

2015

## Utilization of Classroom Physical Activity Breaks

Danae M. Dinkel

*University of Nebraska at Omaha, dmdinkel@unomaha.edu*

Jung-Min Lee

*University of Nebraska at Omaha, jungminlee@unomaha.edu*

Caitlin Golden

*University of Nebraska at Omaha*

Connie Schaffer

*University of Nebraska at Omaha, cschaffer@unomaha.edu*

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/pahppresentations>

 Part of the [Maternal and Child Health Commons](#), and the [Other Public Health Commons](#)

### Recommended Citation

Dinkel, Danae M.; Lee, Jung-Min; Golden, Caitlin; and Schaffer, Connie, "Utilization of Classroom Physical Activity Breaks" (2015). *Research Presentations*. Paper 4.

<http://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/pahppresentations/4>

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Physical Activity in Health Promotion Lab at DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Research Presentations by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact [unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu](mailto:unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu).



## ABSTRACT

Historically within schools, physical education and recess periods have been utilized as the primary times for children to obtain some portion of physical activity (PA) recommendations during the school day. Due to academic pressure, opportunities for physical education and recess periods have been reduced. Fewer than 5% of schools require daily physical education and fewer than 12% require daily recess. Additional PA opportunities are needed throughout school day.

**PURPOSE:** The overall purpose of this study was to examine teachers' utilization of classroom PA breaks.

**METHODS:** 332 Elementary school teachers from five school districts in a Midwest city were recruited to complete an online survey.

**RESULTS:** A majority of elementary school teachers from the school districts were utilizing classroom PA breaks and were interested in learning more about implementing them in their classroom.

**DISCUSSION:** Future research is needed on the most effective methods to increase classroom teachers' knowledge about and use of classroom PA breaks. Additionally, further analysis is warranted to examine differences between school districts.

## INTRODUCTION

Classroom physical activity (PA) breaks may be a viable solution for providing additional PA opportunities for children throughout the school day. Classroom PA breaks can also increase children's time on-task, as well as improve reading, math, and spelling scores. Nationally, only 11.8% of districts require classroom PA breaks. Regardless of policies, there is limited information on the implementation of classroom PA breaks in public and private schools.



## METHODS

- Five school districts of various sizes (4 public, 1 private) in a metropolitan Midwest city were recruited to participate.
- A 38 question online survey was sent to each district.
- Four districts sent the link to all elementary schools within their district and one district selected ten schools to complete the survey.
- Participants receive a \$5 gift card for participating.

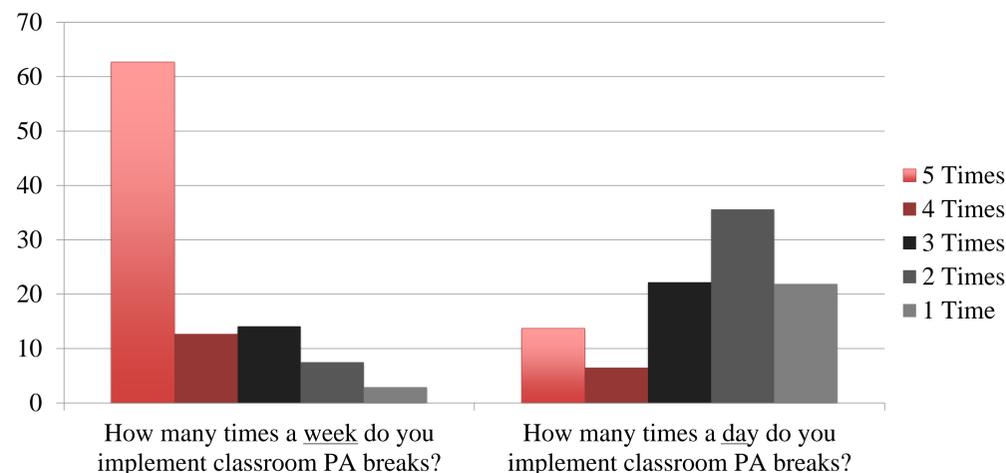
Table 1. Characteristics of Participants

