Children and Physical Education: Let’s Do the Numbers

National recommendations say children should get at least 60 minutes of exercise every day, and at least half of that amount should take place during the school day. But that’s not what’s happening.

High school students who attend physical education classes in an average week.

1 out of 2

22
Percentage of schools that do not require students to take any physical education classes at all.

Six States
Only Illinois, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New York, and Vermont require physical education in grades K–12.

6.5 Million
The number of children who live in “food deserts”—areas that are more than a mile away from a grocery store.

1 in every 3
Children who are physically active every day.

17.7
The percentage of girls who are physically active at least 60 minutes per day.

45
Percentage of overweight children who are living in poverty.

Extra Credit

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Fitness.gov.