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Themes for Participation in Physical Activity Breaks in College Classrooms

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Natural Science

Oral

Title: Themes for Participation in Physical Activity Breaks in College Classrooms

Presenter: Polson, Taylor

Faculty Sponsor: Stellino, Megan

Abstract:

It is well known that physical activity has many physiological benefits to the human body, but more recently the psychological effects have been examined. Research on the psychological effects of exercise has shown that physical activity can decrease depression. Specifically, the effects of physical activity in classrooms on the psychological health and academic performance of students has become a major area of focus, both in and out of the United States. Physical activity has recently been implemented into the class room in the form of physical activity breaks (P.A.B.s), in which students participate in short bouts of exercise during class. Research on physical activity breaks has shown many benefits, including decreasing off-task behavior, improving test scores, and increasing the amount of physical activity outside of classrooms. However, most this research has been focused on elementary and middle school students. This project analyzed the results of a study that implemented P.A.B.s into an undergraduate class, which is a gap that has yet to be analyzed. Themes were analyzed for reasons students chose to participate or not participate in these breaks. Enjoyment, needing a break, and contributing to the study were the top reasons students chose to participate. Not feeling well, being unprepared, or just not wanting to were the main themes found for students choosing not to participate in the P.A.B.s. The P.A.B. program has already been created and implemented by a group of researchers. This study will analyze data that has already been collected by the team of researchers.