



Alternatives to Withholding Physical Activity as Punishment

Physical activity during the school day helps improve student learning, social-emotional skills and attention during class. However, recess and physical education are often taken away as punishment for students who don't complete homework or act out in class. Often times, these are the students that need physical activity the most. Teachers and parents can do their part to ensure students get the activity they need by implementing healthy alternative consequences!

**GAME
ON ACTION** FOR HEALTHY KIDS
TIP SHEET

Alternative Disciplinary Measures

Here are some ways to discipline kids and offer teachable moments.

Students can:

- Clean up the mess they made or remedy the situation for which they are being punished (natural consequence).
- Write an essay on what they did wrong and how to behave better next time (reflection and self-evaluation).
- Write an apology letter to the person who has been wronged. Use it as an opportunity to discuss the importance of seeking and giving forgiveness.
- Miss a class trip or school event if they cannot behave properly (loss of a privilege).
- Do community service.
- Stay late after school for detention.
- Have credit deducted for homework that is turned in late.

Did You Know...

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that children get at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day.

Physical activity helps:

- Build healthy bones and muscles
- Reduce feelings of depression and anxiety, and promotes psychological well-being
- Reduces the risk of chronic diseases and obesity

Positive Classroom Management Techniques

Positive classroom management techniques can be used to avoid behavior problems all together. By reinforcing positive behaviors and setting clear expectations, students are less likely to misbehave.

- Include students in establishing classroom expectations and outcomes; review expectations frequently.
- Be consistent with enforcing behavioral expectations
- Reward positive behavior:
 - Trip to treasure box filled with non-food items such as stickers, pencils, erasers, bookmarks, school supplies, etc. for good behavior
 - Access to items that can only be used on special occasions as a reward for good behavior such as special art supplies, games or toys
 - Special privileges for good behavior such as having lunch with the teacher or friends



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Alternatives to Withholding Physical Activity

Tips

- **Make sure administrators are supportive of alternative consequences.** Ask your administrator to approve materials that are shared with staff to help enforce this practice.
- **Identify a teacher who excels in classroom management.** What do they do to address poor behavior? Can others use their system?
- **Review classroom expectations frequently with students.** Develop routines to help students understand what appropriate classroom behavior looks like.
- **Keep it positive!** Reward students who are doing the right things!

Benefits of Recess

Academic Benefits

- Over 80% of principals report that recess has a positive impact on academic achievement¹.
- Two-thirds of principals report that students listen better and are more focused after recess¹.

Social Benefits

- Gives children a much-needed break from a rigorous learning environment.
- Allows students an opportunity to practice social skills and use their imaginations.

Physical Benefits

- Allows students to release pent up energy.

¹"The State of Play", Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

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