

[Date]

[Recipient]

RE: Footwear in schools

Dear [Educator],

Thank you for your dedication to improving the lives of children through education. As a teacher myself, I know that education is often a tiring and thankless profession, yet also tremendously rewarding.

I am writing on behalf of students from your school who wish to spend more time barefoot. Rest assured, this is actually a good thing! There is a growing body of scientific evidence that prolonged shoe use damages our feet, ankles, knees, hips and spine. The use of footwear by children and adolescents is particularly problematic since a child's foot takes many years to develop; the shoeing of children sets them up for foot problems that last a lifetime. Indeed, nearly all of our adult foot problems in the United States can be traced back to our shoes. It is widely believed that footwear is needed "for safety reasons," but after performing a thorough search for barefoot-related injuries I and others have found little evidence to support this assertion. Indeed, the evidence indicates we should all go barefoot *more* for healthier feet and bodies.

I know that you want to do what is best for the students in your care while also balancing the needs of the school. I sincerely urge you to allow your students to go barefoot on campus if they wish. Doing so provides immeasurable benefits to the children with no risk to the school. Allowing a pupil to be barefoot in class, or gym, or inside or outside on school grounds does not expose the school to additional liabilities. There have been zero court cases in which a school was found liable for injuries to a student allowed to go barefoot . In one case, in 1976, a school was found liable when a barefoot child fell and received dental injuries, but in that case the school had forced the pupil to participate in gym barefoot against his will because he had forgotten his shoes. *Forcing* a child to go barefoot and *allowing* him/her to go barefoot are two different matters, however.

I urge you to discuss this matter with your fellow teachers, pupils, and parents. Always, I am available if you would like further consultation. I love sharing the discovery that feet are healthiest and happiest when bare!

Sincerely,



Dr. Daniel Howell

Author of [The Barefoot Book: 50 Great Reasons To Kick Off Your Shoes](#)
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