What is the Relationship of Student Health to Academic Achievement?

- Students whose parents are involved in their education show significantly greater achievement gains in reading and math than students with uninvolved parents, better attendance, and more consistently completed homework. 1, 2
- Community activities that link to the classroom positively impact academic achievement, reduce school suspension rates, and improve school-related behaviors. 3, 4
- Teachers who participated in a health promotion program focusing on exercise, stress management, and nutrition reported increased participation in exercise and lower weight, better ability to handle job stress, and a higher level of general well-being. 22
- Students benefit from having healthy teachers because teachers are more energetic and absent less often, and the school climate is more optimistic. 23
- The physical condition of a school is statistically related to student academic achievement; an improvement in the school’s condition by one category, say from poor to fair, is associated with a 5.5 point improvement in average achievement scores. 20
- Students who develop a positive affiliation or social bonding with school are more likely to remain academically engaged and less likely to be involved with misconduct at school. 21
- A comprehensive intervention that combines teacher training, parent education, and social competency training for children had long-term positive impacts, including greater commitment and attachment to school, less school misbehavior, and better academic achievement. 17
- A school-based social services program targeting students at risk for dropping out of school produced the following results: grade point average increased across all classes, school bonding increased, and self-esteem improved. 18
- Reading and math scores of third and fourth grade students who received comprehensive health education were significantly higher than those who did not receive comprehensive health education. 5
- Physical activity among adolescents is consistently related to higher levels of self-esteem and lower levels of anxiety and stress. 6
- Students who participated in school physical education programs did not experience a harmful effect on their standardized test scores, though less time was available for other academic subjects. 8-10
- Physical activity is positively associated with academic performance. 7
- Early childhood and school aged intervention programs that provide parental support and health services are associated with improved school performance and academic achievement; early intervention may also improve high school completion rates and lower juvenile crime. 11
- Schools with school-based health centers report increased school attendance, decreased drop-outs and suspensions, and higher graduation rates. 12, 13
- Food-insufficient children (ages 6 to 11) are more likely to receive lower math scores, repeat a grade, visit a psychologist, and have difficulty getting along with other children. 14
- School breakfast programs increase learning and academic achievement, improve student attention to academic tasks, reduce visits to the school nurse, and decrease behavioral problems. 15
- Food-insufficient teens (ages 12 to 16) are more likely to visit a psychologist, be suspended from school, have difficulty getting along with others, and have no friends. 14
- School breakfast programs positively impact academic performance, absenteeism, and tardiness among low-income elementary school students. 16
- Children who participated in a social service intervention aimed at promoting student success by improving parent-child and parent-teacher communication showed improved academic performance. 19
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