



ABC For Fitness™ **Activity Bursts in the Classroom**

Dear School Administrators and Teachers,

At this time when childhood obesity is epidemic, and what used to be “adult onset” diabetes is occurring with increasing frequency in children under age 10, our kids need regular physical activity more than ever. But pressures on schools - in part related to the federal No Child Left Behind legislation - are causing reductions, not increases, in daily physical activity. In other words, No Child Left Behind is leaving more and more of our kids ON their backs, all day long!

Physical activity is vital for children’s health. It is also vital for their attentiveness and concentration. As a parent of 5 children myself, I know all too well that young children can be restless and rambunctious. They need to move. Rambunctiousness is a normal, healthy childhood condition- and calls out for recess, not Ritalin. It is perhaps no coincidence that as daily physical activity levels decline, the diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder is made with ever increasing frequency.

But how do we reconcile our children’s needs for regular activity, with the needs of schools to dedicate as much time to possible to teaching? How, in other words, do we reconcile the square peg to the round hole? By whittling the peg, or re-drilling the hole, of course! Enter ABC for Fitness™.

Inspired by my own son, Gabriel, who at the time was 5 years old, ABC for Fitness™ is a program designed to convert wasted time in school into productive, health-promoting activity bursts. The program is based on the amount of time TEACHERS say they typically waste during the school day in disciplining restless or inattentive children. By breaking activity into short “bursts” that can be delivered right in the classroom throughout the day, ABC for Fitness™ provides teachers a means to dissipate the restless energy of their pupils; keep the children alert and focused; and never interfere with teaching time. In fact, since creative teachers, and the training manual, have approaches to teaching during the activity bursts, teaching time can increase with this program.

ABC for Fitness™ is offered to schools at no cost in dollars. It comes at no real cost in time. And it can be in addition to any other physical education program a school may provide. The program is intended to promote health and fitness; enhance concentration and the behavioral environment in the classroom; and help optimize academic performance.

As a parent, I will be deeply gratified if children in your school benefit from ABC for Fitness™. And Gabriel will certainly be pleased and proud of himself!

With all best wishes,

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