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Your child needs, physical activity as a daily dose for an active living!

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to understand the importance of physical activity for young budding children and their sedentary lifestyle, as in the view of today's global and academic pressure. Minimal gross motor qualities and fine motor qualities which are the prerequisites for an active child. The children are sorted with their daily routine, jam packed with academics, competitive sports and fewer time or no time for leisurely activities as recommended by WHO Learning through playing, gender sensitisation where gender equality is the prime need in the society and improvement of Physical and mental abilities is need of the hour. This makes us realise the significance of the physical activity among children which aids them in proper utilisation of daily dose for an active living.

Keywords: Physical activity, motor skill development, gender sensitivity, cognitive development

Introduction

Millennium arrives, technology advances and scenario changes and Pandemic happened!

And yes it's a huge and a massive transformation of technology from the past to the present. We only tend to find; children with sophisticated wingers, video games, PC-games, Tabs, smart phones, I pods, Electronic devices and Gadgets.

Now this being the present scenario, where children are put into a sophisticated lifestyle where they hardly find time for play. Some of them do own a racquet, a frisbee, a skater board, a yoga mat, a football, crazy balls, boomerang or a colorful hoop. These beautiful and colorful objects are bought from a sporting shop which attracts parents more than kids, and thus parents buy them for their children to play with them. Time; being a major constraint for these kids as they spend most of their day in school, tuitions etc. When they are at home, they are too busy with their gadgets and the time required for them to wind up from this play is almost an hour or so...

The lifestyle is advanced nowadays that kids have mostly avoided physical activity such as walking, cycling to school, the commutation mode is mostly parents pick up and drop or else it's the auto-rickshaws, school vans or the school buses. The child takes half an hour to an hour to reach the school with all constraints. The assignments or homework which has been assigned by their respective schools and tuitions are a heavy one indeed. The lifestyle of these kids has to be transformed immediately, if the same situation keeps continuing, the child is put to many stressors, peer pressure and pressures at home cause disinterest in their academics and co curricular activities.

The era of advanced technology has created a boom with lot of merits and demerits along. The 21st century is accompanied by the global warming, social isolation dependency, reduction of creativity and change in reasoning, sedentary lifestyle, increase in non communicable disease, expensive treatments and imbalance in the ecosystem.

And now arrives the pandemic, the whole year has come to a standstill with a huge loss in the lives of people's economy, education etc. The parents are striving hard to keep up their job and to bring back a secured life to their families. Have we ever thought of those young minds used to spend most of their time at school, tuitions, classes and competitions have now exposed to so much of stress due to online classes, submissions, sedentary life. The fear of pandemic has lot of restrictions over the kids with staying at home, compulsory masks, social distancing and having an inactive life with adverse physical and mental health consequences.

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A few of the community living places such as residential colonies and apartments are mostly having provisions for children to step out and play in very small groups for a short period.

WHO defines physical activity as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that require energy expenditure - including activities undertaken while working, playing, carrying out household chores, travelling, and engaging in recreational pursuits.

The term physical activity is mostly confused with exercise, which is a part of the physical activity, exercises are usually planned, structured mostly repetitive and highly beneficial as they bring in lot of beneficiary changes in the anatomy, physiology and functioning of the human body. Exercise must be performed with resistance, intensity, frequency and duration. All the muscles have to be worked in the body as the cardio vascular system, muscle balance, muscle strength, flexibility can be improved. Exercises have to be designed to one's requirement.

Beyond exercise any other physical activity which is performed during leisure time is quite unstructured, unplanned, it may be practiced as a part of a person's work, but has enormous health benefits. Further both the moderate and vigorous intensity physical activity improves health in a great way. Doing something constructive is better than doing nothing.

Key facts: WHO

- Insufficient physical activity is one of the leading risk factors for death worldwide.
- Insufficient physical activity is a key risk factor for non communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer and diabetes.
- Physical activity has significant health benefits and contributes to prevent NCDs.
- Globally, 1 in 4 adults is not active enough.

- More than 80% of the world's adolescent population is insufficiently physically active.
- WHO Member States have agreed to reduce insufficient physical activity by 10% by 2025.
- Physical inactivity is a leading cause of disease and disability warns WHO, 4 April 2020.
- (Approx 2 million deaths are attributed to physical inactivity which has prompted WHO to issue a warning on the sedentary lifestyle of people in the world)

The launch of Global Action Plan on Physical Activity

WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus joined the Prime Minister António Costa of Portugal and launched the new "WHO Global action plan on physical activity and health 2018-2030: More active people for a healthier world."

Worldwide, one in five adults, and four out of five adolescents (11-17 years), do not do enough physical activity. Girls, women, older adults, poorer people, people with disabilities and chronic diseases, marginalized populations, and indigenous people have fewer opportunities to be active.

