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LEADERSHIP—THE HOPE OF PHYSICAL ED- UCATION

ONE of our progressive educational associations has defined education as follows:

Education consists in the organization of activities whereby children may learn the lessons of life in a natural way under friendly guidance in an atmosphere of freedom in accordance with age and capacity needs.

This definition implies a number of things. The first is that all education is through activities. The second is that great responsibility is placed upon leaders in the selection of activities. The third implication is that by participating in activities selected in accordance with age and capacity needs the children may be said to educate themselves.

The questions which we have to ask are: What are the educational results which can best be achieved by children participating in physical education activities?

What results may be hoped for?

Can physical education offer children a real physical activity program organized in an atmosphere of freedom conducted in a natural way under the influence of friendly guidance?

The following are listed as the educational objectives which might well be expected as outcomes from such a program:

1. *The development of organic power.* Organic power is probably best illustrated in what we call "endurance" or "vitality." It means simply the power to expend great energy and to withstand fatigue. This organic power is tremendously needed today.

Summary of a talk given before the Southern section of the American Physical Education Association at Greensboro, North Carolina.

It is a matter of common knowledge that many of the men in positions of great responsibility at the present day obtained their organic power or endurance in the big-muscle activities on the farm. More and more there is a strain upon the nervous system. There is the hurry and worry of business life. If men are to stand up under this strain, there must be built up through big-muscle activity—playground activities—during childhood and youth, great organic capacity.

2. *Menti-motor development.* In play activities menti-motor power is developed. This means simply that the latent powers in the neuro-muscular mechanism, called strength and skill, are developed; and that millions of nerve cells are brought into functional activity under the control of the will. This power is greatly needed today in connection with the varied and highly mechanical life that we live. Capacity for quick responses built up on the athletic field or in simpler games may save a life in the crowded traffic or prevent accidents in connection with our modern factory system.

3. *The development of the impulses.* In the games of childhood and youth the most powerful impulse tendencies of human nature are exercised. Character traits are developed. In the social situation surrounding the game the temptation may be strong to be unsportsmanlike and violate the rules for the sake of winning, if good leadership is lacking. Probably the first time a child distinguishes right from wrong is when other children point at him and say, "You didn't play fair." Playground activities offer a tremendous range of opportunities for guiding the development of the impulses in an approved direction.

4. *Development of judgments.* In no

phase of education is it necessary to think situations and to will coordinations so rapidly as in playground athletics. Judgment is necessary. Action must be instantaneous. A slight err in judgment is fatal to the individual or to his team. The entire being of the player is set upon making a good showing for his teammates. He thinks because thinking is imperative in play to do his best. "The play standards built through interest in activities are vital to the lives of the child." The child wants to do them. The youth enters into the game of baseball, or the small child into his tag game, because of a want, a drive, a hunger which is impelling. Only when there is such an impelling hunger is it possible to establish standards or rules and regulations in regard to conduct.

Most animals are trained under the whip of the food hunger. Probably in the past most individuals of the human race have been trained under the whip of the food hunger. In fact, many of us remember how that whip was used to enforce the health habit of eating vegetables before we came to the time of desert. Modern standards do not sanction the use of the hunger whip in the education of children. We have, however, in the play drive a phase of the activity drive. Children want to play; therefore upon this "want" we can build standard.

5. *Social adjustment as an objective.* One of the difficult tasks is to adjust ourselves to society and at the same time adjust society to ourselves. Adjustment is difficult because of the large groups. In cities the proportion is one to many thousands and in some cities, one to many millions, while in America at large, it is one to 110 millions. It is difficult for the individual to see his relationship to this big group or the relationship of the big group to him. Without question, power to see this relationship must be established in the little face-to-face groups, one to four or five

in the home, one to four on the basketball team, one to six in the playground, one to ten in the club, one to forty in the school, and so forth. Conduct in social adjustment is largely established through the big-muscle types of games.

6. *Standards as an objective.* Throughout all of these activities we have the problem of the development of standards; standards of morals, manners, health, citizenship, and character. This is a thesis in itself and can be merely touched upon. Suffice it to say that these standards must be built around wants, around things the child wants to do. Standards cannot be built by compulsion; they cannot be built through fear. You cannot make effective an organization for the compulsory enforcement of good fellowship. Good fellowship must be a by-product, and standards must be by-products; they must be built around wants.

After an organic capacity has been built, children may not choose to follow health rules. The desire to follow health rules must have its mainspring in the assurance that it will aid children in doing the things *they want to do*.

Our task, then, is to discover the "wants" of children and build upon them. The tremendous responsibility which is placed on the physical education profession here is that most of the "wants" of children center around the big-muscle type of activities. Therefore, to a large extent, the responsibility of building standards of manners, morals, citizenship, character, and health center in our profession.

JAY B. NASH.

There had been a train wreck, and one of two authors felt himself slipping from this life. "Goodby, Tom," he groaned to his friend. "I'm done for." "Don't say that, old man!" sputtered the friend. "For goodness sake, don't end your last sentence with a preposition."