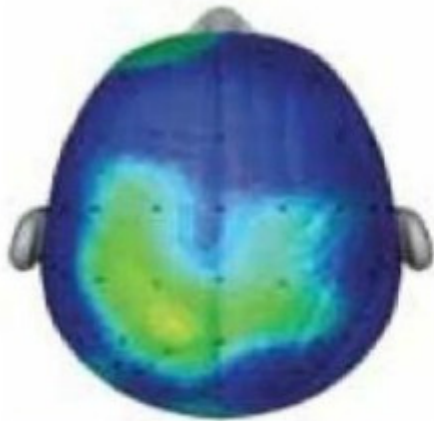


# Brain Breaks

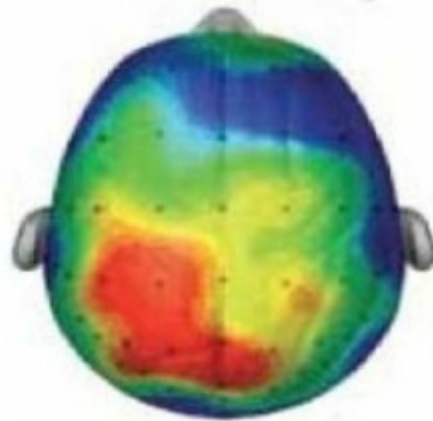
Brain breaks are physical activity breaks during a child's school day to promote better schoolwork retention and focus. Brain breaks are popular among both children and teachers because they provide a much-needed break in a young child's school day. According to research by Oregon State University, brain breaks usually involve between 5-7 minutes of physical activity to promote physical health, mental awareness, and educational success. Research has found that children need to move and be active during the day. Given short and few recess breaks, brain breaks allow children to get out of their chairs and move around for several minutes to get blood pumping in the course of a normal academic day. Brain breaks are especially vital when attention spans start to waver and children begin to "check out" from school. They also help kids to stay in a more positive and happy mood. Examples of brain breaks can vary from dance songs to which kids follow instructions as they move around the classroom, to other examples like throwing a ball or switching seats between students. The overall benefits of brain breaks have been thoroughly researched and students as well as teachers reap the benefits of this physical activity during the school day.

## **Cognitive Effects of Exercise in Preadolescent Children**

*Average composite of 20 students' brains taking the same test after sitting quietly or taking 20 minute walk*



**Brain after sitting quietly**



**Brain after 20 minute walk**

*Source: Derived from research by Dr. C.H. Hillman, University of Illinois at Urbana, Champaign, Urbana, IL (2009).*

For more research on brain breaks, see Oregon State University's research on this topic: <http://oregonstate.edu/ua/ncs/archives/2014/sep/%E2%80%9Cbrain-breaks%E2%80%9D-increase-activity-educational-performance-elementary-schools>

## Brain Break Examples

1. <http://teachtrainlove.com/20-brain-break-clips-fight-the-fidgeting/>

Instructional video with tips for brain breaks for teachers as well as some cute dancing brain break videos.

2. <http://minds-in-bloom.com/2012/04/20-three-minute-brain-breaks.html>

A list of 20, 3 minute brain breaks that can be done in a classroom, including things such as throwing a ball around between kids or doing small physical challenges to get kids moving around more.

3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMvycnRNIZo&feature=related>

A 9-minute YouTube video on tips for teachers to use brain breaks effectively as well as the reasoning behind why they are vital for child development and learning in the classroom.