

Enhance PE Task Force - April 2013 Resource and News Update

Reports and Information

[The Learning Connection: What You Need to Know to Ensure Your Kids Are Healthy and Ready to Learn](#)

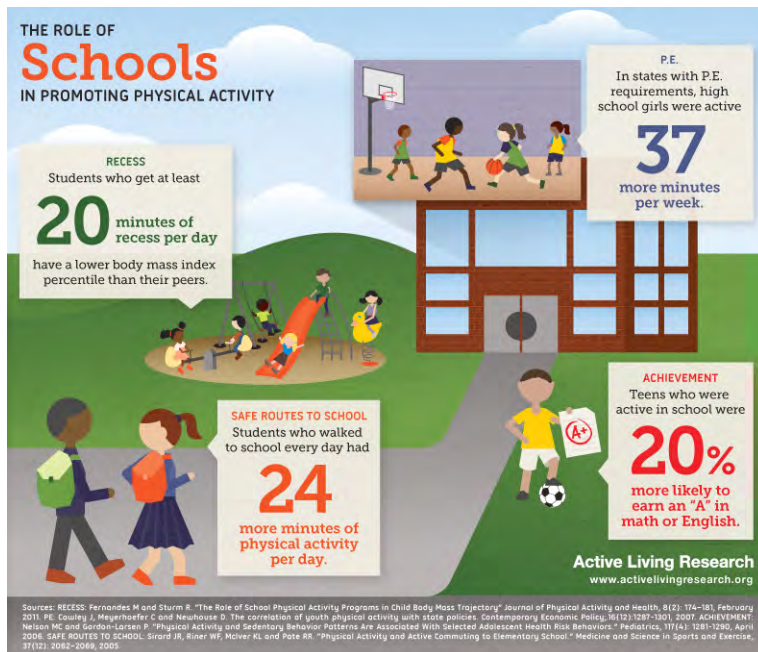
Healthy children are better learners. Yet, one-third of our kids are overweight or obese, putting them at risk for a variety of health complications and chronic diseases. Fortunately, solutions to this national epidemic, along with the keys to students' academic success, are within reach and they're documented in Action for Healthy Kids' new report, *The Learning Connection: What You Need to Know to Ensure Your Kids Are Healthy and Ready to Learn*, released in celebration of the organization's inaugural, annual observance, *Every Kid Healthy Week* – April 22 –April 26, 2013

[The Wellness Impact: Enhancing Academic Success Through Healthy School Environments](#)

This recent report also reinforces the “learning connection” — the crucial link between quality nutrition, physical activity and academic performance. “Brain imaging shows that children experience improved cognitive function and higher academic achievement after just 20 minutes of physical activity,” said Dr. Charles Hillman of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. “Combining the many benefits of physical activity with good nutrition habits that support healthy weight can have a powerful impact on a child's potential to learn.”

Other findings suggest:

- More than half (62%) of all teens say they do not eat breakfast every day of the week.
- Breakfast eaters have better attention and memory than breakfast skippers.
- Three-in-four high school students aren't active for the recommended 60 minutes each day.
- Students who were more active during school performed better on standardized tests for reading, math and spelling



[INFOGRAPHIC: The Role of Schools in Promoting Physical Activity](#)

This infographic highlights a few ways that schools can promote daily physical activity for kids. Comprehensive physical activity programs that offer PE, recess, and safe and active ways to get to schools not only offer children the skills to learn how to be physically active for a lifetime, but also provide physical and mental benefits which help them perform better in school.

In the News

[The P.E. Shift](#) (Scholastic, Spring 2013)

Phys ed programs are getting away from team sports—with great physical and academic results

[Kids need to step up physical activity, report says](#) (USA Today, March 8, 2013)

Children and teens should be more active in PE, the classroom and after-school programs.

[Does More Time Spent in P.E. Class Make Kids Stronger?](#) (April 23, 2013)

American College of Sports Medicine research links increased hours in school-based physical education to increased muscle strength

[The Link Between Kids Who Walk or Bike to School and Concentration](#) (The Atlantic CITIES, Feb. 5, 2013)

Study finds that kids who cycled or walked to school, rather than traveling by car or public transportation, performed measurably better on tasks demanding concentration, such as solving puzzles, and that the effects lasted for up to four hours after they got to school.

[Getting a Brain Boost Through Exercise](#) (New York Times, April 10, 2013)

Two new experiments, one involving people and the other animals, suggest that regular exercise can substantially improve memory, although different types of exercise seem to affect the brain quite differently.

[Child activity levels vary with different school environments](#) (ScienceNetwork, April 8, 2013)

A study of 27 Perth primary schools and their students' activity levels has revealed school environments play an important role in supporting children's class-time and recess exercise.