

Physical Education Insights

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O.R.B.I.T.S. newsletter to provide a
framework for post COVID schools.

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Physical Education



- Physical Education may be the hardest subject online because it requires physical interaction of children. However, it can be done online due to the current situations of school shutdowns (online learning mode) and social distancing (on-site learning mode).
- PE learning involves both understanding of the concept of movement and doing the movement itself. Allocating time for both is important.
- PE, **movement-based practicum**, can be done through regular body stretching, jumping, walking around the house (might not be done by all learners/teacher can only guarantee that if child is holding his device while walking or running), getting something, such as socks, shirt, spoon, etc, towel workouts,
- Most important is focusing on the objectives of the PE class, which is not only to move and kill time. Flexibility and strength of muscles.



Physical Education



Deleting PE or reducing time allotted to it can be harmful to children and adolescents, especially those who are working fully online. This is the time when PE classes are as important as academics in an urging way (obesity and mental health concerns).

Range of PE periods is different from an education system to another, but in general it ranges between 2 to 5 periods per week.

During the regular times according to certain studies, many schools reduced the numbers. COVID school closures is a serious reminder that these sessions are taken seriously. There are challenges, such as getting hurt at home during virtual PE classes, lack of equipment, settings such as apartments, and so on. Teachers are being very creative to keep these classes running and engaging.

Essentials in PE classes as per research:

1. Flexibility and stretching
2. Muscular strength and endurance
3. Health and nutrition
4. Better body figure
5. Social activity

Physical Education



Physical education is needed now more than ever not only for fitness, but also for challenges, such as obesity and mental health.

There is a variety of exercises, such as the **regular fitness movements**, weightlifting (using items at home, such as bottles), stretching (using towels), simple football dribbling, sock dribbling and juggling, dancing to music. Some schools provide jump ropes or hula hoops or ask parents to provide.

Yoga is another form of stretching and breathing. This form of exercises helps tremendously with mental health as well.

A third form can be an **outdoor walk or a hike**, but it is given as an assignment to be recorded in terms of minutes by a parent/guardian.

Most importantly, ensuring that school policies and **safety rules** are highly monitored and already approved before online PE sessions are conducted, and that parents/guardians are informed in case of any new activity, that might be challenging to some learners.

Physical Education



Balancing exercises are a creative way to enhance diversity in PE classes, even online. Balancing, as explained by science, has lots of benefits:

- increases stability and prevents falls
- increases body flexibility
- reduces the risk of ligament problems
- speeds up recoveries from muscle pains
- collaborates with cognitive strength and thus increases attention
- collaborates with mental health and thus increases calmness and mood control

Standing on one leg, standing up from a chair without using the hands, walking on a line of small pillows, etc., are all balancing exercises. **A quick tip** to make easier for children is spreading the arms and focusing on one point, such as staring at a door handle or a plant. Staring at one point or thing is a very effective exercise for building a balancing capacity.

Balancing is a necessary exercising routine for adults as they age. That's why **building it in children as a habit**, is rewarding to those future dads, moms, and professionals.

Physical Education



Creating excitement is essential in online PE classes. PE is one of those classes that are difficult to navigate due to its nature – as a spatial and social-led activity class.

Being innovative is critical. One of the redesigned fun PE activities is **“To the rescue”**- a task that suits home PE learning. Learners and the teacher can agree on hiding a pet or animal, virtually, for the teacher to find. That is, learners agreeing on one hiding spot in the teacher’s room in which he is conducting his/her class, without the teacher knowing that spot. That spot could be a cabinet, under the sofa, and so on.) Then when the rescue starts, the children can mimic the direction that the teacher should take, such as left, right, front, or back.

This can be so much fun as learners should move in the right direction at the right time, which they obviously will not do perfectly, creating giggles and laughter in the virtual class.

It is also safe in the sense that the one, who is dictated the directions (no need for blindfolding here since the hiding act was imaginary) is the teacher, not the learner.

This kind of activity incorporates focus (learners moving left, right, front, or back to direct the teacher towards the hidden pet), cooperation (all learners cooperating to move in the right direction at the right time), and movement (learners will be moving their bodies or even jumping left, right, front, or back).





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