

### Initiatives for Physical Health in India

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Living a healthy life encompasses a fundamental component of achieving one's physical and mental well-being. With increasing awareness of physical and mental health around the globe, the government of India has taken several initiatives in this respect. Sports play a major role in not only enhancing physical fitness among students but also helping in imbibing moral values and social skills among children. It helps in managing stress too.

Various initiatives taken by the government of India aim at increasing opportunities for the youth to consider sports as a career option. Alongside, physical education has not only been encouraged through the curriculum but also through various scholarships for students with an inclination for sports as well as the ones who have participated in the games at the zone, state, national and international level.

A few such opportunities and initiatives taken up by the government of India with the aim to provide our

budding champions are presented below.

#### **Fit India Mission**

In 2019, a fitness programme was launched with the goal of promoting fitness and wellness throughout the nation. This movement encourages people of all ages to make individual or group efforts towards their own health and well-being, incorporating physical exercise and healthy eating habits into their daily routines to achieve a healthy body and mind. The movement also aims to shift behaviors from a sedentary lifestyle to an active way of living with schools being the first formal institution where physical fitness is taught and practiced. To involve schools on a large scale, the FIT India movement introduced parameters for FIT India School Certification.

*Fit India School* movement attempts to inculcate the 'How to live' concept in the formal education system by encouraging teaching and

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practising the art of taking care of one's body and health daily.

The following are the parameters stated by FIT India Mission in order to provide certification to schools:

1. Having one teacher trained in PE, and such teacher is physically fit and active.
2. Having a playground where two or more outdoor games are played.
3. Having one PE period each day for every section and physical activities (sports, dance, games, yogasan, PT) take place in the PE period.
4. Having all students spending sixty minutes or more on physical activities daily.

The government encourages Schools to Organise a Fit India School Week in the month of November to December.

The 'Khelo India' program is an additional effort introduced to revive sports culture in India at the grassroots level by creating a robust framework for all sports played in the country and establishing India as a prominent sporting nation. Its objective is not only to promote good health but also to instill important traits such as teamwork, strategic and analytical thinking, goal-setting, risk-taking, and leadership skills in individuals. As part of this initiative, 'Khelo India School games' holds annual competitions in various sports disciplines such as archery, athletics, badminton, basketball, boxing, football, gymnastics, hockey, judo, kabaddi, khokho, shooting, swimming, volleyball, weightlifting, and wrestling in partnership with the School Games Federation of



India (SGFI) and the National Sports Federation (NSFs).

The *Khelo India*—National Program for Development of Sports was revamped. *Khelo India* has the above twelve verticals as its components to serve in the field of sports. For more information, please visit the website—<https://kheloindia.gov.in/> .

Both Fit India Movement and Khelo India encourage physical fitness for everyone—young and elderly, men and women.

Along with the scholarships offered for sports persons, there are several organisations and institutions (governmental and non-government)

that organise and encourage participation in annual sports events.

The challenge is quite complex. Most Indians are falling into the routine of a sedentary lifestyle which has engrossed us in our mobile phones, television sets, social media or playing games on the computer. Hence, including physical activity in one's daily life needs will power and discipline, encouragement from family and friends. On the other hand, malnutrition in India is rampant, and although in a vast number of cases it is related to poverty, it is also underlined by lack of knowledge and care.