

# HealthMPowers

## Improving Academic Achievement through a Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program

### THE CHALLENGE

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<sup>1</sup>
- 24% of Georgia students were unable to achieve the HFZ for any of the FitnessGram® assessments<sup>1</sup>

### THE SOLUTION

The CDC recommends children get at least **60 minutes** of physical activity every day.<sup>2</sup>

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

### BEING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE IN SCHOOL

- ✓ Improves academic scores (reading, math, spelling and composite)<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ Improves classroom behavior<sup>4-6</sup>
- ✓ Increases concentration<sup>4-6</sup>
- ✓ Increases time on task<sup>4-6</sup>
- ✓ Reduces risk of depression<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ Improves cardiovascular fitness and muscular strength<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ Reduces likelihood for developing many diseases (e.g. type II diabetes)<sup>3</sup>



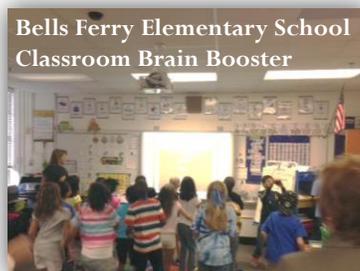
### Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP) Model<sup>7</sup>

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 increasing physical activity improved classroom behavior, time on task and academic achievement.<sup>3</sup>

### 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**).<sup>3</sup>



Bells Ferry Elementary School Classroom Brain Booster



Spring Place Elementary School Recess Obstacle Course

#### Recess

- Active recess for at least **20 minutes** can improve academic performance.<sup>8</sup>
- 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.<sup>3</sup>
- 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.<sup>3</sup>

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Yargo Elementary School  
Before School Program

After the implementation of a 5<sup>th</sup> grade morning physical activity program, Yargo Elementary School's 5<sup>th</sup> grade students had a ten-lap increase in PACER scores and an increase in CRCT scores for 4 out of 5 subject areas.<sup>12</sup>

## 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.<sup>9</sup>
- Adding structured physical activity programs in after-school programs **increased children's physical activity without using up the time intended for completing their homework.**<sup>3</sup>

## 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.<sup>8</sup>
- 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.**<sup>3</sup>



**"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<sup>10</sup>
- Improved **stress-coping skills**<sup>10</sup>
- Improved **health status**<sup>10</sup>
- **Lower out-of-pocket healthcare costs**<sup>10</sup>
- Increased **job satisfaction**<sup>10</sup>
- Safer and more **supportive work environment**<sup>10</sup>

## FAMILY and COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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



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