

THE SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE



What is a sedentary lifestyle?

A lifestyle with a lot of sitting and lying down and very little to no exercise.



Where is this most prevalent for adults?

According to the article, "What Kinds of Jobs Are Considered Sedentary," by Leonor Crossley, "The U.S. Social Security Administration defines sedentary workers as those spending the majority of their shifts sitting, lifting no more than 10 pounds and standing and walking no more than two hours out of an eight-hour work day," (Crossley 1). This includes driving jobs, "one of the largest work forces of around 3.2 million," computer-related jobs like "graphic designers, web designers, computer programmers and software engineers," office jobs like "receptionists, accountants, tax preparers, counselors, bill collectors and telemarketers," and surveillance jobs, (Crossley 2-5).



Where is this most prevalent for children?

For this, one cannot pinpoint a certain part. Sitting is embedded into their whole day. According to the article, “Standing vs Sitting,” by Standup Kids, “the average U.S. student is sitting at school an average of 4.5 hours a day... [plus] an additional 7 hours a day in front of a screen... [which when added to] the sitting... [when] driving to school, doing homework, and eating meals... [means] kids are sitting 85% of their waking hours,” (1-3).

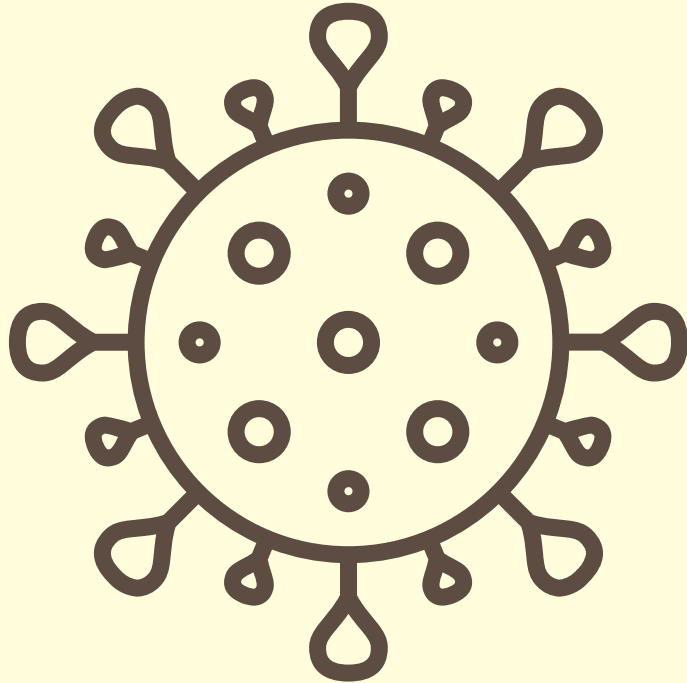


Graphic from “Standing vs Sitting,” by Standup Kids.

Why is this a
problem?



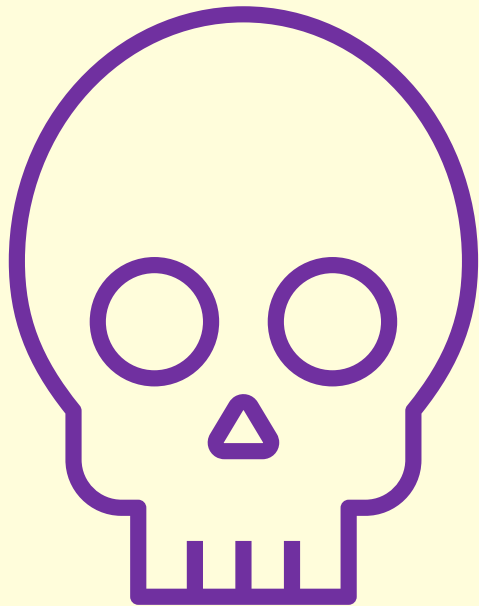
According to, “12 Sedentary Lifestyle Statistics in 2021 That Will Get You off Your Chair,” by Ergonomic Trends, “sedentary behavior increases the risk of cardiovascular disease by up to 147%,” (26).



