
A Growing Problem of Teenage Obesity

Us students, constantly get distracted, day dream and develop pain in our bodies due to the constant sitting we endure everyday at school. A great way to fix these problems, is via the implementation of standing desks. Standing desks allow students to stand up whilst learning, but also can have a stool which allows students to sit down if they really need too. The desks have adjustable heights, which allows anyone at any height to use the desk, and therefore is practical for everyone.

Did you know that 1 in 4 adolescents are overweight or obese, and as years go by this is increasing even more? This can easily be solved. Most people would say the best solution is to allocate more physical education classes into the school day, but this can be impractical and takes time away from class when we should be learning. The most logical way to decrease the rate of adolescents becoming obese, is to bring in standing desks into class rooms. Children spend approximately 60-70% of waking hours sitting, that is more than half their day sitting. Children need to be active and even just standing can assist this. It has been proven that with the implementation of a standing desks, children could burn 54 calories a day just by standing whilst learning. You may think that is not many calories, but over the course of a school year that accounts up to 9,720 calories. That is a lot of calories to burn, particularly when this does not include the individual doing any physical activity.

Due to the positive correlations with weight loss and standing desks, a study was conducted on 3 schools in Texas, United States of America, which researched the effect standing desks has on adolescent's body mass index (BMI), which provides an approximate measure of whether someone is overweight. The results from the research illustrated that children's BMI decreased by 3% over a 2 year-period. That is a drastic change, particularly for the short period of time the study was conducted in. This is the best way to help reduce the increasing obesity issue among adolescents, so why have standing desks not been implemented yet? The government so badly want to fix the issues surrounding obesity, and standing desks is the most logical way to do so.

We as students know, the difficulty of engaging in class as so many of us tune out regularly despite how hard we try to focus. No matter the teacher, or the subject, there will always be someone who is struggling to focus during that particular class. Whilst sitting in class, it makes it easier for us to lose attention and become tired, which is why the implementation of standing desks will assist with our concentration levels. By standing when learning, we are able to fidget more and move around without distracting others, therefore waking ourselves up and making it easier to concentrate during class as we are more alert.

For regular students, focusing in class can be difficult, but children who have attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), paying attention in class and not getting distracted is extremely challenging. The use of standing desks has shown a positive correlation with adolescents who have ADHD. In a school environment these children are meant to sit for a prolonged amount of time, which makes it harder for them to concentrate as they constantly get distracted. By having standing desks, it allows them to move around more and to fidget which assists controlling their ADHD and staying focused during school.

There is a shocking amount of serious illnesses linked to sedentary behaviour, which include cardiovascular disease, high cholesterol levels, increased blood pressure and diabetes. These diseases are all dangerous, and in extreme cases can cause death. A practical way to prevent this is via the implementation of standing desks. It has been said by expert scientists that sitting is the new smoking due to the severity of the side effects that prolonged sitting can do to you. So why is sitting such a common part of the school environment? You may be thinking; well why don't individuals just exercise outside of school hours. But not only is that up to the individual to do themselves, but it has been said that the effects of sitting can not be over turned by regular exercise. By the use of standing desks in schools, it kills 2 birds with 1 stone, where it not only burns calories but also prevents serious health issues.

Some people say, that because standing desks are expensive as they cost approximately between \$250 and \$1000, that the benefits are not worth it. Yes, it may be expensive to implement numerous desks into schools, as a few will be needed for each classroom, however, standing desks could possibly save the government money. The government is spending approximately \$8.6 billion on people whom are obese. This doesn't even include the money they could save due to the health risks such as cardiovascular disease, which are correlated with a sedentary lifestyle. Despite the initial cost for the government, not only will it hopefully save the government money as the ever rising obesity rate, should start to decrease but it will also help Australia to become a healthier nation.

Standing desks do not rely on the individual to eat healthy or participate in physical activity, which means that it will focus towards a wider range of people who are overweight. By the government targeting the younger population and implementing standing desks to help reduce the number of obese individuals, it assists in decreasing the obesity population and ensures a healthier future for Australia. Let's take a stand, and ensure schools provide adequate standing desks for their students.