

The positives and negatives towards physical education



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' Young children are leading increasingly sedentary lives, with physical activity frequently being displaced by television viewing, internet surfing and video gaming', Myers, Strikmiller, Webber and Berenson (1996).

Furthermore, great concern has surfaced for this lifestyle change as, according to the World Health Organization (2000) childhood obesity has risen dramatically in the last ten years. When looking at the school context, incorporating physical activity or sport is a likely means of improving the physical health status of children, Haskell (1994). According to research undertaken physical education can lead to improved cognitive performance; Sibley & Etiner (2003). Research also shows us that in some circumstances physical education can lead to improved attention and greater concentration, Hillman, Castelli & Buck (2005), Shephard (1996). With this in mind can physical education teach young people about self worth and the value of respecting others? This paper will explore the idea that physical education can do these things but also look at the flip side of the coin and see if they can have a negative outlook on pupils.

Prior to the general election in 1997 the labour party stated that ' Sport can be crucial to the social and personal development of young people and by participating in sporting activities they can learn to differentiate between good and bad behaviour', (Crabbe 2000) adds that the labour party declared that if elected they would start developing sporting opportunities for young people to, ' help them foster a sense of their value to society and help tackle problems of youth crime'. Indeed when elected in 1997 the Labour government started supporting sports programmes for youths both in and out of school. It is too early in to the new Conservative/Liberal coalition to

know how they will support sports programmes for children, as on one hand they have begun plans to start a schools Olympic style competition modelled on London 2012, Telegraph (2010), but on the other the have already began cuts on public spending which is highly likely to affect schools.

Within schools, physical education is an essential component of quality education. Not only do physical education programmes promote physical activity, but according to Nicholas (2004) participants in such programmes are also shown to have improved academic performance under certain conditions. It is often believed that sport and physical education is fundamental to the early development of children and youth and the skills learned during play, physical education and sport contribute to the holistic development of young people. According to Hendry (1993) ' through participation in sport and physical education young people learn about the importance of key values such as, honesty, fair play respect for themselves and others and adherence to the rules'. Collins (2003) ads it also provides a forum for young people to learn how to deal with competition and how to cope with both winning and losing. These learning aspects highlight the impact of physical skills and abilities.

Assessing the relationship between physical education and academic achievement is a difficult task, due to the challenges of defining and measuring Physical Education. i. e. it is difficult when the time children spend in P. E as well as the quality of instruction they receive varies from school to school. In 2005 a study was conducted by Grissom (2005), of 884, 715 students in California to evaluate the relationship between physical fitness, a marker of physical activity and academic achievement over the course of a <https://assignbuster.com/the-positives-and-negatives-towards-physical-education-essay-samples/>

school year. Grissom also included student's socioeconomic status and gender. Grissom's findings supported the presence of a positive relationship between physical fitness and academic achievement. Subsequent analyses revealed that this relationship was stronger for girls than for boys and stronger for those who came from higher socioeconomic backgrounds than those who came from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Nichols (2007) adds to this by stating as well as a child's academic achievement improving, 'through physical education they also learn the value of respecting others through team work and competition'.

It seems plausible that children succeeding at sports at school i. e. making a team or becoming captain could make a child try harder at other subjects such as maths, English and science because the sense of joy they get from achieving positive goals in sport could lead to the child wanting to go to school. But look at the flip side of the coin. The study above was a generalisation. Would the study achieve the same results if all the pupils had not liked physical education/sport? What if a child hates physical education/sport or even worse loves the sport but is just not good enough to get in the team or club he or she tries out for. There seems to be little or no research to provide evidence on improving cognitive performance or learning self worth for those with less ability in a sport. One could argue that it could have a negative effect on cognitive performance and grades could begin to drop. The reasons for this could be the child could be bullied about his or hers lack of skill in sport or the child could begin to resent going to school and attendance could drop.

In 1985 after a study by Noles (1985), he recommended providing physical activity in primary schools based on physical activity preferences. He states, ' by offering a wide variety of activity types, for example, dance, aerobics, running and ball games and allow children to participate in the activity of their choice, you are far more likely to get children to engage fully'. This would be on a daily basis with the purpose of providing regular physical activity and for children to take part in something they enjoy. This is supported by the British government who recommend 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity per day for children in primary schools and 5 hours per week for secondary school students, 2.5 hours of which comes through P. E taught in school and a further 2.5 hours completed through after school teams etc.