According to, “12 Sedentary Lifestyle Statistics in 2021 That Will Get You off Your Chair,” by Ergonomic Trends, “sedentary behavior... increases risk of colon cancer by 24%... endometrial cancer by 66%.... lung cancer by 21%,” (29-30).



According to, “12 Sedentary Lifestyle Statistics in 2021 That Will Get You off Your Chair,” by Ergonomic Trends, “sitting for more than 7 hours daily increases the risk of depression by 47%... [and] can increase the risk of developing Alzheimer's by up to 12 times,” (35-36).



According to, “12 Sedentary Lifestyle Statistics in 2021 That Will Get You off Your Chair,” by Ergonomic Trends, “people who spent more than 6 hours per day sitting with low levels of physical activity have a 71% increase in mortality rate,” (6).

Someone once told me that it is not possible for one person to find a solution for the whole problem. That one must focus on a specific factor and a specific audience.

I will be focusing on how to improve physical activity rates for students attending high schools in the United States.

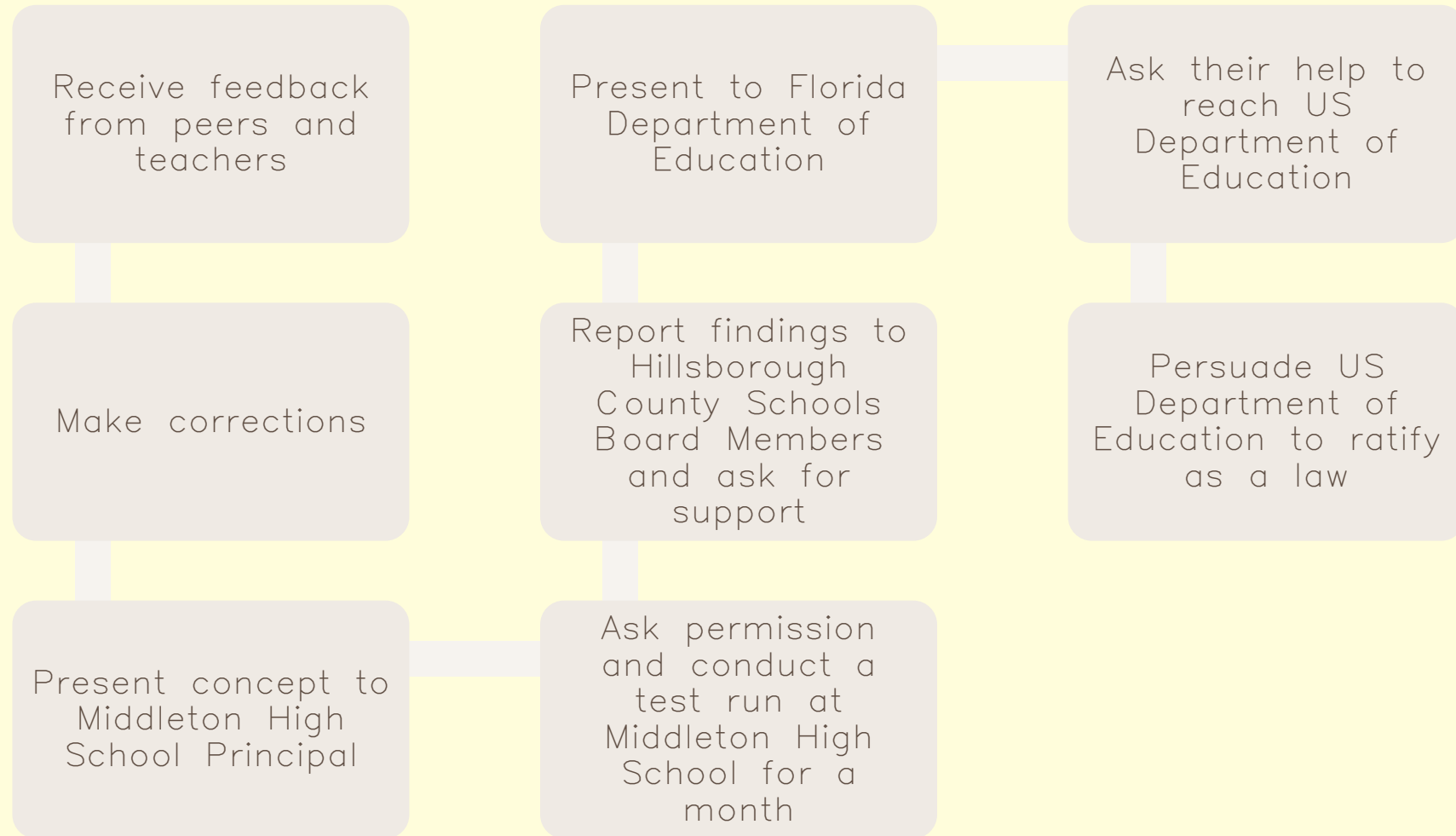
POSSIBLE SOLUTION



Federal Law

Directed by the Department of Education for full enforcement, this law will mandate that all high schools in the US with classes less than or equal to 45 minutes must include 8 minutes of physical activity and classes greater than 45 minutes but less than or equal to 90 must include 15 minutes.

ACTION PLAN



FORCE FIELD
ANALYSIS

Forces For Change

Parents

Improved health for children not only silences a parent's worry, but it can also lessen the strain on a family's finances with a reduced possibility for hospital visits.

Students

Students will feel cared for and feel like they matter to others.

Schools

If a school does not just provide an education but also focuses on students' health, more students will wish to enroll.

Forces Against Change

Teachers

Some teachers may see this as a loss of instruction time and a hassle because they must adapt curriculum to this law.

Administration

Some administrators may believe that students' inactivity is an individual choice and that it is not their problem.

