The SHAPE fitness assessment results for 2013-2014:

- Only 19% of Georgia students were able to achieve the Healthy Fitness Zone (HFZ) for all five FitnessGram® assessments.
- 24% of Georgia students were unable to achieve the HFZ for any of the FitnessGram® assessments.

The CDC recommends children get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. Schools can help achieve this goal by promoting a Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP), which includes:

- Classroom integration
- Recess
- Before and after school activity
- Quality physical education
- Staff engagement
- Family/community engagement

During School

Classroom Integration
- Provide physical activity breaks between subjects, or use it to teach academic concepts and skills.
- Eight out of nine studies found positive associations between classroom-based physical activity and indicators of academic performance (increased time on task, reduced fidgeting, improved concentration, and improved reading, math, spelling, and composite scores).

Recess
- Active recess for at least 20 minutes can improve academic performance.
- Eight of eight studies found one or more positive associations between recess and indicators of student cognitive skills, attitudes, and academic behavior, including attention, concentration and/or on-task classroom behavior.
- One study found that fourth-grade students who participated in directed physical activity during recess (stretching and aerobic walking) had significantly higher concentration scores after recess than those students who sat quietly in the library during recess.

Before/After School Activity

Family/Community Engagement

Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP) Model

Children need at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day for better health and school success. Through the CSPAP Model, schools can increase physical activity without compromising academic achievement. In fact, a number of research studies found increased physical activity improved classroom behavior, time on task and academic achievement.

BEING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE IN SCHOOL

- Improves academic scores (reading, math, spelling and composite)
- Improves classroom behavior
- Increases concentration
- Increases time on task
- Reduces risk of depression
- Improves cardiovascular fitness and muscular strength
- Reduces likelihood for developing many diseases (e.g., type II diabetes)
After the implementation of a 5th grade morning physical activity program, Yargo Elementary School’s 5th grade students had a ten-lap increase in PACER scores and an increase in CRCT scores for 4 out of 5 subject areas. 12

QUALITY PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- The goal of physical education is to develop physically educated individuals who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of physical activity. 6
- A review by the CDC found that in eleven of fourteen studies there were one or more positive associations between physical education and indicators of cognitive skills and attitudes, academic behavior and/or academic achievement. 3

BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITY

- Before/after school physical activity has endless benefits and takes no time from the school day.
- A research study that provided ADHD students with 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity before school yielded benefits in motor, cognitive, social and behavioral functioning in young people exhibiting ADHD symptoms. 9
- Adding structured physical activity programs in after-school programs increased children’s physical activity without using up the time intended for completing their homework. 7

“Teachers are powerful role models for students. In a recent survey of over 200 teachers participating in a HealthMPowers’ staff wellness program, 80% reported exercising more and 48% increased the amount of physical activity they provided for students.”

-Christi Kay, HealthMPowers President

STAFF ENGAGEMENT

Employees participating in worksite wellness programs benefit from:

- Increased wellbeing, self-image and self-esteem 10
- Improved stress-coping skills 10
- Improved health status 10
- Lower out-of-pocket healthcare costs 10
- Increased job satisfaction 10
- Safer and more supportive work environment 10

FAMILY and COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- One study indicates family support and parent modeling of exercise are linked to physical activity in children. 11

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Yargo Elementary School
Before School Program

References

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