Regular physical activity is key to preventing and treating non communicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and breast and colon cancer. NCDs are responsible for 71% of all deaths globally, including for the deaths of 15 million people per year aged 30 to 70

The action plan shows how countries can increase physical inactivity in adults and adolescents by 15% by 2030. It recommends a set of 20 policy areas, which combined, aim to create more active societies through improving the environments and opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to do more walking, cycling, sport, active recreation, dance and play.

WHO recommends

Table 1: Recommended Physical Activity

Sl. No	Age Category	P A Requirements	Also Include	Frequency	Remarks
1	5-17 years	60 minutes Moderate to vigorous intensity	Strength training for muscle and bones	Daily	60 min + Additional health benefits
2	18-64 years	150 minutes Moderate to vigorous intensity	Strength for major muscle groups (2 + days a week)	Per week	300 min + Additional health benefits
3	65 + years	150 minutes Moderate – vigorous intensity	Strength for major muscle groups (2 + days a week) Those with poor mobility must to enhance balancing ability to prevent falls and injury (3 + days a week)	Per Week	300 min + Additional health benefits

The intensity varies with different people for better cardio respiratory health all activities have to be performed with bouts of 10 minutes duration.

India Report Card - 2018

The Active Healthy Kids Global Alliance organized the concurrent preparation of Report Cards as part of Global Matrix 3.0, an international initiative to compare the physical activity of children and youth in 49 countries from six continents (representing 60 per cent of the world's population). The 2018 India Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth is the first assessment of 10 key indicators of physical activity among children and youth in India (Overall physical activity, organized sport participation, active play, active transportation, sedentary behavior, physical fitness, family and peers, school, community and built environment, government strategies, policies and

investments) Yoga was added as a new indicator specific to India. (RWG prepared the new indicator to capture a key cultural component of physical activity in India)

India shocking scores a 'D' Grade in the Overall Physical activity. The countries such as Slovenia, Zimbabwe and Japan have been awarded the first three positions. Being active is a way of life, a cultural norm for these countries and the children and youth spent more than 60 minutes in physical activity every day. India had secured C garde i

Benefits of physical activity and risk of insufficient physical activity

Regular physical activity of moderate intensity – such as walking, cycling, or playing sports – has significant benefits for health. At all ages, the benefits of being physically active outweigh potential harm, for example through accidents.

Some physical activity is better than doing none. By becoming more active throughout the day in relatively simple ways, people can quite easily achieve the recommended activity levels.

Regular and adequate levels of physical activity leads;

- Motor skill development
- Grasping of Sports Skills
- Cognitive Development
- Socialization
- Gender Sensitivity
- Subject Integration
- Knowledge of Physical Education
- Knowledge of Health Education

Motor skill development

It is a learned ability to cause a predetermined movement, it is relatively a permanent change in ability to perform a skill with practice or experience, continuous /regular practice of these skills will improve in gaining greatly improved performance. Gross and Fine motor skills are the types in motor skills

Gross motor skills uses large muscle groups in the movement such as walking, running, jumping, crawling, swimming, climbing and balancing (oculomotor skills) and throwing, catching, kicking (object control skills) these skills are not extensive but is the outcome of continuous tasks .

Fine Motor Skills uses smaller muscle groups which use wrists, hands, fingers, feet and toes. These tasks are precise in nature such as handwriting, playing a musical instrument, blinking etc and there is a retention loss if these skills are not used for a long time. These skills can become impaired due to conditions such as injury, illness, developmental disabilities etc. problems with brain, muscles and joints may also have an effect on the fine motor skills which decreases control further.

Grasping of Sports Skills

As there is development of motor skills in a child, the motor skills in turn helps in the transfer of learning specific sports skills as the large muscle groups are already accustomed to fundamental movements it becomes easier and quicker to grasp sports specific skills for a child.

If the fundamental skills are regularly performed and have been mastered the time taken to learn a sport specific skill may take longer time to practice and master and further sports specific skills would come handy in a short time

Eg; if the child is already used to throwing a ball over the head regularly, he/she will have a better edge on quicker learning in throwing a basketball with minimum teaching and correction of skills

Cognitive Development

There are many number of evidences that reveal that physical exercises have positive effect on the functioning of brain , the two key areas such as the pre frontal cortex and the temporal lobes subsequently produces new brain cells and increase in their size and thus having greater volume , thus there is delay in the onset of diseases such as Alzheimer's, dementia and so on.

