain break activities.

[Ultimate Camp Resource](#)



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Resources for Physical Activity Breaks

[Yoga Recess in Schools](#)-DVD and free training

Other Resources for Physical Activity During the School Day

Before and After School Physical Activity Programs

[A Primer on Joint Use](#)

[A Running Start](#)-video resource for coaching youth runners

[Afterschool.gov](#)

[Afterschool Counts!](#)

[After School Physical Activity Website](#)

[BAM: Body and Mind](#)

[Considerations for Developing Effective Afterschool Programs](#)

[California's After School Physical Activity Guidelines](#)

[Carolina Panthers Fit Squad Activity Videos](#)

[Co-Curricular Physical Activity and Sport Programs for Middle School Students](#) (2002)

[Fit for Life After School Program](#) – activity leader handouts and nutrition mini-lessons.

[Games Kids Play](#)

[The Healthy Kids, Healthy New York After-School Initiative Toolkit](#)

[Joint Use](#)

[Kidnetic](#)



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Before and After School Physical Activity Programs

[Kids In Action](#)

[Leadership for Healthy Communities Action Strategies Toolkit](#)

[Model Health! Promoting Nutrition and Physical Activity in Children](#)-activities included

[Move More North Carolina: Recommended Standards for After School Physical Activity](#)

[North Carolina Healthy Active Children Training Guide](#)

[North Carolina Intramural Sports Handbook](#)

[One Revolution at A Time: A Guide to Starting and Running Youth Bike Ride Clubs](#)

[Opening School Grounds to the Community After Hours Toolkit](#)

[Operation Fit Kids Curriculum](#)

[Physical Activity Pyramid for Your After School Program](#)

[Playworks](#)

[President's Challenge for Kids](#)

[Promoting Physical Activity and Healthy Nutrition in After School Settings: Strategies for Program Leaders and Policy Makers](#)

[ReCharge Energize After School](#) –after school activities from Action for Healthy Kids

[Unlocking the Playground: Achieving Equity in Physical Activity Spaces](#)

[VERB: Play Activities for Tweens](#)

[Youth Physical Activity Guidelines Toolkit](#)



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Quality Physical Education

[A Side-by-Side Comparison, By Elementary, Middle and High School, of the Opportunity to Learn Guidelines for Physical Education](#)

[A Side-by-Side Comparison, By Grade Level, of the Appropriate Instructional Practice Guidelines, K-12](#)

[Appropriate Maximum Class Length for Elementary Physical Education](#) (2008)

[Appropriate Use of Instructional Technology in Physical Education](#) (2009)

[Eligibility Criteria for Adapted Physical Education Services](#) (2010)

[Increasing Physical Activity Time in Physical Education Class](#)

[Key Points of Quality Physical Education](#)

[Moderate to Vigorous Physical Activity in Physical Education to Improve Health and Academic Outcomes](#)

[NASPE School Physical Education Program Checklist](#)

[NASPE Tools for Observing Physical Education](#)

[Opposing Substitution and Waiver/Exemptions for Required Physical Education](#) (2006)

[Physical Education is Critical to a Complete Education](#) (2001)

[Teaching Large Class Sizes in Physical Education](#)

Recess

[Assessing Recess: Growing Concerns About Shrinking Play Time in Schools](#)

[Games Kids Play](#)

[International Play Association: Promoting Recess](#)



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Recess

[KaBOOM! Play Matters Report](#)

[Maximizing Recess Physical Activity](#)

[North Carolina See, Learn, Do Recess Activity Videos](#)

[Playworks Education Energized: The 2009-2010 Playbook](#)

[ProTeacher Indoor Recess Games](#)

[Recess Before Lunch Resources](#)

[Recess for Elementary School Students](#) (2006)

[School Recess and Group Classroom Behavior](#)- article about positive relationship between recess and improved classroom behavior.

[Sixty Alternatives to Withholding Recess](#)

[UNC School of Education-Importance of Recess](#)

Walking and Biking to School

[Bike for All](#)

[CDC Walk to School Program](#)

[Creating a Walk to School Program](#)

[International Walk to School Program](#)

[Safe Routes to School](#)

[Walking School Bus](#)



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Employee Wellness

School employee wellness programs are important to school-wide success, and have been shown to improve staff health, increase physical activity levels, and be cost effective. Schools should plan and implement activities, policies, and incentive programs for faculty and staff members to encourage participating in and modeling a healthy lifestyle that includes physical activity. When school leaders are personally committed to good health practices, they are positive role models to the youth they serve, and may show increased support for student participation in physical activity.

[American Cancer Society Workplace Solutions](#)

[American Diabetes Association Winning at Work Program](#)

[American Heart Association Fit-Friendly Companies Program](#)

[California WIC Program Healthy Meeting Guidelines](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Healthier Worksite Initiative](#)

[CDC LEAN Works!](#)

[Comprehensive Guide to Worksite Wellness](#)

[Developing an Employee Wellness Program](#)

[Fruits and Vegetables and Physical Activity at the Worksite](#)

[The Good Work! Resource Kit](#)

[Healthy Arkansas Worksite Wellness Toolkit](#)

[The Healthy Meeting Planning Guide](#)

[Healthy Workforce 2010: An Essential Health Promotion Sourcebook for Employers, Large and Small](#)

[McGraw-Hill Wellness Worksheets](#)

[Meeting Well-American Cancer Society](#)



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Employee Wellness

[Moving into Action: Promoting Heart–Healthy & Stroke–Free Communities](#)

[National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases\(NIDDKD\)Weight Control Information Network](#)

[Network for a Healthy California Fit Business Kit](#)

[Physical Activity at Meetings](#)

[Resource Guidebook: Recommendations for Physical Activity at the Workplace](#)

[School Employee Wellness: A Guide for Protecting the Assets of Our Nation’s Schools](#)

[Strategic Alliance ENACT](#)

[Wellness Council of America](#)

[State Worksite Wellness Programs](#) database

[Simcoe Muskoka District Heath Unit Healthy Workplace Resources](#)

[Take Action! A Worksite Employee Wellness Program](#)

[USDA WICWorks Staff Wellness Resources](#)