

EXERCISE BREAKS IN THE CLASSROOM



Rockwell School, Bristol, RI

Bobbi Jarvis, Chairperson, Rockwell PTO Wellness Committee, 374-8627, bobbijarvis@cox.net

1. What are Exercise Breaks in the Classroom?

- 5-10 minute bursts of physical activity in the classroom
- Led by the teacher or student leader
- Done during natural transition times in the classroom, on the way to a “specials” class or when teacher notices that students are less attentive and need a break
- Scheduling the breaks is up to each teacher so the program is very flexible – teachers can fit the breaks into their own schedule.
- Goal: 15 extra minutes of physical activity each day=75 extra minutes each week.
- Examples: ABC for Fitness, Boot Camp, Line Dancing, Power Walking, Animal Charades, Mathercize, etc.

2. Scary Statistics

- One in 5 children in Rhode Island entering Kindergarten in 2004 was OBESE!!! (With a BMI>95%)
-Source: 2007 Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Factbook
- A child born in 2006 has a 1 in 3 chance of developing diabetes! -Source: Surgeon General
- But there’s hope!

3. Why do Exercise Breaks in the Classroom?

- To provide a way for students to “get the wiggles out” so they can be more available to learn*
- To improve academic performance**
- To provide an outlet to deter future misbehavior
- To replace distraction minutes with exercise minutes to keep kids more focused
- To improve overall health of students
- To show kids the importance of exercise as a lifelong commitment***

*“Students whose time in PE or school-based physical activity was increased, maintained or improved, their grades and scores on standardized achievement tests, even though they received less classroom instructional time than students in control groups.” Source: Active Living Research, Fall 2007

**“A landmark study of 33 Ontario (Canada) schools that are part of a health drive call Living Schools – where students exercise each day, play extra sports and are discouraged from eating junk food – saw overall scores climb by 18% over two years in reading, writing and math, compared to about 4% for similar schools not in the provincially funded program.” Source: healthzone.ca article, June 9, 2008

***“In addition to improvements in cardiovascular fitness and strength, levels of arousal and attention in the classroom were better and overall academic grades improved for all grade levels.” Source: The President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Newsletter, Fall 2008

***It’s also a way to get closer to the 150 minutes of physical education recommended by The National Association for Sport and Physical Education.