

Benefits of extra curricular activities



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Over the course of my high school career, I have encountered many types of people and have learned that the opinions of each are as varied as the individuals they correspond with. Every single one has his or her own perception about staying after school for a multitude of reasons and activities. Some, like me, have a stronger opinion than others. I maintain the belief that, when a student stays after school, he not only experiences benefits mentally but also physically.

A number of researchers have questioned, hypothesized, and examined the effects of after-school activities on children's health as well as on their grades. Studies have been completed over the past few decades, and many interesting facts have been discovered. One example being "a big increase in the number of school children participating in after-school programs: 8.4 million youngsters compared with 6.5 million in 2004," according to Home Alone. This dramatic increase in the number of students staying after school can be the result of several things.

One possibility is that transportation is readily available to the students if a parent or guardian is unable to pick up the child. Students could also be coming to the realization that staying after school gives them energy to go home and actually finish the homework that was assigned. For example, let's say that a student loves playing basketball, but the school doesn't offer a team. This student is missing out on the opportunity to exercise both his body and his mind. Now if the school did offer a basketball team and the student joined, every time he had to stay after to practice, he stimulates his body, which includes his brain.

Then, when practice was over, he would have the energy and brain stimulation to finish his homework. When choosing a school for their children, many parents have to take into consideration the charges foreducation, in addition to any fees for participation in an after-school program. In fact, cost is one of the major factors that play into the reasons why parents keep children from participating in after-school functions. Costs can include actual charges for the program, either in time or dollars, and expenses incurred for providing transportation.

However, according to Home Alone, “ After-school programs are a cost-effective way to boost student achievement, reduce juvenile crime and help over stressed working parents.” Yes, if parents pick up their children from the school, the expenditure for gasmoneyis less than the outlay to pay a babysitter every day or to arrange weekly accommodations at a daycare center for watching the children. A more constructive alternative would be to let them stay at school to either continue their education or play a sport to release built upstress; then parents could just pick them up on their way home from work.

Now there are some parents that, even if they have the time or money, will not let their children stay after school. Reasons for this include not wanting to expose the children to the delinquents that have to stay for detention afterwards. Some even say that playing sports will distract children from his/her studies because the student will focus on the game and not the school work. According to Bill Varian, “ Students involved in extracurricular activities receive better grades than those who are not involved in extracurricular activities. In addition, activities improve the overall student.

Therefore, they help students to receive better grades by teaching them character building lessons, teaching them lifelong skills, saving some at-risk students who would possibly drop out of school, and helping students develop social skills. " We can reasonably ascertain, then, that after-school activities not only help children grow and develop now, but participating in the undertakings also prepare them for a better, more fulfilling future. Another major factor that plays a role is the effect that the programs would have on a student's life.

Each and every student has a different life when he/she leaves school. Some have to go to work to help their parents pay the bills, while others can sit back and relax while a butler makes a snack, finishes their homework, and cleans the house. I have even seen some children go home to parents who think the child was a mistake and want nothing to do with him/her. According to Lee Shumow, " The children that are the most prone to actually gaining anything, in particular educational achievement, from after-school programs are the ones from high-risk backgrounds.

Although, children that come from these backgrounds are the ones to have the least availability to the programs. " Many of the children that are classified in the high-risk background are the ones that people think will be the troublemakers in the community. But, if you take these children off the streets and keep them after school a few extra hours a day, they can develop bonds with other children so that ultimately they will stay away from drugs, alcohol, weapons, and the people who would tempt them to encounter and develop such habits.

According to Mary Rombokas, including high-risk children in after-school activities “ lessens the number of disciplinary problems later down the line. ” Some parents turn to the school to provide a “ day care” in essence. So that if the parents are not home, then they can let the children stay at school a few extra hours so that they don’t have to worry about leaving them at home. According to Home Alone “ In 2009, over 15. 1 million children were left home alone and unsupervised after the school day had finished. This is more than a quarter of America’s school children and an 800, 000 increase from 2004.

These statistics includes 4 percent of elementary and 30 percent of middle school students. ” Many of these parents more than likely don’t like leaving their children at home, but they have no other choice; it may be the only thing they can do unless more programs became available to students. “ Parents of 18. 5 million students say they would enroll their children in an after-school program if one were available. These numbers represent a hugely missed opportunity. A majority of publicly financed after-school programs serve low-income students.

They offer help with schoolwork, sports activities, and other enrichment known to translate into improved school attendance and higher graduation rates and lower rates of teenage pregnancy, drinking, delinquency and drug use,” according to Home Alone. I realize that there are some parents who, no matter how much documentation is provided, will never change their minds about allowing their children to stay after school. However, there are alternative options for their children to having them staying on school grounds after the school day has ended.

Some students have the buses drop them off at facilities that will look after the children and have them play games or do homework in groups so that social skills can be developed. In addition, playing sports or group games help the children use their mental abilities by having them think on their feet so that later in life they will be able to overcome a problem not only with better results but also more quickly. Many of these places cost little to no money at all. Some parents may want to personally take some time to play or work with their children.

There are places available to help them in their endeavors. Almost every community has a center called the YMCA. For a nominal fee, parents can share a variety of activities with their children. Or, if a student is having difficulties in school that a parent cannot help with, older children can provide tutoring while the parents work out in another room. In a case like this, both sides benefit.

Works Cited

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