Problems Facing Physical Education Essay, Research Paper

Problems Facing Physical Education

I am not one hundred percent positive, but I am pretty sure I want to major in Physical Education. There are many problems and dilemmas facing professionals in Physical Education. Problems range from poor facilities to kids not receiving proper treatment in the class. I think the biggest problem is the poor facilities.

Most states do not even meet the minimum recommendations for physical activity of 50 to 200 minutes a week, according to a 1997 National Association for Sport and Physical Education survey. Even if the kids have a regular physical education class they may not be getting any real exercise. One study in California found that during the course of one week, “school kids were getting only six to 20 minutes of activity tops,” says study author James Sallis, Ph.D., professor of psychology at San Diego State University. Most of gym period was spent doing activities such as lining up for attendance or watching other kids take their turn. In some schools PE class was just another period of recess.

Budget cuts and lack of teacher training is really starting to hit home. The percentage of youngsters who are overweight has more than doubled in the past 30 years. (According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 14 percent of children ages six to 11 are overweight, as are 12 percent of adolescents.) It’s not just from poor eating habits. The average child in America spends more than four hour a day watching TV or playing computer or video games. If the children are not getting the proper amount of exercise then that can make the difference between being normal weight and overweight.

Too many PE programs are characterized by over sized classes, poor facilities, and little administrative support. Another dilemma facing PE has nothing to do with the budget or facilities. Some teachers teaching the classes are not properly qualified or trained. A lot of programs have instruction-equating punishment with exercise. From what I understood this had to do with things like, allowing students to pick teams, evaluating performance on things such as showing up properly attired rather than learning, and letting the best athletes in the class dominate.

I interviewed Larry Becker, one of my high school football coaches and also PE teacher, to see what he thought were the major concerns and dilemmas facing Physical Education. I talked to him about going into Physical Education as my major because I want to be a coach. He said probably the biggest misconception is that people go into Physical Education to be a coach or just a PE teacher and they do not really realize that not too many schools are looking just primarily for PE teachers. He said that he majored in science because he knew that more than likely he was not going to just walk in somewhere and get a job as a PE teacher. He said it looks a lot better on your resume if you have something else as your major, and maybe minor in PE.

He also talked about the poor facilities and budget cuts that Physical Education suffers from. He said it was not really an issue at my school, but at some schools the main portion of the money spent has to go to education purposes other than PE.

Many parents have joined together and came up with many solutions facing PE today. Many parents have found out about a program called SPARK, which was, co-created by Sallis. Unlike classic PE in which the curriculum has practically been unchanged since the forties and fifties this new PE emphasizes working together in groups versus competing teams and promotes fitness, not sports skills. Everybody can appreciate that. The kids that are not athletically gifted or do not like the traditional sports can feel more involved and in return reap greater benefits.