

## Bill Description: S.634/H.R.1585

### Fitness Integrated with Teaching Kids Act (FIT Kids Act)

A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to enhance children's health

The Fitness Integrated with Teaching Kids Act supports quality physical education for all public school children through grade 12. It ensures that kids are active during the school day and learn how to be personally responsible for their health through exercise and a healthy diet.

Physical activity is the most important component of any program to reduce the epidemic of childhood obesity and may also reduce tobacco use, insomnia, depression and anxiety. Research also indicates that fit and active children learn more effectively and achieve more academically. The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend that children engage in sixty minutes or more of physical activity each day, so therefore kids need to be active during the many hours they spend in school. School is also where kids learn how to exercise and eat a healthy diet through physical education, health education and other programs. Yet many kids receive little or no physical education or physical activity at school.

If we are to reap the health and other benefits of school children, we need to ensure that they are knowledgeable about wellness and are active during the school day. Parents also have a key role in the health of their children and need to be informed of school physical education and other programs so they can complement and model at home.

The FIT Kids Act includes amendments to the elementary and Secondary Education Act:

- **Provide information to parents and the public by requiring all schools, districts and states to report on students' physical education programs.** In Title I Report Cards, adds elements that report on schools' physical education programs:
  - 1) Amount of time spent in required physical education as measured against the recommended national standard;
  - 2) Percentage of local educational agencies in the state that have a required age appropriate physical education curriculum;
  - 3) Percentage of elementary and secondary school physical education teachers who are state licensed or certified;
  - 4) Percentage of schools that have a School Health Council that meets monthly to promote a healthy school environment;
  - 5) Amount of physical space in each district that is used primarily for physical education and activity.



## Heart Disease and Stroke. You're the Cure.

- **Ensure that children get the support they need throughout their educational experience.** All parents, educators, counselors and administrators should be involved in teaching children healthy lifestyles. Amends the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program, Smaller Learning Communities and the 21st Century Community Learning Centers to help ensure that children receive nutritional education and structured physical activity in their schools and communities. Amends Title I Parent Involvement section by including information and training for parents to encourage healthy and active lifestyles for children.
- **Support professional development for teachers and principals to promote children's healthy lifestyles and physical activity.** Amends Title II Part A to support professional development opportunities for teachers and principals to promote students' health and physical activity. Ensures that physical education and health education teachers obtain professional development directly related to their curricula. Additional funding of professional development provides training in how to teach physical education and health education to boost students' ability to learn.
- **Fund study to examine the impact of health and physical activity on student achievement and find effective ways to improve healthy living and physical activity for all children.** The bill proposes a National Academy of Sciences Panel and Study to identify effective ways to combat childhood obesity and encourage healthy living for all children. The study should examine the impact of health and physical activity on student achievement, innovative methods of engaging parents and children in developing healthy habits, and effective ways to ensure a healthy school environment.