



Creating Healthy Schools

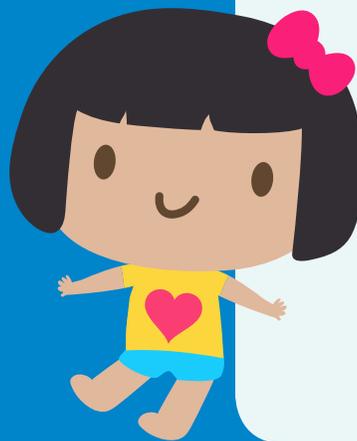
Physical Activity and Punishment

Our school district cares about the health and well-being of students and the importance of working together with parents and families to support healthy habits in the school setting. Our school is required to have School Wellness Policies, which include a section on physical activity. Our school does not allow physical activity to be used as punishment. Families play an important role in supporting these policies at school and at home. By being active, your family can contribute to the health and wellness of your children and all the children attending your school.

Why is this important?

Teachers and families prepare students to live productive lives. Any time physical activity is used as punishment, it can be experienced as unenjoyable and a negative consequence. When physical activity is a positive experience, students make it part of their routine. Research shows students who are physically active improve academic achievement and overall health, as well as memory and concentration.

It is equally important to be positive about physical activity experiences at home. Family members play an important part in creating positive emotions about being active. Families can help motivate children to have active lifestyles. Children often learn to dislike things that are used as punishments. Physical activity should never be used as punishment, because it could lead to children avoiding activities that are important for adopting healthy habits and a maintaining a healthy body weight.



How can I get more involved?

School Policy

- Go to the Parent Teacher (PTA/PTO) meetings and talk about punishment practices used in your child's school.
- Talk with the principal, food service director, and teacher to find how they keep track of these rules.
- Support the school's policy to not use physical activity as a punishment.

Punishment Behaviors in Schools

- Review the school's punishment policies.
- Speak with your child's teacher about the rules set in the classroom.
- Know what is expected of your child.
- Be engaged in your child's schoolwork and foster a positive attitude.

Physical Activity

- Talk positively about exercise and physical activity.
- Participate in physical activity as a family and make these fun times that you and your child enjoy.
- Do not use physical activity as a punishment at home.

Alternatives to Physical Activity as a Punishment

- Temporarily remove your child from the situation which created behavior that needs to be addressed.
- Talk with your child and listen to why he/she did or did not do something.
- Use positive reinforcement, non-food rewards and praise to protect a child's self-esteem and help create long term positive behaviors.
- Set a good example; most children want to act like their family members.

Other Resources:

- A toolkit for positive discipline in the classroom created by Inclusive Learning-Friendly Environments, provides an outline for teachers. More information can be found at: <http://unesco.org.pk/education/icfe/resources/res10.pdf>
- The National Association of Sport and Physical Education position paper on Physical Activity Used as Punishment and/or Behavior Management. This can be accessed: <https://www.shapeamerica.org/uploads/pdfs/positionstatements/Using-Physical-Activity-as-Punishment-2009.pdf>
- The Center for Science in the Public Interest created a handout over alternatives to withholding recess as punishment in the classroom. The handout can be found here: http://cspinet.org/new/pdf/Alternatives_to_Withholding_Recess.pdf



I'm interested in learning more!

Who do I contact?

Principal: _____

PTO President: _____

School Wellness Coordinator: _____

District Wellness Coordinator: _____

