

## State Physical Fitness of Students on Decline

California tests the physical fitness of students in grades 5, 7, and 9. The latest Physical Fitness Test results show only 31% of our state's students reaching healthy levels. The 2011 Physical Fitness Test was administered to 1.34 million students. There are three categories of fitness: The Healthy Fitness Zone (HFZ), Needs Improvement, and Needs Improvement-High Risk. Standards in aerobic capacity and body composition fitness are measured. While aerobic capacity is an indicator of physical fitness, body composition is perhaps the most important indicator of who will develop future health problems. The 2011 results show significant percentages of students in the High Risk category at each grade level.

<b>2011 Students in Needs Improvement-High Risk Category</b>	
34.1%	Grade 5
30.3%	Grade 7
25%	Grade 9

In addition, when comparing the 2010 test results with 2011, it looks like our students are declining in fitness.

<b>2010 &amp; 2011 California Students in the Healthy Fitness Zone</b>		
	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Gr. 5</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>25.2%</b>
<b>Gr. 7</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Gr. 9</b>	<b>38.7</b>	<b>36.8</b>

You be the judge? Are our children physically fit? Do you know how much physical education

your child gets in school each week? The State mandate is "at least 200 minutes over a ten day period." That can be interpreted in many ways. "Recess" is not physical education. Although many children run and play hard at recess, it is only 15-20 minutes, rarely organized, and many students do little more than stand around and visit with their friends.

Elementary schools that still have P.E. teachers usually work hard at fitness standards, but 30-40 minutes twice a week is hardly enough. At EDCC, we focus on the same standards of fitness to enhance your child's school program. Our SPARKS P.E. program is a fabulous program which introduces standards-based, new activities and skill training each week. So, EDCC students get double the amount of fitness sessions each week compared to students who do not attend EDCC. Over-all, EDCC students are looking pretty fit. It would be great to look at the schools' fitness test results this spring and a sub-group of EDCC 5<sup>th</sup> graders and even 7<sup>th</sup> graders, and see how many EDCC students scored in the HFZ!