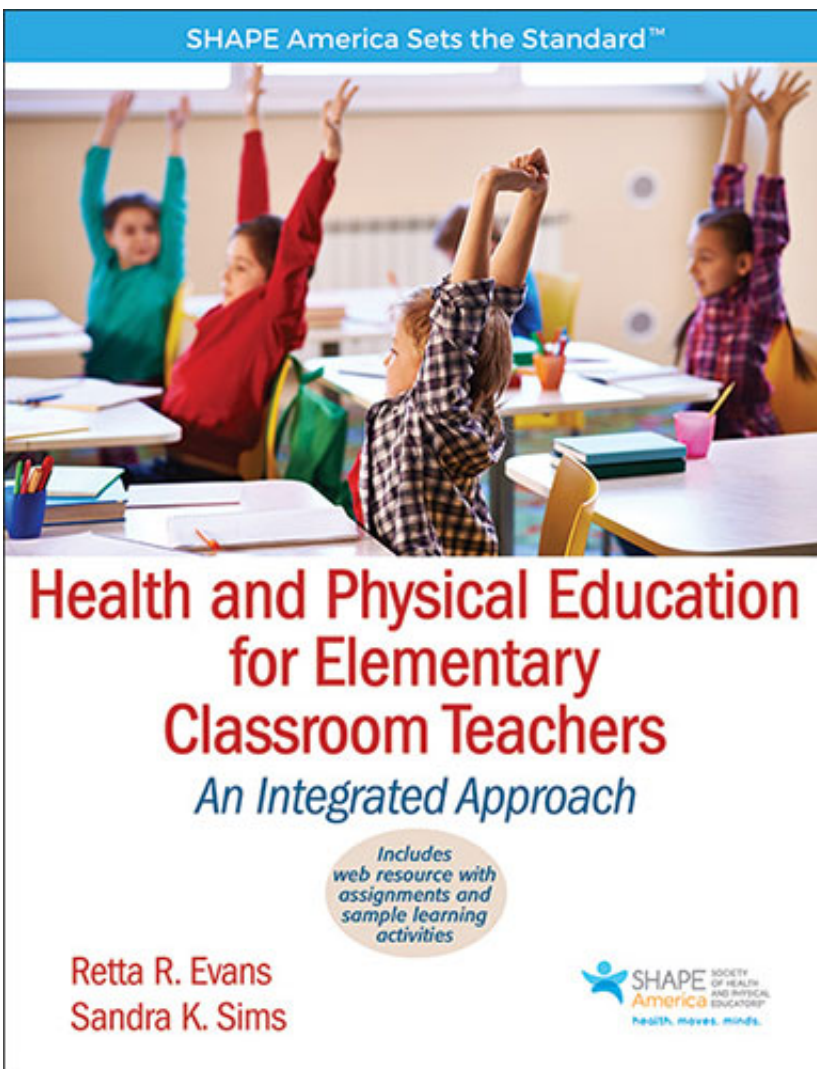


New book offers integrated approach to teaching health and physical education in elementary schools

March 21 2016, by Tiffany Westry



In elementary schools across the United States, teachers are tasked with covering a variety of subjects with students, including health or physical education, although they may not have special training in those areas.

In their new book, "[Health and Physical Education for Elementary Classroom Teachers: An Integrated Approach](#)," University of Alabama at Birmingham professors Retta Evans, Ph.D., MCHES, and Sandra Sims, Ph.D., respected educators and physical education advocates, provide resources for teachers to seamlessly incorporate [health](#) education and physical education into an integrated curriculum.

"More and more school districts are initiating health and wellness programs across the school and in the classroom," said Retta Evans, Ph.D., "So it makes sense that there is a textbook out there to support these initiatives that are happening across the country."

For several years, Evans and Sims have taught a methods and materials course for elementary teacher education students at UAB. The health and physical education course prepares aspiring educators for communicating and working with health and physical education specialists, selecting developmentally appropriate activities and integrating movement activities and concepts into classroom subjects. It was while teaching the course that Evans and Sims noticed a void. While the content of the course integrates health and physical education, the teaching material at Evans' and Sims' disposal focused only on one subject: health or physical education.

"For the first time, education students can have a book that focuses on how a classroom teacher can integrate physical education and [health education](#) into their daily lessons," Sims said. "This integration is powerful and addresses teaching the whole child. Research shows numerous benefits for children when involving more activity in the classroom. These activities are of great benefit to them."

"Health and Physical Education for Elementary Classroom Teachers" is organized into two parts, each dedicated to different components of incorporating health and physical education into the elementary classroom. Part I focuses on the foundational knowledge needed for teaching health and physical education. It addresses the [health risk behaviors](#) of today's generation of students, a team approach to coordinated school health, how physical growth and brain development in children are related to health, and the many characteristics and benefits of a high-quality physical education program.

Part II emphasizes the strategies necessary for incorporating health, [physical education](#) and physical activity into the curriculum and school day. It discusses how teachers can become advocates of healthy and active schools, identify habits that promote everyday health in the [classroom](#), and incorporate physical activity and the national standards into each school day. It also presents teaching methods, assessment tools and evaluation strategies to ensure teaching success. Practicing teachers and [teachers](#) in training will find websites, tips for best practices, sample lesson plans and tables with innovative strategies throughout the book.

Provided by University of Alabama at Birmingham

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