

## ACTIVE KIDS, ACTIVE MINDS

*By Chris Watts*



How well children perform in the classroom could be linked to how physically active they are? Some of you may feel that this is an obvious link, but children are getting less physical and less active but have to strive more to achieve better results without being so active.

Writing in the Archives of Paediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, researchers said they found strong evidence of a link between exercise and academic performance. The review looked at 14 studies involving more than 12,000 children.

“Exercise may help by increasing blood and oxygen flow to the brain”, it said.

Our brains use 20% of all the oxygen we uptake. Our brain controls every thought, action and feeling we have. Dr Amika Singh and colleagues were prompted to look at the relationship between physical activity and academic performance because of concerns that pressure to improve children's school marks could mean they spend more time in the classroom and less time doing physical activity.

Twelve of the studies were conducted in the United States, one in Canada and one in South Africa. Sample sizes ranged from 53 to about 12,000 participants between the ages of six and 18 years.

### **Blood flow:**

Researchers said they found strong evidence of a "significant positive relationship" between physical activity and academic performance using those two studies as evidence. The study indicates that this could be because exercise helps cognition by increasing blood and oxygen flow to the brain.

Physical activity could also reduce stress and improve mood, making children more likely to behave in the classroom. The most powerful aspect of any fitness and exercise program are

activities that improve the delivery of Oxygen and nutrients to the brain and also to the trillions of cells that ultimately create energy and cellular regeneration.

Dr Singh said: *"Children who learn to participate in sport also learn to obey rules. This may mean they are more disciplined and able to concentrate better during lessons."*

"People always ask, 'How much exercise do I need to do to get an A?' We don't know that but we would like to find out," said Dr Singh. "Children should be active for at least one hour a day, for health reasons. But we also need to look at other things, like what kind of activities they should do, when they should do them and for how long."

At Motion Dynamics we believe that children should be performing flexibility, stability, and core exercises twice daily. Bending, extending, and twisting are normal movements for children but the children that we get to see are as inflexible in their legs and spines as older adults.

Children should be doing at least 40 minutes of aerobic activities such as jumping, running or swimming a day and being mindful or aware of their own body posture at all times. Your body posture or position or poise is a reflection of how you feel and how confident you are and how you function and perform.

Learn more at Chris-Watts-Motion Dynamics  
Contact Chris at [chris@chriswatts.biz](mailto:chris@chriswatts.biz)