

TATHAPI



UGC Care Journal

ISSN :2320-0693

June - 2020

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TATHAPI :UGC CARE LISTED JOURNAL

ISSN :2320-0693

Volume-19

Regular Issue-31

June- 2020

Impact factor :5.60

Chief Editorial Officer

S.N.Sharma

Edupedia Publications Pvt Ltd

New Delhi, India

Published by

Tathapi Journals

Edupedia Publications Pvt Ltd

New Delhi, India

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS: A WAY TO DEVELOP FITNESS AND LIFE SKILLS AMONG CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

Physical education plays a critical role in educating the whole student. Research supports the importance of movement in educating both mind and body. Physical education contributes directly to the development of physical competence and fitness. It also helps students to make informed choices and understand the value of leading a physically active life style. A good exercise program includes a warm-up, aerobic activity, exercise to improve muscular fitness and flexibility and a cool down. Rest and sleep are basic to fitness.

Physical activity reduces morbidity and mortality from many of the leading causes of ill health, notably coronary heart diseases, atherosclerosis, hypertension, certain types of cancers, type II diabetes and have positive effects on aspects of health including control of body fat and weight and counteracting depression and anxiety.

Key Words: Fitness, Life Skills.

Introduction

In the early years when schooling was confined to the three R's of reading, writing and arithmetic, the home and the community had the responsibility of providing holistic experience and education in other areas. In today's busy world, the home as an educational institution and child life in the home had been reduced the dimensions symbolised by a forty-foot or even twenty five-foot lot and the tidy cramp of a bungalow, flat or apartment. The home has become an adult dressing room, a refreshment centre, with numerous devices to convert the sideboards into beds. The educational juice has been squeezed out of the home.

Play- nature's method of education- has no chance, and only the unusual parent can organise educational activities under such conditions. Child life and home education have been sacrificed on the altar of an organisation of adult life. Hence we have seen the shifting of the old educational functions of the home and community to the school in the form of manual training, home economics, industrial and vocational education, social education, moral education, health education, physical education etc.

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the level of participation, the degree of skill, and the number of activities mastered as a child directly influences the extent to which the children will continue to participate in physical activity as an adult.

Good health is basic to everything in life. Without health, people have difficulty doing the things they want to do. According to WHO, "health is a state of physical, mental and social well-being and not mere the absence of infirmity." We all must work towards promoting good physical, social and emotional health and preventing illness. Achieving and maintaining good health is largely within our control. Practicing the healthy behaviours listed down can help to increase the quality and length of life.

- ↓ Exercise regularly.
- ↓ Eat three balance healthy meals daily, including breakfast.
- ↓ Choose to eat only healthy snacks.
- ↓ Maintain a normal weight for your height and age.

Physical education plays a major role in the field of health, fitness and in sports and games. Physical education develops the alertness of mind, good human relationships, all-round personality, character building and also emotional development.

Nutrition also plays an important role in maintaining good health. A person doing exercise should take a balanced diet that is 50% of carbohydrate, 30% of protein and 20% of fat.

Exercise and Rest for Fitness:

Physical fitness is the body's ability to meet the demands of daily living. It is a key to overall good health. It affects emotional, social and physical well-being. The three elements of health-related fitness are heart and lung endurance, muscular fitness and flexibility. Heart and lung endurance is the fitness of the heart, blood vessels and lungs. It is the ability of the heart and blood vessels to move oxygen efficiently through blood to lungs.

Health Related Physical Fitness:

- ❖ Cardio Vascular Endurance is the ability of the heart and lungs to stay with an activity for a long time.
- ❖ Muscular fitness is the strength and endurance of body's muscles.
- ❖ Flexibility is the ability to twist, turn, bend and stretch easily.

Regular exercise gives you more energy and helps to feel better and look better. It also helps to reduce the risk of heart disease. Another benefit of exercise is weight control. Exercise burns up the excess calories in the body. Kilocalorie is a measure of the amount of energy in food.

1gm of carbohydrate gives 4.2 kilocalories of energy whereas 1gm of protein gives 4 kilocalories of energy and 1gm of fat gives 9 kilocalories of energy. Always begin exercise workout with a warm-up. Warming up increases blood flow to the muscles and prepares the body for extended exercise. It allows the heart rate to increase gradually rather than suddenly.

A warm-up reduces risk of injury that can happen when the body is pushed into brisk exercise too fast.

