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Improving Academic Performance – Through Exercise



Some of you will be aware that in 2012 I will be contributed to [Generation Next's Weekly Newsletter and Blog](#). This is my piece from this week's newsletter.

The link between physical activity and improved physical and mental health has long been established.

However there is a growing body of research that suggests that increased physical activity levels in students also leads to improved academic performance.

In [this research review](#) by John Ratey and Jacob Sattelmair from the University of Illinois, reference is made to a 2002-2005 study of nearly 1 million students in California. In this study, investigators consistently found that those students with higher levels of fitness scored higher on academic tests.



A smaller follow-up study (Castelli 2007) replicated this finding. There, physical fitness—and aerobic capacity in particular—related positively to test scores in mathematics and reading, whereas body mass index related inversely to scores.

It's also worth noting that Ratey and Sattelmair also suggest there should be less emphasis on sports specific physical education as this often excludes many students. Instead they advocate for a move towards physical activity or strenuous play, aimed at increasing the duration and intensity of aerobic activity.

As a trained PDHPE teacher myself, I find this very interesting, as this is a philosophy that has guided our PDHPE Department at Emanuel School for many years.

Ratey and Sattelmair's report suggests that rather than PDHPE being one of the *less important* subjects at school, it is perhaps, one of the *most important*.

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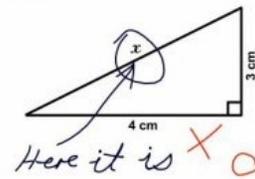
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Read Dan's Education Manifesto – "Still Trying to Find X"

3. Find x.



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