Philosophy of Physical Education

By Tony Stadtherr
So many people spend their health gaining wealth, and then have to spend their wealth to regain their health (A.J. Reb Materi). Young people today spend an incredible amount of time in a sedentary state. Approximately 38% of teens watch more than 3 hours of television per day (CDC, 2003, online). Research shows that many Americans do not take part in regular physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. This problem often starts at an early age. Physical education is commonly considered a learning environment that promotes physical activity and various sports. The intent is generally to promote fitness and health, as well as the benefits of team-building, teamwork, sportspersonship, and fair play (Siedentop, 2004). Physical education needs to be a staple of our youth’s education from a young age through graduation from high school.

Physical education is a unique aspect of education in that it provides the only instruction for students in the development and maintenance of positive attitudes, essential knowledge and physical skills. The contribution of physical education is to provide for the optimal physical development of each individual, providing instruction necessary for life-long fitness, movement, and physical well-being (NASPE, 2005, online).

Good physical education experiences also contribute to social, psychological, and mental development. Without an effective physical education program along with other academic subjects, it is impossible for students to achieve the well-rounded development they need. Physical well being of students has a direct impact on their ability to achieve academically (California Department of Education, 2002, online).

Physical education is the only subject in the school curriculum which provides the opportunity for all children and youth to develop lifetime health, fitness, coordination skills, and movement experiences. A physical education instruction program should enable all youth to realize, acquire, and maintain knowledge of why health related fitness and movement are essential to their present and future well-being (NASPE, 2005, online).

Physical Education instruction is essential for all students, from kindergarten through grade twelve. To profit from the benefits of exercise and movement and to develop essential skills in physical activities suitable for life long participation, time should be scheduled daily at all levels. The daily instructional period for elementary school pupils should be at least thirty minutes. The daily instructional period for secondary students should be a standard class period (NASPE, 2005, online).

As a physical education teacher I hope to teach students’ activities and skills that they can use throughout a life time. In America today, too few people stay active after high school. The focus in America has become individual activity. While I do believe individual activity is useful, I don’t think it is looked at as an attractive exercise option. I want to reintroduce the concept of team activity and sport to our students in a way that differs from the traditional style of sport education. I hope to present exercise and activity as an enjoyable experience, performed in a supportive team atmosphere. The key to this is not only teaching the skills but including all aspects of the activity so it can be appreciated to the fullest. My goal is for students to leave my class with the physical as well as mental skills they must possess in order to be active for a lifetime.

The hazards of being inactive are clear. Physical inactivity is a serious nationwide problem (Surgeon General, 1996, online). It’s clear that physically active children and adults are healthier than those who are not active. As a physical educator, I will emphasize positive experiences for youth in a physically active setting. I will present physical activity as an enjoyable experience in which all can participate. Physical education needs to be a positive, memorable experience for all. This is the least we can do to ensure that our youth have a chance to live a long, quality life.
Reference:


