

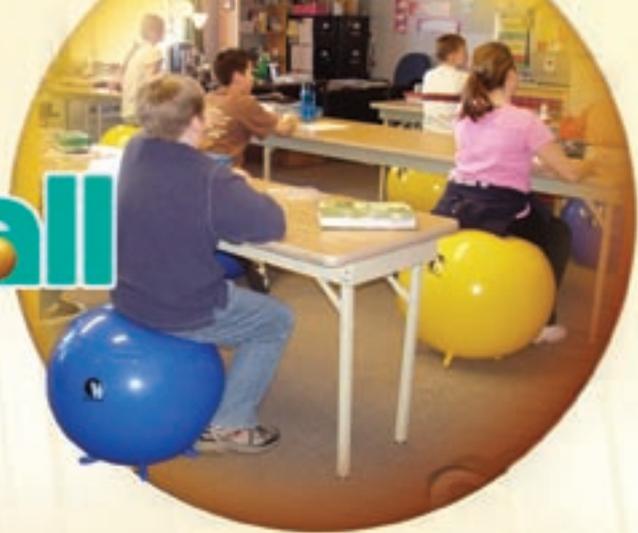


HEALTH

Students Have a Ball

Sitting on exercise balls brings more than a smile to students and teachers

by Ruth Devlin / PAGE DESIGN BY ANGELA CHANG



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Sitting on a chair all day in school can make anyone want to move around. So, more and more teachers are letting students have a ball. By **replacing** chairs with exercise balls, teachers find students' posture and attention improves.

Dottie Pownall, a fifth grade teacher in West Virginia, has been using balls as chairs since December 2008. "The students love them," she says. Pownall took a **survey** of her students. She found that 80 percent thought sitting on the balls helped them focus better.

Former teacher Lisa Witt felt so strongly about the use of balls as chairs, she started WittFitt. This company encourages the use of the balls. In addition, the company educates not only teachers but also students on how to use them. "We have clients in 24 states, three provinces in Canada, Puerto Rico and Japan," says Witt. "Research shows that sitting on the balls promotes sitting up straighter. You can slouch on a ball," says Witt, "but it feels awful." Because the students are moving, their blood flow increases. That carries more **oxygen** to the brain, so the kids have more energy and can focus longer.

"**Furthermore**, they're fun," says Pownall.

Talk About It

- Would you like to sit on a ball as a chair? Why or why not?

Key Points

- By replacing chairs with exercise ball, teachers find students' posture and attention improve.

www.wittfitt.com

Word Bank

replace (v)

Ken **replaced** his old blue car with a new red truck.

survey (n)

The company's employee **survey** discovered everyone wanted to leave work at 4:50 p.m. instead of 5:00 p.m.

oxygen (n)

People get **oxygen** from their air they breathe.

furthermore (adv)

I can't finish my work tonight. **Furthermore**, I can't finish it tomorrow either.

More Information

posture (n)

slouch (v)