Skill Related Physical Fitness

- Strength
- Endurance
- Agility
- Speed
- Co-ordination
- Flexibility
- Power
- Balance

Sports and Life Skills:

Skills are acquired through practice and patience. A skilled person uses less time, energy and resources to do a job and produces quality results. Sports Skills and Life Skills are two major skills that should be developed among children. They play a vital role in their day to day activity. Now a-days students don't know how to walk, play a game and to cope with one another. So they have to improve their sports skills and life skills in their life.

Life Skill Education is an approach that functions as an instrument of empowerment. Enhancing life skills enable pupil to adapt to situations and help them to lead a healthy and positive life. Life skills enable us to translate knowledge, attitude and values into actual abilities by helping us what to do, when to do and how to do it. Life skills enable adolescent boys and girls to utilise the other skills such as functional, vocational/livelihood and literacy skills better.

Types of skills are

- **Literacy Skills:** Reading, writing and arithmetic skills.
- **Language Skills:** Communicating using a language in writing and speech.
- **Functional Skills:** Filling up bank forms to deposit or withdraw money, able to read map, booking railway tickets, fix a fused bulb etc.
- **Vocational Skills:** Enhancing livelihood opportunities – carpentry, tailoring, making handicrafts, fisheries etc.
- **Sports Skills:** Capable of playing on the field as part of a team or as a single player.
- **Cultural Skills:** Capacity to participate in cultural activities like music, dance, folk songs, folk dance, mono-act etc.
- **Recreation skills:** Capacity to lighten the spirits of the group he or she belongs to with activities that can break the monotony. For example: use of jokes, recreational minor games such as passing the ball, dodge ball, snatching the kerchief etc.
- **Life Skills:** Life Skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.

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- **Core Life Skills:** They are Self-awareness, empathy, creative thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relationships, decision making, problem-solving, coping with stress and coping with emotions.

Understanding the Core Life Skills in our Daily Life through Sports Skills

For example give an introduction about the game Kho-Kho, a popular game that is played in rural and urban areas. Both teams of boys and girls can play this game. Then divide the participants into two teams randomly and ask them to organise the game and play. Observe the process adopted by the groups (who takes the leadership, how they organise themselves, how they interact with each other, whether they function as a team, what decisions are being made, body language used and how they carry on the game etc.)

Analysis of the game for understanding Life Skills:

On completion of the game, initiate an interactive discussion to understand their experience in the whole process and their feelings while playing the game. The following questions may be asked for understanding the Life Skills.

- Who took the leadership?
- Who gave the instructions?
- Was there team work?
- Was there any pressure on the team to perform? How the team cope with that?
- Was there a chance for the team to perform well than what they did? If yes, why?
- How was the communication between the opponents? (Body language, sign language, shouting etc.)
- Was there any new technique used in the game?
- If someone got hurt, how did others feel about it?
- Who resolved problems in the teams? A player not moving fast enough or not actively participating.)
- Who cheered the team?
- Who pointed out the shortcomings of the game?

On completion of the game, a sport helps to understand the Core Life Skills:

- **Self-Awareness:** What strength and weakness each one has – (can run very fast, very strong etc.)
- **Empathy:** Response of the team members when one of them gets hurt.
- **Critical Thinking:** Think how the opponent is planning the next move; identifying the shortcoming of the game.
- **Creative Thinking:** Use a new technique to capture a player.
- **Effective Communication:** Verbal and non-verbal communication within and between teams.
- **Interpersonal Relationship:** Accepting other team members as friends and being with them as a team.

- **Critical Thinking, Problem Solving and Decision Making:** When some did not play as per team's requirement to decide to change the strategy immediately.
- **Coping with Stress:** Stress of not being caught, not being eliminated for not following rules or for foul play, to win the game along with others.
- **Coping with Emotions:** Reactions on winning or losing the game.

Conclusion:

Regular exercise improves fitness, increases energy, reduces chance of illness and injury, helps to maintain weight and reduces stress symptoms. A good exercise program includes a warm-up, aerobic activity, exercise to improve muscular fitness and flexibility and a cool down. Rest and sleep are basic to fitness. The body does not function properly without enough sleep. Rest also improves the body's ability to fight disease and injury.

Sports skills and life skills help in developing positive and flexible attitude to day today life. They help in building self-confidence, self-esteem and good rapport and help them to adapt to situations and people. These skills are learnt from their experiences, perceptions, insight, stories, books, parents, teachers, religion, media, culture, sports and games etc. All these skills are present in every individual. To get the best out of them we need to sharpen them regularly. A person who is active in sports and games will be able to cope up with any situations in life.

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Edupedia Publications Pvt Ltd
New Delhi, India