



PRESS RELEASE

For more information, contact:

Paula Keyes Kun (703) 476-3461; pkun@shapeamerica.org

Follow SHAPE America on Twitter; hashtag #SHAPEBoston
and like us on Facebook and Instagram

New Study Reveals Attendance in High School Physical Education Has Stabilized, But Still Below the Recommended Guidelines

September 22, 2016, Reston, VA – A new report issued today by the National Physical Activity Plan Alliance and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that between 1991 and 2013, U.S. high school students' attendance in physical education classes remained stable, but at a level much lower than the national recommendations of daily physical education. The report, entitled "Secular Changes in Physical Education Attendance among U.S. High School Students," observed that one-half of students do not attend physical education classes.

"The primary goal of this report was to determine the extent to which school-based physical education attendance has changed over the past two decades so that we are better able to inform national recommendations and strategies," says Committee Chair Russell R. Pate, Ph.D., of the University of South Carolina and Chair of the National Physical Activity Alliance. "Despite popular claims of declining participation in physical education classes, the results suggest there is no significant change in physical education attendance."

The key findings of the report include:

- The proportion of high school students attending physical education on a daily basis declined from 1991-1995 and since then has remained stable at approximately one-third. The trend in the early 1990's might be explained by the adoption of block scheduling which remains common in many school districts.

- Across the 22-year period, consistently more boys than girls reported attending physical education classes, with the average percentages being 57% versus 49%.
- Attendance in physical education classes decreases steadily from 9th to 12th grade. Attendance was greatest among 9th grade students, although that percentage declined from 75% to 64% between 1991 and 2013. During this period, there were increases in attendance by 11th and 12th grade students. Only about one-third of 11th and 12th grade students reported physical education attendance.

Since the report shows that high school students' physical education attendance is currently below the recommended guidelines, the adoption of policies and programs aimed at increasing participation in physical education among all U.S. high school students should be prioritized. The U.S. National Physical Activity Plan provides evidence-based strategies and tactics that, if fully implemented, have the potential to substantially increase student participation in school-based physical education programs.

National Physical Activity Plan Alliance

The NPAPA is a not-for-profit 501-c3 organization committed to ensuring the long-term success of the National Physical Activity Plan (NPAP). A coalition of national organizations and at-large experts on physical activity and public health, they have come together to ensure that efforts to provide physical activity in the American population will be guided by a comprehensive, evidence-based strategic plan.

About SHAPE America

SHAPE America – Society of Health and Physical Educators is the nation's largest membership organization of health and physical education professionals. Since its founding in 1885, the organization has defined excellence in physical education, and our National Standards for K-12 Physical Education serve as the foundation for well-designed physical education programs across the country. We provide programs, resources and advocacy to support health and physical educators at every level, from preschool to university graduate programs.

SHAPE America has 50 state affiliates and is a founding partner of national initiatives such as the Presidential Youth Fitness Program, Let's Move! Active Schools and the Jump Rope For Heart/Hoops For Heart programs. "50 Million Strong by 2029" is our commitment to empower all children to lead healthy and active lives through health and physical education programs. For more information, visit <http://www.shapeamerica.org>.

####