

OAHPERD *FAST FACTS*

About the Health and Fitness of Our Children

The Oklahoma Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (OAHPERD) has compiled research results from studies regarding our nation's health and fitness levels. We put this together for school administrators, board members, and parents because we are alarmed at the rates of unfit and unhealthy children we are seeing. The result of this inactive trend is children who have chronic diseases, such as heart disease and diabetes at young ages. Childhood obesity is a growing epidemic in the U.S. and will increase if something is not done. Too many students are eating junk food and spending excessive amounts of time being sedentary. This, combined with cutbacks in physical education programs in schools, is not good news for our children. Many physical education programs that do make it through budget crunches do it with little equipment, huge class sizes, and unqualified teachers. Over time, this paints a very troubling picture of our future. How can we say physical education is not as important as what some deem to be more "academic" courses? When prioritizing, shouldn't issues such as premature death, chronic disease, and decreased quality of life take precedence over all others?

Oklahoma Research and *Fast Facts*:

Many Oklahoma elementary school physical education classes are taught by classroom teachers rather than physical education specialists (those with a degree in physical education)

There is no specific state mandate for physical education relative to time allocation (school districts determine how to meet standards).

Oklahoma schools do not have daily physical education mandated, yet the Surgeon General and many other leaders in the health field repeatedly state that children need at least 60 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week.

Physical education classes often average 40+ students per class.

5.2% of Oklahoma 5th graders have been told by a physician to lose weight.

Oklahoma ranks 3rd in percentage of adults who do not engage in any leisure-time physical activity (43%).

Oklahoma ranks 12th in proportion of adults eating fewer than 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day (80%).

Oklahoma has the 5th highest rate of death due to cardiovascular diseases, 2nd highest due to ischemic heart disease, and 10th highest due to stroke.

Oklahoma ranks 19th in prevalence of adults who currently smoke (24%).

National Research and *Fast Facts*:

Obese children are likely to become obese adults. Habits from childhood are carried into adulthood. Inactivity and diet cause at least 300,000 deaths a year in the U.S. Only tobacco use causes more **preventable** deaths.

It is estimated that 38.8 million adults are obese and nearly 7 in 10 don't get enough exercise.

Obesity-related diseases cost the U.S. economy more than \$100 billion every year.

In the last 20 years, the percentage of overweight children between the ages of 6 and 11 has **doubled**.

For young people between the ages of 12 and 19, the number has nearly **tripled**.

Roughly one in five African-American and Hispanic children were overweight—a **120%** increase during a 12 year study.

The CDC estimates that over the past 10 years the number of students involved in daily physical education has fallen by more than a third.

OAHPERD *Fast Facts*-Page 2

Children spend an average of 14 hours watching television per week. Children 12 to 14 average almost 7 hours per week playing video games.

There has been a huge (10-fold) increase in the number of children with type II diabetes during the past 5 years. This used to be rare in children.

Adolescent females are much less likely than males to engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity.

Nationwide, 29.1% of students attended high school physical education class daily, down from 42% in 1991.

About one in four children surveyed did not get any physical education in school. For those who did, 93% said they enjoyed it. However, physical education classes accounted for, at best, less than one and three-quarters hours of physical activity per week.

The state of California performed testing on over 1 million students and found that 80% were not fit (1999).

California collects massive fitness data on their students in the 5th, 7th, and 9th grades. They have passed legislation requiring these tests. They are putting in place programs to improve their children's health in light of the obesity and chronic disease epidemic we see facing our children. Several other states are beginning the process. The fitness results for the state of California, and each school district and school, can be viewed at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/cilbtanch/sca>.

What should students know and be able to do when they have completed a K-12 physical education program at your school?

The National Association of Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) appointed a committee to answer that question. Subsequently, a task force was appointed to develop content standards. The standards tell us what to look for in a physically educated person. **A physically educated person:**

Demonstrates competency in many movement forms and proficiency in a few movement forms.

Applies movement concepts and principles to the learning and development of motor skills.

Exhibits a physically active lifestyle.

Achieves and maintains a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.

Demonstrates responsible personal and social behavior in physical activity settings.

Demonstrates understanding and respect for differences among people in physical activity settings.

Understands that physical activity provides opportunities for enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and social interaction.

Based on this information, are YOUR students physically educated?

If you want to have a more successful physical education program and the health and well-being of your students is top priority, or if you just have questions, contact us at www.oahperd.org. You will find information about professional links, publications, membership, and more. If you have more specific questions about obtaining information and sources for improving your physical education program, please contact OAHPERD.

Sources:

California State Dept. of Education; Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDCP), reports from 1997-2001; International Life Sciences Institute, 1997; NASPE News, Winter 2002; National Institute of Health, Oklahoma State Dept. of Education/HPE; Oklahoma Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 1999-2000; Shape of the Nation—Status of Physical Education in the USA, conducted by NASPE (an association of AAHPERD), 2001; United States Dept. of Health and Human Services; and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (CDCP), 1999