' Specialist sports colleges are at the centre of the government's strategy to enhance young people's opportunities to participate in a wide range of sports as well as rising the standard of teaching and learning of physical education and school sport'. (Youth sport trust 2010). 1997 saw the introduction of sports colleges as part of the specialist schools programme in the United Kingdom. According to (Sport England 2010) these programs allow secondary schools to specialise in certain fields, in this case PE, sports and dance. Sports colleges are designed to develop a visible ethos throughout the school and within their local community which will hopefully inspire their learners to engage in sport.

According to (specialist sports school standards 2010) sports colleges will, support the governments aspiration for all young people to have two hours high quality PE per week within and outside the curriculum. Take an <https://assignbuster.com/the-positives-and-negatives-towards-physical-education-essay-samples/>

appropriate role in the physical education, school sport and clubs link.

Develop the skills and understanding of teachers and make greater use of new technologies as a way of raising the quality of teaching and learning in PE. Extend provision and facilities to benefit all learners of all sporting abilities, whilst also giving those with the greatest potential, opportunities to achieve the highest standards of which they are capable. Work with other schools and the wider community to develop and share good practice, facilities, human and other resources. And finally are involved in national initiatives (e. g. Step into Sport) and competitions that enrich provision in PE and sport for their own learners and those in their partner schools.

‘ Team games in physical education and sport are often where negative behaviours, such as cheating, dissent towards teachers/officials, winning/losing ungracefully and excessive aggression are frequently exhibited’, Shephard (1997), this creates a number of opportunities for the teacher to discuss behaviours and values associated to these behaviours. The overall aim of each of the lessons is for the specific behaviours attached to each of the values are modelled by the pupils and for these behaviours to be taken beyond the field/gymnasium. According to Shephard et al (1994), there are particular conditions that should apply to each lesson that will create a positive learning environment for values-based teaching. If the following learning conditions are in place the lesson is more likely to be a successful one:

(1). Teaching style. The teacher should be confident in using a divergent, child-centred style. Her/his role is one of facilitator and observer. The ability to reflect articulately on the behaviour in the lesson is essential. Behaviour

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that reflect the values are referred to as 'teachable moments'. They can be positive or negative examples although positive TMs tend to be more effective than negative.

(2). A set of core values for the lessons should be identified and put under the banner of 'Fair Play'. For the lesson examples given are respect, equity, responsibility, trust and inclusion but they can be chosen according to the ethos of the school or the needs of the children.

(3). The teacher to act as a role model. It seems plausible that if a teacher wants the children to demonstrate certain behaviours then he/she must model those behaviours themselves. For example, dealing with both winning and losing, and the success and failure that brings, in an honourable way.

(4). Building positive relationships. Often a PE teacher has more opportunity to build positive relationships with pupils inside and outside of their lessons. For example, a teacher looking for opportunities to raise the self-esteem of a 'difficult' pupil by offering praise in private whilst walking back to the changing room.

In conclusion, it is unrealistic to claim that physical education alone can lead to greater academic achievement. Although (Gatz et al 2002) argues that, 'organised physical education programmes, can however, contribute to giving better ethics and values by giving young people a positive identity, feelings of empowerment and by helping youth acquire leadership, teamwork and self-governance skills under adult supervision'. Furthermore Andrews (2010) adds to this by stating 'in general sport and physical education is considered highly beneficial to the physical and mental development of a child and not <https://assignbuster.com/the-positives-and-negatives-towards-physical-education-essay-samples/>

only does it help improve a child's co-ordination and increase awareness of his or her body, but also helps them interact socially, learn rules and respect them, enhance concentration capacity and learn to take responsibilities'.

Although studies in the past all seem to agree that physical education does lead to greater cognitive performance and teach children ethics and values of respect for themselves and others, these are all generalisations.

Furthermore the only thing that does seem to be clear is the fact that physical education does help combat child obesity which is a growing concern and few would disagree that a child that looks good would feel good about themselves, giving the child a sense of self worth. Golenberg et al (2000) discussed the values of the body in relation to the effect they can have on self esteem, stating that ' one's physical body is a potential source of self esteem and that not living up to social standards regarding the body can have negative consequences for the self'. ' Among boys and girls body dissatisfaction is linked to low self esteem insecurity and depression', Cash et al (1986), McCaulay et al (1988), ' while body satisfaction is associated with happiness', Berscheid et al (1973).