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# University of Virginia

## Adapted Physical Education

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Name: Johnny Healthy  
Grade: 7<sup>th</sup> Grade  
School: Charlottesville Wellness Academy

Date of Evaluation: October 8, 2008  
Evaluator: Martin E. Block, Ph.D.

### Introduction

Johnny is a 7<sup>th</sup> grader male who attends the Charlottesville Wellness Academy (CWA) in Charlottesville, VA. Johnny has qualified for special education services as a child with autism. Currently, Johnny attends general physical education (GPE) with his 7<sup>th</sup> grade class. The class is comprised of approximately 15 children evenly divided between males and females. Johnny attends GPE independently without the support of a teacher assistant or assigned peer tutor. Johnny was referred for an adapted physical education (APE) evaluation by his parents due to their concerns with his physical fitness and general motor abilities. The purpose of this initial evaluation was to determine if Johnny qualified for APE services through Albemarle County Public Schools. Johnny was observed during his GPE class on Monday, November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2005, by Dr. Martin Block of the Kinesiology Program, Curry School of Education, at the University of Virginia. The following provide results of my observations as well as some comments from a brief conversation I had with Mike Jones, Johnny's GPE teacher at CWA.

### Motor Performance – Locomotor Patterns

I observed Johnny participating in several activities including warm-up fitness/locomotor activities and basketball skill work. Locomotor patterns observed included running and sliding. Johnny's running pattern included proper arm action and a normal base of support (not overly wide which would indicate severe balance problems). However, Johnny did not generate enough force to show a flight phase (a moment when both feet are off the ground), he did not demonstrate proper leg bend (lower leg should be parallel to the floor), and he really did not pump his arms to help generate speed. Johnny also appeared to run much more slowly than his peers. Johnny was able to slide both to the left and to the right, and he did this without crossing his legs. However, he did have trouble keeping side-orientation, and he did move slowly as if he really had to think about the movement. While I did not observe other locomotor patterns, his running and sliding patterns indicate a delay in locomotor patterns.

### Sports Skills - Basketball

I also observed Johnny performing dribbling, shooting and playing defense in a basketball unit. Johnny was able to dribble and maintain control of a basketball while walking forward the length of the court. However, he really had to concentrate on the basketball looking at it intently. He also was unable to jog or move to the left or right with any control when dribbling a basketball. There were a few other children who had similar dribbling patterns as Johnny, but most of the children in the class had better control and speed when dribbling. When shooting a

basketball Johnny stood closer to the basket than most of his friends. He used a two-handed shooting pattern (both hands to the side of the ball rather than one hand behind the ball). He was able to get the ball to the basket from about 5' away, and although he did not make a basket in 3 attempts he came close. There was another boy who used a similar shooting pattern as Johnny. However, most of the children used the more appropriate one-handed pattern, and most shot from farther away from the basket than Johnny. I also observed Johnny playing defense against a peer who dribbled across the gym. Johnny back-pedaled awkwardly and was really unable to move with any efficiency to the left or to the right to slow down the dribbler. However, most of his classmates had similar problems guarding a dribbler, although most of his classmates moved more quickly when guarding a dribbler.

Based on my observations of Johnny in basketball skill work Johnny is delayed in sport-specific motor skills. There was another child in the class who also had problems with basketball skills, but all the other children in the GPE class performed both qualitatively (how they looked) and quantitatively (how fast and how accurately they performed) better than Johnny. While I did not observe Johnny in other age-appropriate sports activities (e.g., volleyball, soccer, softball), my guess is that Johnny would have trouble with required coordination, speed, and strength to move smoothly and effectively in these activities.

#### Physical Fitness

I observed Johnny doing various fitness-related warm-up activities during GPE. I also talked to Mr. Jones about Johnny's fitness scores on basic fitness testing he conducted in the fall. Johnny was unable to do any sit-ups or push-ups during my observations. He was able to run through several cones, albeit slowly, demonstrating some basic agility and space awareness. He was able to do use stretch bands for arm strength about the same level as his peers. Mr. Jones noted that Johnny did to poorest in the class in the "Pacer test," a test to measure cardiorespiratory endurance. Most children can run back and forth across a gym keeping the pace of a set timer for 20 or more times. Mr. Jones noted that Johnny could no longer maintain the pace of the timer after 13 times. It is unclear whether or not Johnny's slow and somewhat awkward running pattern resulted in his inability to maintain the required running pace or if it was his limited endurance. Finally, Johnny appears to be slightly overweight, although several peers in his class also appeared to be slightly overweight. Based on my observations, Johnny does appear to be delayed in physical fitness. It should be noted that Johnny was able to participate in all activities during the 30 minute GPE session, and he never asked to sit out and rest or get a drink of water.

#### Behaviors in General Physical Education

I was able to observe Johnny's ability to attend, follow directions, stay with the group, interact with peers, and generally display appropriate behaviors. Behaviors are clearly Johnny's strengths in GPE as he was extremely well-behaved. He followed all directions without the need for the teacher to repeat them, and he was able to move independently and start GPE activities without any extra cues. Johnny seemed to get along with his peers although he did not initiate any interactions with them during my observations. His peers were wonderful with him asking him to join their group, be his partner, and generally encouraging him when he tried the various activities of GPE. Also, Johnny did not seem to get upset when he was not successful or when he could not complete an activity such as sit-ups or push-ups. The only behavior that I did note was a little self-stimulatory behavior when Johnny first walked into GPE. He would walk away

from his peers, straighten and stiffen his arms, and wiggle his fingers. He only did this for a few seconds, and only a few times during GPE, and this behavior never interfered with his ability to attend to the teacher or follow directions.

#### Summary and Recommendations

Based on my observations of Johnny in GPE and comments from Johnny's GPE teacher, it is clear that Johnny is delayed in gross motor skills and physical fitness. He is well-behaved in GPE, and these delays do not seem to have a significant affect on Johnny's abilities or self-esteem in GPE. In addition Johnny seems to have some wonderful peers who are very supportive of Johnny's limited motor and fitness skills. It should be noted that I observed Johnny during a "skill work" session rather than a "game session." Mr. Jones noted that Johnny does better in skill work as opposed to game play. He noted that in games Johnny tends to stay more on the periphery, and the speed of the game is usually too fast for Johnny to be successful.

Based on my observations of Johnny and his apparent delays in gross motor skills and physical fitness, I believe Johnny qualifies for adapted physical education (APE) services through Albemarle County's APE Program. Since Johnny does fairly well in GPE, I am recommending that Johnny receive 30 minutes of APE services as a supplement to his current GPE sessions. This 30 minute session should focus on improving Johnny's strength (sit-ups and push-ups) as well as his basic sports skills (e.g., throwing, catching, dribbling, etc.). I also suggest that a home fitness program be created for Johnny to work on his physical fitness. This home program could be no more than daily sit-ups and push-ups (modified sit-ups and push-ups) to work on Johnny's core strength.

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