Fostering Wellness and Learning through Healthy Classroom Practices

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What medicine can...

- Lower blood pressure
- Lower diabetes risk
- Increase energy
- Reduce anxiety and depression symptoms
- Improve mood
- Improve sleep
The doctor of the future will give no medicine, but will involve the patient in the proper use of food, fresh air and exercise.

Thomas A. Edison
Learning Outcomes

• Identify personal health practices for self care
• Contrast physical activity needs for adults and children
• Understand link between health and student behavior and learning
• Recognize health-supporting classroom practices
• Discover resources for school wellness
Personal Health
STRESS

Work-related stress is the NO. 1 WORKFORCE HEALTH ISSUE and a major occupational risk, ranking above physical inactivity and obesity. 
Source: 2013 Towers Watson Survey

CHRONIC PAIN

Costs of lost productivity because of chronic pain range from $11.6 TO $12.7 BILLION annually. 
Source: NIH, 2008

FATIGUE

Inadequate sleep leads to worker errors, low productivity and safety incidents which affect business profitability. 
Source: Moore-Ede, 2011; Rosekind et al. 2010; Sirois, 2007

Graphic source: https://www.cdcfoundation.org/businesspulse/healthy-workforce-infographic
The burden of staring at a smartphone

Effective weight on the spine as forward tilt increases

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<tr>
<th>Angle (°)</th>
<th>Weight (lb)</th>
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Finding the time for self-care

**Physical health**
- Walking meetings
- 5 minutes stretch break during prep time
- Your favorite activity for 30 min 2-3x/week
- Walking the dog

**Mental/emotional health**
- Breathing exercise or music during prep
- TV or music
- Bath
- Reading
- Calling a friend or family member
- Utilize employee assistance program (EAP) benefits

Schedule it in/make yourself a priority!
Small group discussion

- What things do you do for your own self care (at home or at work)?

- What are things your school does well to support mental, physical, emotional health of teachers and staff?
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- **H**: Stand up and wave “hi” to neighbor
- **S**: Stand up and stretch arms up
- **C**: Stand up and clap twice

Adapted from Smile, clap, hurray on apple schools web site: http://www.appleschools.ca/energizers
- Now stay seated if the letter is lower case
- H: Wave “hi” to neighbor
- S: Stretch arms up
- C: Clap twice
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<td>17</td>
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- When you see a letter underlined, do the opposite of sit/stand

- H: Wave “hi” to neighbor

- S: Stretch arms up

- C: Clap twice
Supporting the Whole Child Through Healthy Practices

CDC 2007, ASCD
Healthy, active kids learn better

Brief bouts of physical activity $\rightarrow$ Increased focus $\rightarrow$ Better grades and test scores
Strong evidence for academic benefits

Comprehensive review of more than 50 research studies

Conclusions about physical activity:

- Improves student outcomes:
  - time on task
  - attention & memory
  - information processing
  - standardized achievement tests

- Time allocated to activity breaks does not hurt academic performance...it helps by getting kids re-focused and ready to learn!
How does it work?

physically active kids have more active brains

BRAIN SCANS OF STUDENTS TAKING A TEST:

after 20 minutes of sitting quietly

after 20 minutes of walking

Red areas are very active; blue areas are least active.

The results look like this....
active kids learn better

physical activity at school is a win-win for students and teachers

**Grades:**
- 20% more likely to earn an A in math or English

**Standardized Test Scores:**
- 6% increase over 3 years

**Just One Physically Active Lesson Creates:**
- 13% increase in students' physical activity for the week
- 21% decrease in teachers' time managing behavior

Small amounts of activity each day add up over time

*MORE RESULTS:*

- after 20 minutes of physical activity: students tested better in reading, spelling & math and were more likely to read above their grade level
- after being in a physically active afterschool program for 9 months: memory tasks improved 16%

Increased physical activity = better health

• After sitting for 30 minutes, the body’s ability to create insulin and to manage glucose is impaired.
  – Moving for just 3 minutes every half hour improves children’s insulin control and glucose levels.
The goal for children 6-17: 60 minutes of activity daily.
Physical Education

• An important time for students to learn new skills and knowledge

• National recommendation: daily PE, 30 minutes per day.
  – difficult due to scheduling/staffing

• At many schools, students get PE on 1 or 2 days per week
  – additional opportunities, not substitution
Recess

• Really important to have recess time each day!
• An opportunity for children to move and be active
• Allows time for children to play and to learn to cooperate
Classroom physical activity: what does it look like?

https://youtu.be/DiDFC9vLSAE
Putting it into practice

• Use a signal: clapping, dim lights, “freeze”
• Give instructions to students before the break
• Make sure the area is safe—students can do most activities standing right next to their desks

• Create a positive atmosphere
• Model enthusiasm for physical activity
• Don’t worry about getting it perfect
• Have fun!
When to use activity breaks

