



**Motivating the Non-Athletic/Overweight Girl
with a Personalized Fitness Program
Betty Kern, MS,CSCS**

Personal Training Class

- Born out of a desire to help students realize the connection between diet, activity level and physical fitness or lack of fitness and health problems.
- Focus: "wellness" for a lifetime!
- Goal: equip students with the necessary tools to achieve a health-enhancing level of physical fitness and a healthy diet!
- Began at SHS six years ago to reach girls who were at risk.
- Focus: integrating fitness, nutrition and other health related topics into one curriculum.
- Provides a "safe" environment to exercise and discuss sensitive issues (weight, self-esteem, female issues, body image, etc.)
- Curriculum includes journals for recording nutrition and exercise habits.
- Fitness focused exercises: aerobic, strength training, fitness balls & bands, ab exercises, yoga, etc.
- "Class-room days" for instruction on health and fitness related topics.
- Challenges and awards
- Success stories

*"I have done better in school
because I feel better about
myself."*

Cheryl

*"During the middle of the semester
I could feel my body was more
limber, stronger and overall
healthier! I am going to miss this
class!"*

Catie

*"I have lost eight pounds and
several inches on my waist."*

Abby

*"I have lost 18 pounds this
semester!"*

Cheryl

*Mrs. Kern...thank you for having this
class! I used to think that I
couldn't do anything physical...but
now I know I can do anything I set
my mind to doing! I have lost 30
pounds this year!*

Amanda

*"I wouldn't have made it through my
senior year without this class! The
exercise along with the support of
Mrs. Kern and other girls helped
me deal with a stressful home
situation!"*

Abbie

The results were amazing...

- *Poor nutritional habits were dropped*
- *Healthy habits were adopted*
- *Inactive teen girls were now exercising daily*
- *Self-confidence & self-esteem soared*
- *Study habits & grades improved*
- *Attitudes towards healthy eating & exercise changed*
- *Weight & inches were lost*
- *Muscle tone improved*
- *New friendships were built*
- *Strong, healthy student-teacher relationships developed*
- *Girls had fun!*

Why was this class so successful?

- ***Unique opportunity for HS girls***
 - *Girl's only...less intimidating*
 - *New activities*
 - *Area of interest*
- ***Individualized approach within a group setting***
 - *Individual goals were established, tracked & rewarded*
 - *Challenge competitions allowed for success regardless of ability differences*
 - *Individual advice/consultation was provided*
- ***Girls experienced results***
 - *Fitness levels & flexibility improved*
 - *Pounds, inches and body fat were lost*
 - *Muscle tone increased*
 - *Grades & ability to concentrate improved*
- ***Flexibility in Class Activities***
 - *Girls felt ownership of the class*
 - *Student feedback was valued & acknowledged*
 - *Flexibility of activities within certain parameters*
- ***Information was important, relevant and applicable to teens***
- ***Environment was encouraging and nurturing***
 - *Provided "girl essentials"*
 - *Provided healthy snacks*
 - *Provided a listening, caring ear*
- ***Teacher led by example***
 - *"Taught" all activities*
 - *Participated with girls in "Challenges"*
 - *Demonstrated healthy eating and incorporating physical activity into daily adult life!*

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Motivating the Non-Athletic/Overweight Girl with a Personalized Fitness Program

Program Goals:

- *Provide nutrition, fitness and health information to teen girls enabling them to make informed lifestyle decisions*
- *Provide a 'safe' environment for self-expression through discussion of topics & issues important to young women*
- *Provide an accepting, non-competitive atmosphere*
- *Provide an opportunity to achieve fitness goals that seem unattainable*
- *Encourage trying new fitness activities to help them grow in self-confidence & self-esteem*
- *Encourage healthy eating habits*
- *Hold "Challenges" to encourage activity*
- *Examine habits through journals*
- *Focus on self-improvement & celebration of individual differences*
- *Create an environment that allows girls to be comfortable with each other, the teacher and themselves...that means sometimes we laugh at each other and Mrs. Kern*
- *Demonstrate...FITNESS CAN BE FUN!*

The main goal of the class is to help each girl meet her personal fitness goals!

***Class focus is on adopting healthy lifestyle habits...not on weight loss!
FITNESS FOCUSED!***

If a personal goal is to lose weight, then we will work toward that goal...emphasizing good nutrition & exercise!

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"Personal Training Class"

(Nutrition & Activity Program for Teen Girls)

- *Curriculum includes journals for recording nutrition and exercise habits.*
- ***Fitness focused exercises:*** *aerobic exercise, strength training, fitness balls & bands, ab exercises, yoga, kick boxing, Pilates, "fitness frenzy," etc.*
- ***"Class-room days"*** *for instruction on health and fitness related topics.*
- ***Challenges and awards***
- ***Success stories***

Decisions for the teacher:

Fitness testing...

