

Michigan's Exemplary Physical Education Curriculum

Initiative Description

To address physical inactivity, the Michigan Departments of Education and Health have supported the development of the Exemplary Physical Education Curriculum (EPEC).

The EPEC program

- Enhances physical activity knowledge; personal and social skills; motor skills; and physical activity and fitness levels to equip students to be active for life.
- Aims to improve confidence and fitness levels through increased competence in these skills.
- Consists of lessons that address each of the content standards from the National Association of Sport and Physical Education and the Michigan Physical Education Content Standards.
- Works in the most common Michigan physical education class time frame of 2 days per week for 30 minutes each time and has lessons for grades K–12.

Evaluation

The evaluation of EPEC measured its effectiveness in improving student attitudes and confidence in physical activity, motor skills, physical activity levels, and fitness among 4th and 5th grade students. The evaluation followed 1,464 students who received EPEC and who received physical education curricula other than EPEC in 16 Michigan schools from the fall of 2004 through spring 2006.

Findings

Compared with same-grade students receiving alternate physical education curricula

- Fourth-grade students exposed to EPEC had greater levels of confidence in their ability to perform motor skills.
- Fifth-grade students exposed to EPEC had greater levels of physical activity knowledge.
- Fourth- and 5th-grade students exposed to EPEC demonstrated higher levels of motor skills.
- Fourth-grade students exposed to EPEC reported more total minutes of physical activity.
- Fourth-grade students exposed to EPEC reported more energy during physical activity.

Implications

EPEC represents a new generation of curricula focused on motor skills. Learning and performing motor skills occur through individual and team physical activities; these gains in skills could ultimately enable lifelong fitness. This curriculum has since become part of Michigan's coordinated school health program and help to increase health behaviors among Michigan students.

The Public Health Problem

Overweight and inactivity are problems among youth in Michigan. Research has shown that physical inactivity is the most common risk factor for chronic disease. In 2007 in Michigan

- 12% of high school students were obese and 17% were overweight.
- Less than half (44%) of high school students met recommended levels of physical activity.
- 15% of high school students did not participate in 60 minutes or more of physical activity any day.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
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