• After 30 minutes of sitting
• Aim for a few minutes of activity per hour
• When you see students fidgeting
• When students glaze over
• Whenever you like!
Teacher opinions

• “I can keep them with me longer when I give them those little breaks throughout the day.” – grade 4

• “it just seems like it takes me longer to get them calmed down when we do something that requires a lot of movement. Sometimes I don’t mind that, ‘cause they need it.” – grade 1
Teacher opinions

• “There will be days when we get really busy and I’ll forget to look for that need.” – grade 3

• “We have so much that we have to teach and it’s hard to fit more. I wish there was a way to do it, but there [aren’t] a whole lot of... natural breaks in our day where we can put those activity breaks in.” – grade 5
Health – enhancing physical activity for boys and girls

Boys and Girls Engage Similarly in GN Videos

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SED</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>90</td>
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<td>LOW</td>
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<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>MVPA</td>
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<tr>
<td>MVPA2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
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* denotes a significant difference.

Percent Engagement
Go Noodle
Other school resources

- Other teachers
- Your school’s PE teacher
- https://schoolspringboard.org/
  - Comprehensive toolkits
  - Activity web sites
  - Extensive implementation guide →
Other healthy classroom practices
Healthy classrooms – rewarding positive behavior

- Use non-food rewards whenever possible

Source: [https://www.healthiergeneration.org/_asset/tljc7f/12-5933_NonFoodRewards.pdf](https://www.healthiergeneration.org/_asset/tljc7f/12-5933_NonFoodRewards.pdf)
Active fundraisers – win-win

GET KIDS MOVING
- Host a walk-, run-, bike-, dance-, skate-a-thon or a 5K color run
- Organize a Zumba, dance or yoga night
- Visit an ice skating rink
- Hold a jump rope or hula hoop competition
- Create a team sports tournament for youth and their families
- Hold a field day at school and encourage youth and families to form teams and compete

SPARK CREATIVITY
- Host a talent show
- Hold a yard sale or auction where youth, staff and parents donate items
- Ask local businesses to donate:
  - a portion of sales of healthy menu items
  - products or services to an auction
  - event tickets to a raffle
- Sell school-branded promotional items such as t-shirts or water bottles
- Organize a student art or craft fair
- Hold a coin drive competition between classrooms

SUPPORT HEALTHY EATING
- Hold a “Taste of Your Town” event and invite local chefs to donate healthy dishes
- Sell cookbooks with healthy recipes donated from parents, students and staff
- Host a healthy cooking class and ask a local chef to donate his/her time
- Sell healthy snacks made by youth after school
- Create a healthy family night and invite parents to attend and enjoy a healthy meal with their children and school or program staff
- Hold a youth healthy cooking competition and ask local grocery stores to donate food to keep costs down

Source: https://www.healthiergeneration.org/_asset/r588vm/08-459_AlternativeFundraisingIdeas.pdf
### At secondary level

#### Rewards
- Admission to a dance, holiday party, or sport event
- Pet therapy visit
- Special parking spot
- Free time
- Spirit wear
- Movie tickets (donated)

#### Activities
- Go Noodle (Fresh Start Fit + Flow)
- Dance move videos
- Alternative desk options
- Standing for answers
- Find a new partner to review one thing learned
- Move across the classroom to show agreement with a concept

https://www.pbisrewards.com/blog/pbis-incentives-high-school-students/
Smart snacks

—**Is your snack a Smart Snack?**

- Single serving package
- 200 calories or under
- Subtle difference in appearance
- Whole wheat, lower sodium, calories from fat, etc
What are the Smart Snacks Standards for foods?

To qualify as a Smart Snack, a snack or entrée must first meet the general nutrition standards:

- Be a grain product that contains 50 percent or more whole grains by weight (have a whole grain as the first ingredient); or
- Have as the first ingredient a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food; or
- Be a combination food that contains at least ¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable; and
- The food must meet the nutrient standards for calories, and fats:

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<tr>
<th>Nutrient</th>
<th>Snack</th>
<th>Entrée</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
<td>200 calories or less</td>
<td>350 calories or less</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>200 mg or less</td>
<td>480 mg or less</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Fat</td>
<td>35% of calories or less</td>
<td>35% of calories or less</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat</td>
<td>Less than 10% of calories</td>
<td>Less than 10% of calories</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trans Fat</td>
<td>0 g</td>
<td>0 g</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>35% by weight or less</td>
<td>35% by weight or less</td>
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Small group discussion

• What are some of the challenges to implementing healthy practices in your school/classroom?

• What are things your school, you or other teachers do to support physical and emotional health of students?
Connecting to other schools – social media

- CDC Healthy Schools
- #CDCHealthySchools
- ASCD whole child network:
School Wellness Policies and Practices

• Healthy practices can be difficult to implement
  – some better than none!

• Be a role model
  – your self care and health is important
  – create opportunities to be active
  – suggest healthy foods

• Example of wellness policies: