

## Physical Education is Vital for All

Physical education is required in every American high school and for a good reason too. Many kids argue that P.E. classes aren't important. These claims are false and are an example of the laziness of today's youth. There are many reasons why physical education should be required, but perhaps the most important are that P.E. is good for one's health, it teaches students about exercise and nutrition, it helps relieve stress, and it helps students develop healthy habits that they can use now and in the future.

It is true, however, that there are some negative effects of having physical education in high school. For example, students can take six classes during the regular school day, but if a student takes P.E., at the most, a student could only have five academic classes. For some healthy students, physical education might be viewed as a waste of their time, since they exercise on their own anyway. For these individuals, they would rather spend the hours they have at school learning about history, math, science, and literature. Therefore, having a P.E. class would cut into their schedule and would take an hour away from another potential academic subject. Another point is P.E. classes, like others, are offered throughout the day, so some students would have P.E. in the morning while others would have it in the afternoon. A person could argue that while exercising during some random period of the day, the student could become excessively fatigued and this might make the student forget information he or she is trying to remember for a test. Also, if a student worked out hard on a hot day and could not take a shower afterwards due to lack of time or embarrassment in shedding clothing in front of peers, he/she would have to sit through the rest of his/her classes smelling sweaty and offensive. These reasons may all be true, but they are not strong enough arguments to support the notion of eliminating P.E. classes from American high schools.

Statistics show that the youth of America today are becoming overweight and out of shape, factors which can lead to diabetes. America is a nation which leads all others in the number of obese individuals living within its borders. Poor physical choices in high school can develop into something life threatening when students reach adulthood. Some may not care about the future; however, by maintaining a healthy lifestyle now, students can enjoy life without being ridiculed for carrying around extra body fat which can ruin their self-esteem. Staying physically fit will ultimately have a tremendous positive effect on the individual who does not want to watch his weight creep up year after year while going to the doctor's office for his insulin shots to control his blood sugar.

In addition to healthy affects for the body, physical education can also have positive effects on a person mentally. Studies show that physical exercise reduces stress and releases beneficial chemicals into the body called endorphins. This means that while exercising, the body is actually repairing itself by releasing chemicals that help to burn away the toxicity in the body caused by stress. Therefore, taking a P.E class can help relieve the stress from home or from school work and can be an easy class to have when a student doesn't want to have to think. In addition to being a stress reliever, scientists say that exercise increases blood flow, which in turn stimulates the brain. This means that even if a student has to go to class with a glistening forehead from working up a bit of a sweat, it's still worth it because the student will be more alert and ready to learn since his blood is flowing vigorously though his brain and vital organs. Most students would also agree that P.E. is needed for the mental break from memorizing formulas, remembering dates, and writing essays; it's also needed for the boost it will give in burning calories and stimulating the body. In the end, P.E. helps to balance out a person's hectic schedule and allows a person to get out of the classroom and play.

Another argument for physical education is that it helps students develop good eating and workout habits. One unit in P.E. class teaches students about the nutrition pyramid and about how the body utilizes carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. When individuals reach adulthood, the good habits they learned when they were young will most likely inspire them to stay healthy and physically active. If physical education were taken away, where else would people learn about nutrition and about their metabolism? Students are already overwhelmed with homework and stress from their busy schedules. If P.E. were not a part of the curriculum, no one would take the time to investigate what it takes to live a healthy lifestyle. Overall, P.E. can help foster habits that will reduce serious health risks and in turn P.E. can also make people's lives happier in the long run.

In conclusion, physical education classes should be mandatory in schools. Students need to learn from an early age how important exercise is in their daily lives and by having a P.E. class teachers can help to foster this love of sports into becoming a lifelong habit. In addition to the basic instruction students will receive in how to play various sports and games, students will learn about how their bodies work and about how to maintain a healthy weight through proper food choices. All students need to take P.E. since their bodies were made to move, not to sit still all the time.