

MOVEMENT BREAK IN OUR SCHOOL

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Our school is located in the southeastern part of Slovenia, in a small and peaceful town of Dolenjske Toplice, surrounded with nature and mighty woods, and well known for its thermal waters and Terme Krka health resort.

For several years now, our school has been involved in the Slovenian Network of Health Promoting Schools coordinated by the National Institute of Public Health. Our school places great emphasis on the healthy lifestyle, i.e. healthy eating and physical activity. We are all aware that physical activity and sports are very important activities in childhood as they help children develop and strengthen their body and motor skills. Considering the modern lifestyle, the children have become too passive and they don't move enough. They spend too much time sitting, in the morning at school and in the afternoon with modern technology (computer games, different social media, mobile apps, etc.). Therefore, they don't have time for physical activities and sports, and also not for social contacts with their peers outside. And, consequently, the results in SLOfit testing (Sports Educational Chart) were lower than expected.

As a counterbalance to the negative trends of physical and motor development and also to relieve pupils of the academic pressure between the lessons, we have started practicing the movement break which we named Be Fit Break (Slovene: Bodi fit odmor or BFO). Be Fit Break takes place after the first lesson and it lasts about 5 minutes. The main purpose of the break is for all pupils to fully wake up and exercise in order to improve their learning abilities. It has been proven that morning exercise has a beneficial effect on the body, it improves the mood, and has a positive impact on the brain as it significantly increases the sharpness of mind and the perception, improves the power of memory and deduction and thus prepare the pupils for all the challenges they may face that day.

We have started the Be Fit Break in 2012. During this period, it has been developed and updated and the pupils were additionally encouraged and motivated for active participation in exercising. A different set of exercises was carried out every day and in the second half of the school year the set changed. The set of exercises consisted of endurance exercises, exercises for mobility and strength, and stretching exercises. One day of the week was reserved for Brain Gym exercises. The workout was audio-guided via the school sound system. In 2015 there was a major change in performing the workout. Together with the fitness instructor we recorded 10 different exercise sets with music. Since then we perform these exercises with the help of the video. In 2019, we have scheduled the Be Fit Break once a week in the school gym for all pupils from 1st to 9th grade. In addition to the prepared exercises, the teachers also use YouTube workouts. And they also take the Be Fit Break at their own initiative, when they notice the pupils need a break to relax.

In our school, the Be Fit Break is very popular among pupils and teachers and is one of the measures for preventing the negative impact of the modern lifestyle. Considering the today's busy school schedule, we are convinced that the Be Fit Break is a welcome and good investment in the health of our pupils.

You know what they say: »The morning shows how the day will be«.