



Active Kids Do Better

Studies show that physical activity not only helps kids stay healthy and strong, but it can also lead to:

- Higher test scores
- Improved attendance
- Better behavior in class
- Lower rates of childhood obesity
- A lifetime of healthy habits

How does physical activity affect academic achievement?

Here's the latest research linking physical activity to academic achievement from [the 2014 CDC Health and Academic Achievement Report](#):

- Students who are physically active tend to have better grades, school attendance, cognitive performance (e.g., memory), and classroom behaviors (e.g., on-task behavior).
- Higher physical activity and physical fitness levels are associated with improved cognitive performance (e.g., concentration, memory) among students.
- More participation in physical education class has been associated with better grades, standardized test scores, and classroom behavior (e.g., on-task behavior) among students.
- Increased time spent for physical education does not negatively affect students' academic achievement.
- Time spent in recess has been shown to positively affect students' cognitive performance (e.g., attention, concentration) and classroom behaviors (e.g., not misbehaving).

- Brief classroom physical activity breaks (i.e., 5-10 minutes) are associated with improved cognitive performance (e.g., attention, concentration), classroom behavior (e.g., on-task behavior), and educational outcomes (e.g., standardized test scores, reading literacy scores, math fluency scores) among students.
- Participation in extracurricular physical activities such as interscholastic sports has been associated with higher grade point averages (GPAs), lower drop-out rates, and fewer disciplinary problems among students.

How much physical activity do youths need?

Children and adolescents should participate in **60 minutes**(1 hour) or more of physical activity daily.

- *Aerobic activities:* Most of the 60 or more minutes per day should be either moderate- or vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity. Vigorous-intensity physical activity should be included at least 3 days per week.
- *Muscle-strengthening activities:* Include muscle-strengthening physical activity on at least 3 days of the week, as part of the 60 or more minutes.
- *Bone-strengthening activities:* Include bone-strengthening physical activity on at least 3 days of the week, as part of the 60 or more minutes.
- Activities should be age-appropriate, enjoyable, and offer variety.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008