Brain Breaks

Why Movement?

Ways students benefit when movement is incorporated into classroom activities.

Increases Learning and Attention

"Activity stimulates more blood vessels in the brain to support more brain cells. There is evidence that active kids do better on standardized tests and pay attention more in school" (Sallis, 2015).

Improves Standardized Test Scores

Children who are more active "show greater attention, have faster cognitive processing speed and perform better on standardized tests than children who are less active" (Institute of Medicine, 2013).

Enhances School Performance

International studies show students, especially boys, participating in daily physical activity did better in school (Fritz, 2017).

Reduces Behavior Challenges

A meta-analysis including 10,000 students concluded physical activity "improves classroom behaviors and benefits several aspects of academic achievement, especially mathematics-related skills, reading, and composite scores" (Alvarez-Bueno, 2017).

Increases their Amount of Daily Physical Activity

Children should participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity daily. Only 21.6% of students meet that 60-minute goal at least 5 days per week. (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2018).

Prepares the Brain for Learning

"Movement activates all of the brain cells kids are using to learn; it wakes up the brain. Plus, it makes kids want to come to school more" (Ratey, 2017).

IOWA Health and Human Services

Pick a Better Snack

Learn more:
https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/physicalactivity/pdf/ClassroomPAStrategies_508.pdf

Improves Physical Health

Regular physical activity can help children improve cardiorespiratory fitness and build strong bones and muscles (CDC, 2018).

Improves Mental Health

Physical activity in children can reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2018).

Increases Opportunities for a Healthier Adulthood

Building routines for physical activity promotes lifelong health and can reduce the risk of developing health conditions such as heart disease, cancer, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, and obesity (CDC, 2018).

Improves Memory, Executive Function, Processing Speed, and Attention

Evidence indicates that short or prolonged periods of physical activity in children improves their cognitive functions and self-regulatory processes such as planning, organizing, abstract problem-solving, working memory, and overall academic performance (CDC, 2018).





Reduce Fidgeting

Participating in physical activity improves concentration and the ability to stay on task, while decreasing disruptive behavior, including fidgeting (Baker, 2017; Watson, 2017; Kibbe, 2011).

Benefits Students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Physical activity has been associated with reduced use of medications (Cornelius, 2017; Katz, 2018).

Improves the Ability to Stay On-Task

Regular physical activity improves concentration and the ability to stay on-task in the classroom (Donnelly, 2015; Mahar, 2011)

Increases Motivation

Physical activity improves engagement in the learning process (Institute of Medicine, 2013; Martin, 2017; Kuczala 2018).

Learn more:
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