Opponents mention that the solution is shortening instruction times, but it was never specified that the time set out for physical activity could not also be used for learning. In my biology class, for instance, we move around the room completing several lab stations. To adjust the curriculum to this law can be a headache, but if it can help kids even a little, it's worth it. Moreover, some schools may think that students' inactivity is a personal decision and not their issue, yet poor health leads to a lack of concentration in class and to poor marks which is the school's problem.

So, I believe this solution has potential if everyone plays their role.

How do other highly-developed nations implement physical activities in the lives of their students?



Japan's Sports Day

According to "What do Japanese kids do on sports day," by Kids Web Japan, "Every year, in spring or autumn, school kids all over Japan, from kindergarten through high school, take part in sports day," (Paragraph 1). Classes are canceled the entire day as all students compete in athletics events. The text further states that, "There are two basic kinds of events: individual and group," (Paragraph 2). According to, "Health and Sports Day (Japan) – October 9, 2023," by National Today, Sports Day includes "many of the traditional track and field events, such as relay, sprinting, and long jump. Other activities include ball toss, tug of war, rugby–ball dribbling races, sack races, and many more," (Paragraph 6). Not only is physical education mandatory in Japanese high schools, but they also dedicate an entire day to implement physical activities in the lives of their students.



Other Countries That Do Sports Days

In India, sports days are held for 2–3 days. These include games like football, cricket, throw ball, dodge ball, volleyball, track and field, basketball etc. These sports days are held between the various houses in a particular school. In India, many traditional games such as Kho–Kho and Kabaddi, March–past are played.



In Pakistan, many well funded private and government schools hold a Sports Day too, when track and field events like running, relay races, high jump, long jump, discus and shot–put are held. The various houses in a school compete against each other to win that event. Traditional sports like kabaddi are also played.



I think it is time for America to take some inspiration from other countries.



THANK
YOU

