

Whereas, May 1 through May 7, 2018, is observed as National Physical Education and Sport Week by SHAPE America – Society of Health and Physical Educators;

Whereas a decline in physical activity has contributed to the unprecedented epidemic of childhood obesity which has more than tripled in the United States since 1980;

Whereas nearly 1 in 5 school age children and young people (6-9 years) in the United States has obesity and nearly 1 in 4 Americans ages 17-24 are unable to serve in the military because of excess weight;

Whereas regular physical activity is necessary to support normal and healthy growth in children, and is essential to their continued health and well-being;

Whereas according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, overweight adolescents have a 70 to 80 percent chance of becoming overweight adults, increasing their risk for chronic disease, disability, and death;

Whereas physical activity reduces the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and certain types of cancers and type 2 diabetes can no longer be referred to as 'late in life' or 'adult onset' diabetes because it occurs in children as young as 10 years old;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services' Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend that children engage in at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity each day;

Whereas according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, only 29% of high school students are meeting the goal of 60 minutes a day and 14% of high school students did not participate in 60 or more minutes of any kind of physical activity;

Whereas only 25% of children and adolescents (age 12-15) met recommended levels of daily physical activity;

Whereas children spend most of their waking hours at school and therefore need to be active during the school day to meet the recommendations of the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans;

Whereas nationally, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 out of 4 children does not attend any school physical education classes and fewer than 1 in 4 children get 20 minutes of vigorous activity every day;

Whereas teaching children about physical education and sports not only ensures that they are physically active during the school day, but are also physically literate, having the ability, confidence, and desire to be physically active for life;

Whereas according to a 2014 survey by the Department of Health and Human Services, 3.6% of elementary schools, 3.4% of middle schools, and 4.0% of high schools provide daily physical education or its equivalent for the entire school year;



Proclamation

Whereas according to the survey, 15.3% of elementary schools, 8.5% of middle schools, and 5.9% of high schools provided physical education at least three days per week, or the equivalent thereof, for the entire school year for students in all grades in the school;

Whereas research shows that healthy and active children are more likely to thrive academically;

Whereas increased time in physical education class can help children's focus and concentration and achievement on test scores;

Whereas participation in sports teams and physical activity clubs, often organized by the school and run outside of the regular school day, can improve grade point average, student engagement, educational aspirations and the likelihood of graduation;

Whereas participation in sports and physical activity also improves self-esteem, social skills, and body image in children and adults;

Whereas children and youth who partake in K-12 standards-based physical education programs develop physical literacy, motor skills, knowledge and behaviors for active living, physical fitness, sportsmanship, self-efficacy and emotional intelligence;

Whereas the social and environmental factors affecting children can be impacted by the adults and the communities in which they live, and therefore this nation shares a collective responsibility in reversing the childhood obesity trend and ensuring children are physically active for a lifetime;

Whereas we can intervene to provide a supportive and active learning environment in order to prepare all students to lead healthy, physically active lives.

Whereas Congress strongly supports efforts to increase physical activity and participation of youth in sports: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate

- (1) designates the week of May 1 through May 7, 2018, as 'National Physical Education and Sport Week'; –
- (2) recognizes National Physical Education and Sport Week and the central role of physical education and sports in creating a healthy lifestyle for all children and youth;
- (3) encourages school districts to utilize changes made possible through the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act, which Congress passed in December 2015, to implement physical education programs and classes, provide professional development for educators and promote district-wide mental and physical health and wellness; and
- (4) encourages schools to offer physical education classes to students and work with community partners to provide opportunities and safe spaces for physical activities before and after school and during the summer months for all children and youth.