- *to test or not to test?*

Body composition tests

- *test yourself in front of class*
- ***PRIVACY!!***

Set class expectations:

- *participating in class*
- *dressing for class*
- *grading journals*
- *making up classes...article summary form*

Weekly schedule...post for girls

Semester schedule...lesson plans

"Routine" for each activity

Student Journals:

- *Created curriculum for program to allow for flexibility...in other words so I could do what I wanted...*
- *Journals have "evolved" over the years*
- *Tracks nutrition & exercise habits*
- *Lessons teach girls nutrition & fitness basics*
- *Lessons also focus on topics important to women*
 - *Exercise & Pregnancy*
 - *Weight Gain & Weight Loss*
 - *Disease Prevention*
 - *Family, Friends & Relationships*
 - *Girl's Got it Going on Package*
 - *Osteoporosis & Calcium*
 - *Journal Pages...with extras*

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Semester Projects

Yoga Project

- *Students pair up for project*
- *Each student chooses two yoga poses to research and teach the class*
- *For each pose include...*
 - *Picture*
 - *Muscle or muscle groups involved in the pose*
 - *Instructions for pose*
 - *Precautions for pose*
 - *Benefits of the pose*
 - *Provide a pose that lead into and out of featured pose*
 - *Information can be presented in poster format*

Disease Prevention Project

- *Students choose one of the major disease states that affects a large number of Americans to research: diabetes, heart disease & stroke, high blood pressure, obesity, metabolic syndrome, or cancer*
- *Report should include:*
 - *Symptoms*
 - *Causes*
 - *Prevention strategies*
 - *Effects of nutrition and exercise on the disease state*

"Challenges"

A great way to motivate!

- **Distance Challenge**
 - *Log the number of miles or steps they complete each day*
 - *Pedometers or "on their honor"*
 - *Record on "Challenge Posters"*
 - *Set a challenge goal...examples*
- **Ab Challenge**
 - *Record the number of abdominal exercises they complete daily*
 - *Set challenge levels...1, 2 & 3*
 - *Record on "Challenge Posters"*

CHALLENGE REWARDS!

- *Be creative with rewards*
- *Flip flops*
- *T-Shirts*
- *Healthy food*
- *Beauty treatments*
- *Gift certificates*
- *Beauty supplies*
- *Pictures*
- *Just don't give out goodies that will undermine the intent of the program*

Participate in the challenges with the girls... they love it!

Dressing for class...think about modeling appropriate and modest fitness apparel for your students!

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FITNESS ACTIVITIES

DON'T BE AFRAID TO TRY SOMETHING NEW!

*You are a "Fitness Professional" if you are a
Physical Education Teacher!*

*Expand your professional repertoire...take a new class, earn a certification, teach yourself from DVDs, learn from your students, create your own fitness exercise session...**YOU CAN DO IT!***

Field Trips

Teaching yoga at elementary & junior high schools

- *Giving back*
- *Developing leadership*
- *Modeling for younger students*
- *Working together*
- *Having FUN!*

SHS

How did a class like "Personal Training" get started at Springfield High School in Akron, Ohio?

What would you have to do to get a girl's program established at your school?

Getting started...

- *Submit a letter to request a new class*
- *Include objectives and goals*
- *Present curriculum to administration*
- *Estimate costs for equipment, etc.*
- *Be persistent... you may have to ask more than once!*
- *You may really have to "sell" this to administration*
- *You have to be your biggest cheerleader and push to get new opportunities established!*
- *Bargain shop for equipment...check discount stores, online stores, garage sales, look for "seconds"*
- *Consider a class fee to help pay for journals & equipment*
- *Look for grant money to fund the program!*

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Training in fitness activities... professional development

- ACSM
- NSCA
- ACE
- Yoga Fit
- Pilates
- FiTOUR

Get ideas from magazines, DVDs, journals, workshops, etc.

Fitness equipment/supplies...discount stores (Marcs), sales, yard sales, Fitness Wholesale, etc.

Think outside the box!

Generate enthusiasm for the class

- ✓ *Hang up posters advertising new class*
- ✓ *Talk to girls in PE classes*
- ✓ *Have the counselors talk to girls about the new opportunity*
- ✓ *Hold an after-school preview of the class...*
do a workout with the girls

TEACHER EXAMPLE...YOU!

Never underestimate the impact you have on your students!

Have fun with your students in Physical Education class...if you aren't having fun in PE...there is a problem!

Be enthusiastic...be a cheerleader for physical education and physical activity!

Look for opportunities to encourage involvement in road races, charity events, hiking, back packing, biking, outdoor activities, swimming, etc.

Again...share with the students what you do to keep fit and active!

Tell them how you find time to "fit in fitness!"

Model healthy eating!

Plan opportunities for healthy eating parties!

Encourage other staff members to get active!

Find ways to get teachers, parents and the community involved in fitness activities!

Ask local businesses to sponsor events or donate prizes for the challenges.

Hold events that include parents...walking/jogging groups, weight training, family fun game nights, etc!

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FINAL THOUGHTS

❖ *Believe in yourself...*

- *You can make a change in the PE environment!*
- *You can learn new fitness activities & teach them to your students!*
- *You can be an advocate for your whole school for healthier living! (wellness)*
- *You can make a difference in the lives of your students!*
- *You can be an example of healthy living and physical fitness!*

❖ *Believe in the program...or your program*

- *It will generate enthusiasm for physical fitness!*
- *It will generate a positive atmosphere in the class!*
- *It will be more successful with teacher participation!*
- *It will set high expectations and standards for the students!*
- *It will be successful!*

❖ *Believe in the students...*

- *They will make changes in their lives!*
- *They will adopt new eating habits!*
- *They will become more physically active & enjoy it!*
- *They will be excited about a new program!*
- *They will make decisions that will lead to a healthier lifestyle!*
- *Their enthusiasm will have a positive effect on the whole school environment!*

❖ *Believe in yourself!*

❖ *Believe in the program!*

❖ *Believe in the students!*

*...because you just don't know where
all that might lead you!*

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*“No matter how insignificant what you do may seem,
it is important that you do it”*

Gandhi



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