

Why Children Need Physical Education

Physical education provides a number of important benefits that improve children's overall physical and mental health.

Physical Benefits

A daily physical education program helps children physically. Here are some of the things a quality program does for them:

Reduces the risk of heart disease.

Physical education can counteract the four major risk factors of coronary heart disease: obesity, inactivity, high blood pressure and high cholesterol levels.

Improves physical fitness.

A good program improves children's muscular strength, flexibility, muscular endurance, body composition (fat-to-muscle ratio) and cardiovascular endurance.

Make bones stronger.

Regular physical activity improves posture and increases bone density to create stronger bones and may help reduce the risk of osteoporosis.

Aids in weight regulation.

A good program can help children regulate their weight by burning calories, toning their bodies and improving their overall body composition.

Promotes healthy, active lifestyles.

Physical education develops motor skills and sport skills to promote health and fitness throughout life.

Mental Benefits

A daily physical education program helps children mentally. Here are some of the things a quality program does for them:

Improves academic performance.

Studies have shown that, when IQs are the same, children who have daily physical education classes tend to get higher grades than children who don't.

Increases interest in learning.

Regular physical activity makes children more alert and more receptive to learning new things.

Improves judgment.

Regular physical education gives children practice in moral reasoning and problem solving. They learn to accept responsibility for their classmates' safety, assume leadership in team decisions, accept moral responsibility for actions towards their teammates and develop a sense of fair play.

Promotes self-discipline.

A good program teaches children they are responsible for their own health and fitness. They learn to take control of their lives.

Encourages goal setting.

Physical education gives children the time and encouragement they need to set and strive for personal, achievable goals.

Psychological and Social Benefits

A daily physical education program helps children psychologically and socially. Here are some of the things a quality program does for them:

Improves self-confidence and self-esteem.

Physical education instills a stronger sense of self-worth in children. They become more confident, assertive, emotionally stable, independent and self-controlled.

Provides an outlet for stress.

Physical activity becomes an outlet for releasing tension and anxiety, instead of acting out delinquent behavior.

Strengthens their peer relationships.

Physical education can be a major force in helping children socialize with others more successfully. Especially during late childhood and adolescence, being able to participate in dances, games and sports is an important part of fitting in. Children learn the basic skills they'll need in physical education, which makes new skills easier to learn.

Reduces the risk of depression.

A good program makes children less prone to depression and generally more optimistic about their lives.

Promote healthier lifestyles.

Physical education helps children make a habit of an active lifestyle. They learn a lifelong concern for their personal health that makes them more productive adults.