

How could this vision come to life in your community?

PARENTS

- Ask teachers, principals, and superintendents what they are doing to make sure children receive the minimum amount of physical activity needed each day.
- Mobilize other parents to work with school officials to create and implement a plan for how schools and communities can promote physical activity.

TEACHERS

- Prepare lessons that encourage students to stand, move around the classroom, and regularly integrate movement into learning.
- Engage students in structured activities that promote movement during recess, breaks, and before and after school programs.

SCHOOLS, PRINCIPALS, DISTRICTS, AND SUPERINTENDENTS

- Adopt joint or shared use agreements that allow school facilities to be used for physical activity programs during non-school hours.
- Offer extra- and intramural sports and physical activity clubs before or after school that are accessible for all students and do not require fees for participation.
- Use funding for athletics to support programs that reach the greatest number of students.

COMMUNITIES, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, AND URBAN PLANNERS

- Incorporate traffic calming into community planning to ensure safe routes to school.
- Build paths and sidewalks that lead directly to schools from neighborhoods.
- Adopt school siting policies that encourage new schools to be located in residential neighborhoods.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- Designate physical education as a core subject.
- Establish competency requirements for all teachers in physical education.
- Conduct an inventory of available facilities and opportunities for physical activity across schools and districts to identify disparities.

Why should we strive to bring this vision to life?

Evidence shows that...

Physical activity is key to physical and mental health:

- Lack of activity increases the risk of heart disease, colon and breast cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, and osteoporosis.
- Children who are physically active on a regular basis have improved self-esteem, greater social interaction amongst peers, and are more goal-oriented, while those who are less active are more likely to experience anxiety and depression.
- Sedentary behaviors, like sitting or watching TV, have health risks of their own, which are independent from the health risks of physical inactivity.
- Children who are physically active are more likely to become physically active adults with fewer health risks.

Physical activity is key to academic achievement:

- Children who are more active show greater attention and perform better on standardized tests.
- Increasing the time in the school day that is set aside for recess, physical education class, or classroom physical activity can improve students' academic performance.

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