

Hawaii International Conference on Education
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Epidemiological Research: Prospective Implications for Physical Education

Topic Area: Kinesiology & Leisure Education

Key Words: Epidemiology, Research, Curriculum

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Epidemiological Research: Prospective Implications for Physical Education

Session Description

The purpose of this presentation is to examine recent epidemiological research concerning the health and activity levels of the nation's school age children. The implications of recent research findings surrounding obesity, inactivity and co-morbidity diseases such as diabetes, cancer, heart disease and hypertension will be discussed. The audience will gain an overview of the national curricular trends within physical education and the correlation with hypokinetic diseases. Those in attendance will receive insight into how they might implement pertinent curricular changes.

Abstract

In the past, physical education was an integral part of the school curriculum. Physical education curricula should be sequential to promote lifelong physical activity. The problem is that primary and secondary physical education often invokes spectator sports or group activities, yet few individuals ever have the opportunity or desire to engage in such pursuits throughout adulthood. Today, the majority of U.S. states require only one year of physical education or have no requirements in grades 9-12. The debate among politicians, school administrators, teachers and parents continues with concerns for the value of subject matter as it relates to improving national test scores. The educational philosophy today is to compromise or even eliminate physical development in the hope of improving one's mental aptitude. This capricious attitude exemplified by physical education curriculums has led to a decrease in the physical education requirements in the public schools. Also, the pattern that is appearing among school age children in the U.S. is one that is less active, permeated with unhealthy lifestyles, resulting in children becoming profoundly overweight. Epidemiological research suggests that obesity and other co-morbidity diseases continue to increase in the face of declining physical education programs across the nation. Recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Surgeon General, American Medical Association and others indicate a need for early intervention of lifetime activities in an effort to curtail hypokinetic diseases. Since no other discipline can have more effect upon the physical aspects of the human body, physical educators should accept the challenge of leading the way with innovative curriculums. The main points of the presentation will focus on the implications of recent epidemiological research concerning the health and activity levels of the U.S. school age children and an overview of the national curricular trends within physical education and the correlation with hypokinetic diseases. The objective of the presentation is for attendees to gain knowledge of current epidemiological research that will help guide them toward pertinent curricular change in physical education.

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A Survey of the Status of Georgia's K-12 Physical Education Curriculums

Topic Area: Kinesiology & Leisure Education

Key Words: Curriculum, Physical Activity, Fitness

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A Survey of the Status of Georgia's K-12 Physical Education Curriculums

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine recent epidemiological research concerning the health and activity levels of the nations school age children as they relate to innovative changes in physical education curriculums. A survey consisting of 18 questions and a letter of consent was mailed to 1,887 schools in Georgia. To date, 688 (37%) surveys have been completed and returned. The participants consisted of physical education teachers. The teachers were not identified by name. The mailing envelopes were addressed to "physical education department head." Upon completion of this study a single hard copy of the database will be printed and secured by the principle investigator. This study was necessitated by the mounting epidemiological research relative to obesity, diabetes mellitus, physical inactivity, coronary artery disease, and etc. The majority of U.S. states require only one year of physical education or have no requirements in grades 9-12. The debate among politicians, school administrators, teachers and parents continues with concerns for the value of subject matter as it relates to improving national test scores. An example of this is evident by the recent passage of House Bill 1187 in the state of Georgia, which requires only one credit of physical education in grades 6-12. Ironically, Georgia had the largest increase in obesity (101.8%) from 1991-1998, with the greatest regional increase (67.2%) within the southeastern states. The investigators hope to gain further insight into teacher preparation and curricular intervention as they relate to current health, fitness and physical activity trends among school age children.