

Benefits of Physical Education

Physical activity is crucial for a person’s well-being. Because children are continuously developing, both physically and emotionally, they are greatly affected by the benefits of physical activity. Schools play a vital role in providing the opportunity for physical activity, with both recess and physical education (P.E.) classes.

WHERE GEORGIA STANDS³

17.1% of Georgia’s high school students are **overweight**

12.7% of Georgia’s high school students are **obese**

RECOMMENDATIONS ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

It is recommended that children and adolescents aged 6 to 17 years should have 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day.⁸

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS



23.8%

24.7%

are physically active for the recommended 60 minutes a day³

46.1%

33.6%

attend daily physical education classes when they were in school³

Physical education benefits students by:⁷



Increasing their level of physical activity



Improving grades and standardized test scores



Helping stay on-task in the classroom

Terms to Know	Definition
Overweight ⁴	A BMI at or above the 85th percentile
Obese ⁴	A BMI above the 95th percentile
Body Mass Index (BMI)	Found by dividing a person’s weight in kilograms by the square height in meters. For children, weight status is determined by using age- and sex-specific percentile for BMI
P.E.	Physical education is an educational course in schools about physical exercise.
Contact Hour	A measure representing an hour of scheduled instruction given to students.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN GEORGIA

Grades	P.E. Requirement
K-5	Minimum of 90 contact hours of instruction at each grade level in health and P.E. ¹
6-8	Schools must provide a P.E. class, but it is not required so there is no minimum requirement on how many hours of instructions a student must receive ¹
9-12	One semester of health (.5 credit) and one semester of P.E. (.5 credit) is required for graduation ²

The [Georgia Performance Standards for Physical Education](#)⁹ are based on the National Physical Education Standards developed by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE). The Standards reflect what a physically educated student should know and be able to do at each grade level (K-12). Six standards with accompanying elements are provided for each grade level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Children and adolescents should do 60 minutes or more of physical activity daily. As part of their daily physical activity, they should engage in vigorous activity on at least three days per week. Additionally, preschoolers should engage in at least 60 minutes and up to several hours per day of unstructured physical activity, and shouldn't be sedentary for more than 60 minutes a day (except when sleeping).¹⁰

Our children should be guaranteed:

1. A minimum of three hours per week of physical education, distinct from health class, throughout the school year for all grade levels (K-12).
2. A minimum of 30 minutes of recess per day for grade levels K through eight.
3. Participation in recess and physical education classes that cannot be withheld for punitive reasons, such as discipline and/or poor academic performance.