

Calming Classrooms With Movement



By Mischa Kirby



With physical education classes being cut from curriculum due to budget troubles and classroom time being reallocated to increase focus on standardized test performance, American students are spending more school time stationary.

Some teachers like Jeanne Trainum in Williamsburg, Virginia, though, are asking students to get up and move throughout the day, without sacrificing their lesson plans. Trainum teaches math problems with the help of a beach ball. Students partner up and are given a beach ball that has math problems written on it. Students throw the ball back and forth, answering aloud each question that is closest to their catching hand. The activity is still controlled – no running allowed – but it gives students a break from desk time that they look forward to, Trainum said in her submission of the activity to the [National Association for Sport and Physical Education's Teacher Toolbox](#).

"Teacher Toolbox is one of our most popular web site sections," said 23-year veteran teacher Francesca Zavacky, now a senior program manager for NASPE, which recommends that children spend at least 60 minutes each day in physical activity. The toolbox highlights activities for students of all ages K-12 and family fun activities to encourage the movement to continue at home outside of school.

Other top “energizer” suggestions from teachers around the country include:

- Science: Playing a version of “Monkey in the Middle” to demonstrate how free radicals operate around stable molecules and electrons (a soccer ball).
- Geography: Having students organize themselves in the positions of the 50 states.
- Language: Each letter of the alphabet is given a spot on a half basketball court. Students must shoot a ball from the letters that spell out a given word.