



Classroom Physical Activity

How Can You Help?

Classroom physical activity includes any physical activity performed in the classroom during the school day.¹⁻³ Classroom physical activities can last from 5 to 15 minutes and can be done all at one time or several times during the school day.¹⁻³ Teachers can include physical activity into their planned academic lessons or provide short breaks in class.¹⁻³ Classroom physical activity can increase students' overall physical activity and improve their attention, classroom behavior, and test scores.⁴

Knowing the answers to the following questions can help you support classroom physical activity in your child's school. If you don't know the answers to these questions, check out the school handbook or school website, attend a school wellness meeting or Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meeting, or simply ask your child's teacher.

What's Happening at School?

1. Does the school or district have policies about providing daily classroom physical activity to all students K-12? If yes, what are they?
2. Do classroom teachers integrate physical activity into academic lesson plans? If so, how are they doing this?
3. Do classroom teachers provide physical activity breaks throughout the day? If so, what types of breaks?
4. What type of training or continuing education do teachers receive about incorporating physical activity into the classroom?
5. Is the teacher able to make adaptations for students with health issues or disabilities?
6. Are there opportunities for parents to help identify and lead classroom physical activity breaks?
7. Is the school signed up for **Let's Move! Active Schools**, the national physical activity and physical education solution that equips school leaders and teachers with the resources and tools to implement effective classroom physical activity?



Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention
National Center for Chronic
Disease Prevention and
Health Promotion





Ideas for Parents

You can be involved in your child's school by **attending** meetings, workshops, or training events offered by the school; **communicating** with school staff and other parents; **volunteering** for school events or in your child's classroom; **reinforcing** healthy messages and practices your child learns at school; **helping** make decisions about health in the school; and **being part** of community activities supported by the school. Here are some specific ideas for how you can support your child's school in providing classroom physical activity.

- Join the school or district committee (e.g., wellness committee) that sets the policies for health and wellness, and work to include language about classroom physical activity.^{1,5}
- Encourage your child's teacher to integrate physical activity into planned academic lessons.
- Encourage your child's teacher to provide short breaks of physical activity, and offer to help coordinate some of these activities.
- Offer to help with school-wide initiatives to promote physical activity in the classrooms.
- Volunteer to help identify and lead classroom physical activity breaks in your child's classroom.
- Share programs, such as **North Carolina Energizers** with school administrators and classroom teachers.
- E-mail or discuss with other parents the importance of having classroom physical activity.
- Sign up to champion your school's **Let's Move! Active Schools** team. If your school doesn't have a team, encourage administrators or physical education teachers to enroll and get involved



Check out additional resources for parents related to the school nutrition environment and services, physical education and physical activity, and managing chronic health conditions at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/P4HS.htm>.

REFERENCES

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. School health guidelines to promote healthy eating and physical activity. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep.* 2011;60(RR05):1-76.
2. Institute of Medicine. *Educating the Student Body: Taking Physical Activity and Physical Education to School.* Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2013.
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *A Guide for Developing Comprehensive School Physical Activity Programs.* Atlanta: US Dept of Health and Human Services; 2013.
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Health and Academic Achievement.* Atlanta: US Dept of Health and Human Services; 2014.
5. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Parent Engagement: Strategies for Involving Parents in School Health.* Atlanta: US Dept of Health and Human Services; 2012.

