



Heart Disease and Stroke. You're the Cure.

Bill Summary: S.634/H.R.1585

Fitness Integrated with Teaching Kids Act (FIT Kids Act)

A bill to enhance children's health in No Child Left Behind

AHA/ASA POSITION

The AHA and ASA strongly support the FIT Kids Act. America's children should receive daily, quality physical education and learn about leading healthy lifestyles. This will help stem the tide of childhood obesity, which will improve life-long health, as well as enhance academic and emotional growth. Our children need a head start on a healthy life.

SUPPORTERS INCLUDE:

- Afterschool Alliance
- American Alliance for Health, PE, Recreation, and Dance
- American Assn for Health Edn
- American College of Sports Medicine
- American Diabetes Assn
- American Public Health Assn
- American School Counselor Assn
- American School Health Assn
- BlueCross BlueShield Assn
- Campaign to End Obesity
- Center for Science in Public Interest
- First Focus
- Healthy Schools Campaign
- National Association of County and City Health Officials
- National Association of Health Education Centers
- National Assn for Sport and PE
- National Education Assn
- National Education Taskforce
- National Football League
- National PTA
- Save the Children USA
- The Cooper Institute
- Trust for America's Health
- YMCA of the USA

LEADING SPONSORS

Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI)
Rep. Zach Wamp (R-TN)
61 cosponsors as of 5/05/09

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA)
Sen. Ensign (R-NV)
12 cosponsors as of 5/05/09

WHAT THE BILL WOULD DO

The "Fitness Integrated with Teaching Kids Act" amends No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act to increase children's physical activity throughout the school day and ensure that they learn how to live healthy lives through exercise and diet.

The proposed changes to NCLB:

- Require all schools, districts and states to report on quantity and quality of physical education;
- Amend existing school programs to integrate physical activity and wellness throughout the school day;
- Support professional development for health and physical education teachers and principals to boost students' ability to learn and help promote healthy lifestyles and physical activity; and
- Fund study to examine the impact of health and physical activity on student achievement and find effective ways to increase physical activity during the school day.

WHY CONGRESS SHOULD ENACT THIS LEGISLATION

- Childhood obesity in the United States has reached epidemic proportions. It is estimated that by 2010, twenty percent of children in the U.S. will be obese.
- The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend that children engage in sixty minutes or more of physical activity each day. So, given the many hours kids spend at school, they need to be active during the school day.
- Increasing physical activity is the most important component of any program to combat childhood obesity, yet many schools are cutting back on PE programs. Only 3.8% of elementary, 7.9% of middle, and 2.1% of high schools provide daily physical education or its equivalent for the entire school year. Twenty-two percent of schools do not require students to take any physical education at all.
- Ironically, a lack of regular physical activity can hurt a child's academic, social and emotional development. Research shows that healthy children learn more effectively and achieve more academically.
- Physical activity may also have a positive impact on cognitive ability and reductions in tobacco use, insomnia, depression and anxiety.