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Editorial

Addressing the public health concerns of physical inactivity, low levels of fitness, and unhealthy weight among Chinese school-aged children

Running head: physical activity in school-aged children

In China, sports and physical activity (PA) have traditionally been an integral part of school curricula to promote fitness and enhance healthy growth among children and adolescents. Three decades of economic reforms, however, have brought major changes in social, economic, and built environments that have resulted in concerns about the general health of the Chinese population due to accumulating epidemiological evidence of increased levels of physical inactivity, high rates of obesity, and unhealthy diet. With the emergence of a progressively obesogenic environment, lack of safe and accessible exercise facilities, and pressure to excel scholastically, the youth population is not immune to these dramatic threats to health and wellness, with recent evidence pointing to troubling trends in PA and obesity rates among Chinese children and adolescents.¹⁻⁵

Despite increased awareness of this deteriorating situation, large-scale, population-based epidemiological studies that allow systematic documentation of patterns and trends in PA and obesity and their correlates in young people are scant. This significantly limits our knowledge about the public health impact of physical inactivity and unhealthy weight, and our capacity to develop evidence- and school-based interventions or fitness programs to support the national

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