

While you can argue that there are many important classes in a school, there might be only one that can help students enjoy longer lives and better wellbeing in the long term....We call it Physical Education.

With a high quality physical education program, students have the opportunity to combat obesity, pick up new hobbies, reduce their stress levels, develop physical literacies, have fun, and even begin to change their brains.

Physical education may also be the only subject that engages mind, body, and spirit, and as research tells us can even have a direct impact on how a student performs in other areas of their school life.

It promotes both physical and emotional health, so why is PE still underfunded, understaffed, and under scheduled?

With the evidence to support how important PE is, along with how stressed kids are getting over things like exams, making PE a priority again will make a huge difference to a student's attitude towards school/exams and their results.

Are PE Teachers the Most Important in your School?

This article:

<https://eu.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2018/12/12/kids-need-more-physical-education-core-school-subject-column/2216457002/> tells us how inactivity has been labelled as 'just as bad as smoking', and warns us that children could have shorter lifespans than their parents. Once kids finish school at the end of the day, you can't exactly be sure that they are going to get the recommended 60 minutes of activity. Many of them have little mental energy left from other lessons, and may watch TV, play video games, or even begin homework.

Research To Support PE

Research from the Youth Sport Trust shows that 38% of English secondary schools have cut timetabled PE for 14- to 16-year-olds. One of the main reasons for this is the increased pressure to produce better exam results.

Much of the time pupils would usually spend in PE lessons is now spent receiving extra tutoring on topics other than PE. While this may seem a logical way to produce better exam results, it isn't the best way by a long shot.

Physical education can help children to feel more alert, less stressed, and even better able to remember things from their lessons. Rather than receiving extra tutoring in other subjects, 60 minutes of physical education every day could be the key to improving figures.

It should also be noted that around 30% of year six pupils are classed as "overweight" or "obese" according to the latest government figures. Physical education can help with this too.

PE is often viewed as an opportunity for pupils to be active and to enjoy themselves. Or in some cases, it can be used as a form of stress relief and to serve as a break from traditional learning.

Many schools do not think this is good enough; it has been deemed 'not academic enough' by the majority of schools. We can tell you that the intellectual and academic value of PE itself is largely overlooked. In fact, there are studies that have proven it.

Naperville School Study

In 2003, the student body of 19,000 children was featured in a "Frontline" piece about exemplary schools due to its low obesity rate of 3% , compared to the national average of over 30%. Naperville ensured 45 minutes of daily exercise for students, and this is what is believed to help the students test the highest in the world for math and science in international tests.

Fitness can actually begin changing brain chemistry, giving a child increased access to cells for use even in other lessons. Brain growth and improvements in attention spans result over time. There are both long term and immediate effects, and Naperville teachers are even advising students to go to their hardest class right after they have done PE. A little PE in the morning could enable students to go on to their most dreaded lesson and ace it.

PE Long Term Effects

The long term effects of PE are also astonishing. When we do some sort of activity regularly, the brain actually begins to change and becomes better at learning, understanding, and retaining information. While you could say 'but PE is a physical stress', it's a stress on the body that ends. Whereas chronic stress does not end. Physical activity can ensure our brains re-adjust over time and we become better equipped to deal with stress. Eventually, people require more strain to feel any sort of stress at all.

PE teachers know all of this, and better yet, they are passionate about seeing kids get active and enjoying the benefits that physical activity can provide them. Not only will they do their utmost to ensure that children are all getting stuck into a PE lesson, they can equip students with the tools and knowledge needed to be more active in their home life, and enjoy it.

When you look at all of the benefits of physical activity, as well as the value of PE teachers, you'll see that they truly are the most important people in your school.

Conclusion: Are PE Teachers Really That Important?

There's really no other lesson that helps to improve every aspect of life, including psychological health, social and moral development, and cognitive and academic performance. A PE lesson may look like a waste of time to some, and time that could have been better spent revising for an upcoming exam. However, this couldn't be further from the truth.

After a good PE lesson students will feel less stressed and more alert, and have more brain cells available to complete whether they have on their timetable that day. More people within a school system must recognize the power of what being fit and healthy will do to the learner and their brain. Whatever information students are presented with, after a great PE lesson they will feel able to sort through it, to store it, to bring it back, and even to manipulate it in

their minds. PE Teachers are the only teachers best qualified to ensure that student reap the benefits of their physical education.

Enabling children to do more physical activity and actually enjoy it could be a real gift that helps them for years to come - PE teachers are more important than we could ever fathom!