

The benefits of student-run extracurricular activities

[Education](#), [Learning](#)



The Benefits of Student-Run Extracurricular Activities Nearly every student today finds school tiresome, repetitive, and boring, which is why they rely on hobbies, clubs, and each other to stay sane. Can you imagine a world where kids did nothing but go to school, go home, eat, do homework, and go to bed every day? In his article for ChiPsych Today, child psychologist Dr. John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt states that “ This type of world would deteriorate fast since students would never learn to function in the complex society that we live in today”. These children would become stressed, lonely, and antsy. Conformity would infect the schoolyards and classrooms because children wouldn’t have the chance to diversify or grow up independently. This is why it is crucial for students, their learning, and society in general for schools to do everything that they can to encourage and support student run extracurricular activities. Schools should support these types of activities because they benefit the students by reducing loneliness and ostracism, they benefit learning by teaching students things that they do not have the opportunity to learn in the classroom, and they benefit society by providing it with a more diverse, well-equipped workforce. Being social is a part of school that highly contributes to the happiness level of students. No matter how shy or introverted a student is, to get through high school happily and successfully, they need friends to share themselves with, to keep them company, and to practice their social skills with. A child without a friend is like a plant without water because he or she will never develop properly without one. Student-run clubs provide strong social bonds that bring students with common interests together. “ Trying to make friends is often a very difficult task for youth these days” says Dr. J. J. J. Schmidt, “ many

students have trouble making friends with other students in the classroom because they are not allotted the time or opportunity in class to socialise or even find peers with similar tastes". Extra-curricular activities allow children to socialise with similar peers and to feel a sense of community. Having hobbies reduces stress by providing a creative outlet in an often stressful time in a child's life and can therefore reduce students' hostility towards one another. Children and youth often bully and be cruel to one another, and because youth is such a difficult time, children are usually mean to each other not because they are angry at one another but because they are highly stressed and angry at the world. According to Statistics Canada, 51% of all assault charges among children are caused by children who report being unhappy at school. If letting children do what they love will decrease stress and anger and promote acceptance among the school community, then schools should feel obliged to do so. While teaching them social skills, these types of extracurricular activities teach youth other things such as how to lead and take initiative. Student-run clubs are a great environment for students to learn leadership, initiative, teamwork, and community. The youth involved are made to engage and interact with each other without guidance (a skill that is nearly impossible to teach in a controlled, classroom environment). When students of common interest are brought together to try and get clubs or activities going, they take their passion for the subject at hand and they apply it in real-world scenarios. They must act unaided to achieve their own personal goals. The classroom provides an equally important, but completely separate type of learning to the students. The classroom rarely has students learning how to collaborate on their own and it

frequently fails to spark the students' true passion and work ethic.

Furthermore, students learn how to act in a pseudo-society in which everyone plays a different role and everyone has to work together. In order for a student-run club to work, students must learn to cooperate and work together, but they also must learn to assume roles and act within them.

Clubs such as these often require multiple levels and types of leadership to function most efficiently. These interactions give the children important skills to work in the adult world. Extracurricular activities also give students more diversity in the skills they choose to learn. A wide variety of extracurricular activities should be made available to give students the opportunity to explore their interests and diversify their skills. My sister went through three years of university as a law major before realising her calling was in the field of journalism; had her school offered a creative writing team or school newspaper club, she may have had the chance to discover her passion progress directly into a journalism program, saving her three years of her life. Allowing students to organise their own extracurricular activities gives students the chance to have a wider educational experience. Extracurricular activities help students find their interests, hobbies, and passions while also helping students who are not interested in post-secondary education see their options for the future. Not all jobs that are available to graduates require a high level of education. Many jobs including trades work and jobs in the primary and secondary industries require apprenticeship programs that are taught completely outside the classroom. This wider educational experience diversifies the workforce. Helping students find their own individual interests helps diversify the students which in turn diversifies the

career choices they choose to make. Having a diverse workforce is important to society because it reduces competition and unemployment. Also, having graduates choose the profession that they love creates a stronger, more passionate working generation. Classroom learning is a good, effective way of learning and it is essential for our society to work, there are many things that extracurricular activities can teach students more effectively than a classroom can. Therefore, it is crucial for students, their learning, and society in general for schools to do everything that they can to encourage and support student run extracurricular activities. In short, these activities will decrease stress, ostracism, and loneliness in children; increase social skills such as teamwork, leadership, collaboration, and initiative; and provide society with a better, more passionate and more diverse workforce. If schools can support these activities as best they can, I believe that one day all Canadians, young and old will see the benefits.