Performing exercises will release lot of hormones in the brains such as Dopamine, serotonin, noradrenalin which help in improving focus, attention and mood . They also help in storing of long term memory. The immediate effect on the brain through exercises helps in cognitive development of the kids

Socialization

Man is a social animal, he lives in a society where he contributes to the society in performing his role as a responsible citizen, by creating awareness among the society regarding health , social issues and he is always a part of the society in all ups and downs of the society. Involvement of people in play , group physical activity, performing exercises in group , playing a team sport in the colony, community and society aids in developing a good bonding between people in and around the society.

The harmony and integration during play is as good campaigning for peace and friendliness. Socialization helps to reduce deadly stress. Socialization helps to avoid isolation, and being lonely may reduce longevity. Community exercise programs fill this need by providing a combination of exercise and socialization that may be more appealing.

When it comes to home, the word socialization starts from home. The child learns with observations, building a good rapport with the family is the primary motive at home for a quality life at home. The parents can have better bonding with children when they involve in the daily activities at home, playing with kids and doing exercises with kids creates lot of positive vibes.

One study conducted by the University of Michigan suggested that children who participated in team sports learned to be more empathetic towards others. Furthermore, there was a direct correlation between the students who exercised the most and both leadership skills and empathetic behavior. Most surprisingly, perhaps, is the fact that these same children tended to treat themselves better and adopted healthy lifelong habits.

Another study conducted by the University of Minnesota found that not only did physically active adults spend more time with other people and have more friends, but they also experienced better mental health.

Gender Sensitivity

The gender equity is the burning issues in the current global scenario, be it in India, the equality issues starts at the very economically poor people upto the wealthiest ones. The gender equity is the main concern as both the male and female genders are equal. the girl is not only meant to play with dolls , she is also capable of playing a rough sport like football too.

The equity lessons can be taught from home through physical activities where the whole family is involved irrespective of the gender. The physical activity has to be designed in such a way that both the genders have to be given equal opportunities to perform their tasks effectively.

Every boy child has to know that a girl can actually do lot many more activities which they used to think that girls were not meant to; the only thing that has to be catered to is the opportunity created and a platform raised, so that a girl child also realizes that she is also in the race with all. Physical activity is performed better with motivation from both extrinsic and intrinsic way.

Subject Integration

The subject integration has a broad meaning with relating a learning experience of a concept, theory, a fact through experience, experiment, play and activity. The learning through play is introduced in most parts of the world to foster better learning and quicker learning. It aids in creating exposure to the kids to do and learn.

Physical activity, exercise, play or a sport will help the child

to learn various concepts of academic subjects such as math, science, social science, environmental science, languages and arts so on and so forth.

Insufficient physical activity is one of the leading risk factors for global mortality and is on the rise in many countries, adding to the burden of NCDs and affecting general health worldwide. People who are insufficiently active have a 20% to 30% increased risk of death compared to people who are sufficiently active.

Knowledge of Physical Education

The physical Education has been made a compulsory subject CBSE, ICSE, State Syllabus schools in 2018. The Fit India movement was launched in August 2019 to create awareness about physical fitness to be a part of daily life. The need of physical fitness in daily life will reduce the onset of many lifestyle diseases, communicable and non communicable disease. Physical Education is needed for kids up to the elderly people.

Physical Education is being just a subject at schools but the necessity of the physical education is being taken very seriously at global level because the rate of people having various health issues, and the evidences of reduction of life expectancy has increased compared to early times. The World Health Organization has taken lot of measures to bring awareness about the need of physical activity.

Conclusion

Minimum 30 minutes of exercise at least three times a week is required for any individual from a kid to an adult , these are done with their own capacities and regulating the intensity of the activity . The minimal amount of exercise, physical activity brings in all kinds of muscle to be put to use. Exercises increases muscle strength, co ordination, balance, protects and regulates proper functioning of all the vital organs in the body. Immediate effect on the brain, a single workout can immediately increase levels of neuro transmitters like dopamine, serotonin, and noradrenalin. Improves ability to shift and focus attention (focus improvement) which can last for up to 2 hours. A single workout improves reaction time. The most common finding of long term exercise is the significant rise in the volume of the hippocampus.

Protective effects on your brain, like long term workouts makes muscles becoming bigger and stronger after exercises, the pre frontal cortex and hippocampus. This is important as these two areas are more susceptible for neurodegenerative diseases and normal cognitive decline in aging, it's not going to cure Alzheimer's, dementia ,but its just going to create strongest, so that it takes longer to this disease to actually have an effect Several Organizations, Authorities and Countries are focusing and throwing light upon the need and importance of regular Physical activity, exercises and being active with good lifestyle changes. In order to avoid permanent changes in children behavior that may extend beyond the period of covid-19, measures must be taken to promote home and neighborhood based physical activity during children's leisure time. More care has to be taken to reduce the sedentary time and to let the children take part in structure physical activities to keep themselves fit and fine and to gain better physical and mental health and thereby reducing the stress in their lives due to pandemic

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