



PHYSICAL EDUCATION ACT (ACT 734)



Between television, computer use and video games, children are spending several hours a day involved in sedentary activities. This lack of activity, along with an unhealthy diet, is the leading cause of childhood obesity in the United States.

**ACCORDING TO THE 2003-2004
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND
PREVENTION STATISTICS:**

- 17% of children and adolescents ages 2-19 years are overweight
- These numbers translate into over 12.5 million overweight children and teens in the U.S.
- Adolescents are more likely to be overweight than younger children.

EFFECTIVE FOR 2004-2005 SCHOOL YEAR

In response to the growing problem of overweight and obese children, the Louisiana Legislature passed the Physical Education Act that now requires physical activity in public schools K-6.

WHAT IS REQUIRED OF MY SCHOOL?

All public schools, grades K-6, are now required to provide at least 30 minutes of quality, moderate to vigorous physical activity each day for students. For students with disabilities, special needs or chronic health problems, a suitably adapted physical activity must be provided.

**HOW DO I ENSURE MY SCHOOL PROPERLY
FOLLOWS THE NEW LAW?**

By September 1st of each year, every K-6 public school must report to its school board information outlining school programs that reflect compliance. The school board will then report its finding to the State Board by October 1st of each year.



IS PE CLASS THE ONLY WAY TO COMPLY WITH THE LAW?

No. Physical activity can be incorporated into lesson plans for many subjects. Structured physical activity during recess is also encouraged.

WHAT ABOUT SECONDARY SCHOOLS, THOSE WITH GRADES 7-10? DO THEY HAVE TO PROVIDE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMS?

Right now there are no laws mandating this policy in grades 7-10. However, the state has launched a pilot physical fitness assessment program to study the benefits of school based physical activity for older school children. This three-year pilot program, which began with the 2005-2006 school year, divides participating schools into four groups and collects data on each group. The four groups are:

- Students who receive nutritional intervention only
- Students who receive physical activity only
- Students who receive a combination of nutrition and physical activity intervention
- Students who receive no intervention

Information on these students will be compiled and studied by the Department of Education, the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center and the Pennington Biomedical Research Center.

WHAT IS MODERATE TO VIGOROUS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) a person should be able to carry on a conversation comfortably during moderate intensity activity and will become winded or unable to carry on a conversation during vigorous intensity activity. Examples of Physical Activity:

MODERATE-INTENSITY ACTIVITIES

- Walking briskly
- Bicycling
- Playing actively
- Dancing

VIGOROUS-INTENSITY ACTIVITIES

- Running or jogging
- Jumping rope
- Inline or rollerskating
- Skipping

