

Before School HIIT for Intermediate Age ED & Other Students

Betty Kern, MS, CSCS
Schrop Intermediate School
Springfield Local Schools
Akron, Ohio

What is it?

- A before school 15-20 minute high intensity workout designed for the “ED” students to help them focus & get moving before school each day.
- Started the program school year 2012-2013 with 12 4th-6th boys in the “ED” class.
- We call it “**Workout Warriors**”

Why start a new program?

- Research supports getting students active before the school day to help them focus and improve academic performance.
- For the “ED” student, this is especially important.
- With over 500 students in the school, I decided to focus on the students who need this intervention the most.
- In addition, many of these students were inactive, had low fitness levels and had difficulty keeping-up in regular physical education class.
- With only once a week PE, discipline (in PE & beyond) was often an issue with this population of students.
- So, I proposed that interacting with them more often would help with rapport and improve their performance in PE.
- “Workout Warriors” provides students with an opportunity to engage in 15-20 additional minutes of physical activity at school each day (plus...this gets me out of breakfast duty!)

How does it work?

- Students report directly to the gym as soon as they arrive at school.
- Most bus riders arrive 15-20 minutes before the tardy bell rings.
- The “ED” students eat breakfast in their classroom so this did not interfere with students who receive free breakfast.
- Students warm up with a few laps while waiting for others to arrive.
- Most days a “Tabata” style workout (will demonstrate) is used.
 - After a warm-up, 10-12 intervals of 20-30 seconds of work/10 seconds of rest are employed using callisthenic activities.
- Other days, more running or other locomotor activities are used.
- Tag games are “rewards” for a good week of workouts.
- The cool-down incorporates yoga or other soothing music (John Lennon’s “Imagine” is a favorite), relaxation moves and positive meditation to settle students down before moving on to their class.
- Fridays are often “yoga” days and they love it!
- The teaching assistant for the “ED” class helps me each morning with Workout Warriors!

What happened?

- Initially, there was a lot of complaining & students were sure that they would throw up, pass out or “die”.
- Of course, none of that happened.
- We shut down the complaining and gradually pushed them with more difficult exercises and increased aerobic activity.
- Not only did these boys get fit but they also began to enjoy the workouts.
- Jimmy, who was sure he would throw up everyday for the first 2 months, began thanking me for the workouts!
- Donovan, who was obese and totally opposed to any type of exercise, began to push himself to do better!
- Nick, who had no confidence initially, no longer complained but began to lead the class in all activities!
- All of the boys improved physically, emotionally, socially and mentally as a result of the workouts.
- As a result of working out daily, the boys’ attitude & behavior in “regular” physical education class improved to the where there are no problems!
- In addition, I have developed very positive relationships with each boy in the “ED” class.

A Surprising Development...

- Apparently, it looked as if we were having some fun in the Workout Warriors group each morning.
- Fun music and exercise tends to attract a crowd.
- Soon, other “regular ed” boys were asking if they could come and workout with us before school.
- Due to the large number of requests, students were put on a rotation of 2 days a week for workouts.
- Each morning we have between 70-80 students working out before school.
- The principal and special ed teacher were happy with this development because it gave the “ED” boys a chance to interact with their peers.
- A few “active” students have been “placed” in Workout Warriors to help them get the day started off right.
- 20+ girls now attend as well.

What the teacher & principal have to say...

- **Assistant Principal:**
 - After a month or so of the morning Workout Warriors program, I no longer saw the “ED” students on a regular basis for discipline in the office.
 - Prior to the program, several were referred to my office on a daily basis.
- **“ED” Teacher:**
 - “My class is a highly structured, routine oriented program for students with emotional disturbances.
 - Mrs. Kern has managed to get this difficult population of kids interested in fitness & health through a morning workout program, “Workout Warriors”.
 - They arrive to her class directly from the bus.
 - The kids balked at its first implementation, but now they willingly and joyfully participate.
 - They’ve become much more knowledgeable about various aspects of health and fitness, and they have become quite proficient in the activities, for children their age.

- Now, instead of arriving at my class sluggishly, they arrive a bit winded, but ready to face the day in higher spirits, and with much-improved attitudes, efforts & behaviors.

How to get started...

- Look at the your schedule...is it possible to make some changes.
- I lobbied that this would be a better use of my time than breakfast duty.
- Talk to your principal armed with why it is important and how you can implement the program.
- If you are going to target a certain group (like the “ED” class), talk to that teacher and get “buy-in” with him/her.
- Have a plan not just an “idea”.

Two valuable tools: “Tabata” Training & “Seconds Pro” App

• Tabata Training

- Utilizes high-intensity moves for short burst of 20+ seconds with limited rest between sets (10 seconds).
- Usually incorporating 10+ sets of the moves plus a warm-up & cool down...repeating only 4 or so moves each workout.
- Exercise Examples:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jumping Jacks ▪ Opposite Jacks ▪ Pretend Jump Rope ▪ Skiers ▪ Line Jumps: side-to-side ▪ Line Jumps: front-to-back ▪ Mountain Climbers ▪ Plank Jacks ▪ Shoulder Taps ▪ Push-ups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Table Top ▪ Table Top Shoulder Taps ▪ Crunches ▪ 6-inches ▪ Flutter Kicks ▪ Superman’s ▪ Arm circles ▪ Overhead Claps ▪ Butt-kicks ▪ High Knees
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- This type of training is also really good for kids, as they have to be quiet between sets to listen for the next exercise.
- For the “ED” students, transitions are especially difficult.
- This type of training began to “pay off” for our students in other transition activities throughout their day!

• Seconds Pro App

- Can set up workout with:
 - Warm-up
 - High-intensity interval
 - Low-intensity interval
 - Cool down
- Insert music into the intervals
- For the rest interval...I have no music so they can listen for the next instruction
- Pro-version saves “your workouts”
 - Worth the \$4.99 price!

PE Teacher Reflection:

- I have enjoyed working with these boys so much!
- It has been fun watching them evolve into little “workout machines”.
- They now love the morning workouts, as well as, physical education class.
- It is now rare that I have any discipline problems with these students.
- We have developed great relationships since they are in my room daily.
- For the other students who attend, similar things have happened.
- Some of those students were not “athletes” and have improved their fitness, confidence, coordination and focus tremendously.
- Other boys who had trouble with behavior in regular ed classes are now managing their behavior more successfully with much fewer office referrals.
- I look forward to the morning workouts and love witnessing how they have impacted the students.

**Thanks for your time, attention & participation!
Any questions or comments?**

Betty Kern, MS, CSCS

Schrop Intermediate School

Akron, Ohio

Sp_kern@springfieldspartans.org

betty@pe-fit.com

www.pe-fit.com

www.pefitonline.com