Gender	Male	25 (7.5%)
	Female	305 (91.9%)
Age	20-30	113 (43.1%)
	31-40	105 (31.7%)
	41-50	57 (17.1%)
	51+	56 (16.8%)
Highest Level of Education	Bachelor	132 (39.8%)
	Master	196 (59.0%)
	Doctoral	1 (0.3%)
Years of Teaching Experience	1-5	109 (38.5%)
	6-11	66 (23.3%)
	12-19	44 (15.5%)
	20+	64 (19.3%)

## RESULTS

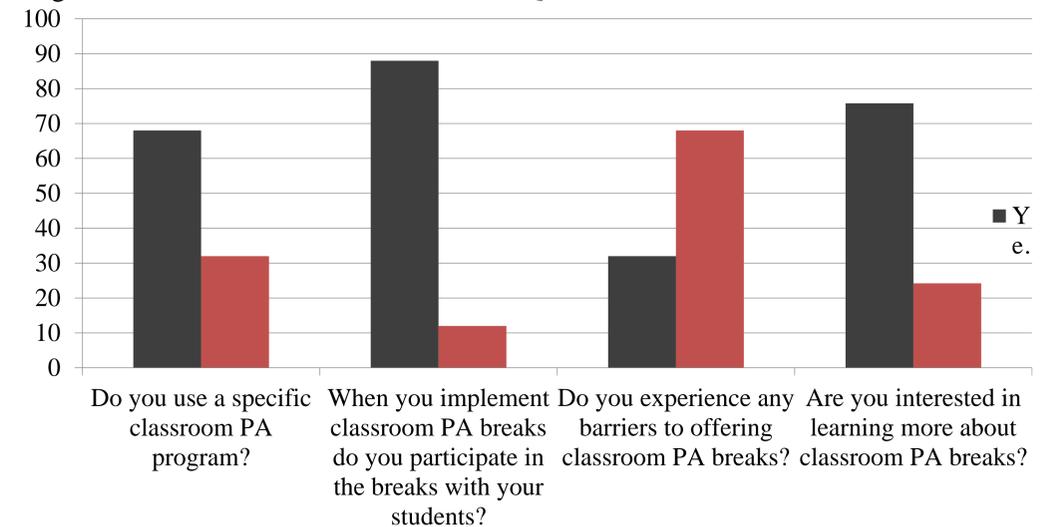
- Response rates in each district ranged from 19% - 52%.
- Of the 332 elementary school participants who completed the survey a majority reported that they did utilize classroom PA breaks (92%).
- Over half (62.7%) of teachers who integrated PA breaks did so 5 days/week, 1-2 times/day (53%).

Figure 1. Utilization of Classroom PA Breaks



## RESULTS (Cont.)

Figure 2. Additional Classroom PA Break Questions



- Less than two thirds (62.3%) of teachers used a specific PA break program (e.g., GoNoodle, Jammin' Minute) and a majority of teachers (88%) reported participating in PA breaks with students.
- About a third of teachers (32%) who implemented PA breaks reported barriers to implementing them. The top reported barrier for all teachers was lack of time (67.4%).
- A majority of participants were interested in learning more (75.8%).
- Teachers preferred to learn about PA breaks in either a training offered at their school (58.9%) or short online training videos (42.9%) and from a national expert (35.7%), teacher in their school (30.7%), or physical educator in their school (29.8%).

## Discussion

Despite the fact a majority of teachers already utilized classroom PA breaks, they were interested in learning more. Future research is needed to find innovative ways to improve teachers knowledge and use of classroom PA breaks. Additionally, further analysis is warranted to examine differences between districts. Interestingly, a majority of teachers reported participating in PA breaks with their students. Additional research is needed on the length and intensity of these PA breaks to better understand the potential impact on health for students and teachers. It is important to note that even though efforts were made to encourage all staff regardless of implementation of PA to participate, response rates varied. Thus, these findings may not represent all teachers within the district.