



Healthier Schools: A Brighter Tomorrow



**Evidenced-based Practices to Jump Start Ohio
School Wellness Plans**



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Dear Educator:

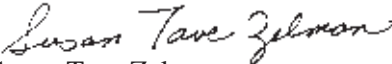
Last year at New Middletown's Springfield Elementary in Mahoning County, the program "Making the Grade with Diet and Exercise" motivated students to improve their achievement test scores and attend school more regularly. Their teachers altogether lost 597 pounds. This outstanding school wellness program provides students with a grab-and-go breakfast every morning, 10 minutes of physical exercise every day, and a reward system that, instead of focusing on food, offers ice skating, extra recess and planned physical activities.


This is just one best practice you'll find in this report, "Healthier Schools: A Brighter Tomorrow," compiled by the School Physical Fitness and Wellness Advisory Council. House Bill 66 created this council to provide guidance to school districts in developing and implementing wellness policies and plans. The council was charged with developing best practice guidelines regarding nutrition education and physical activity for students, researching school-based activities and school-business partnerships that promote wellness, and finding methods for schools to evaluate these efforts.

A focus on child wellness couldn't come at a more critical time. A 2005 study by Trust for America's Health found that Ohio had the 13th highest level of adult obesity in the nation at 24.4 percent, the fourth highest overweight high school student level at 13.9 percent, and the 30th highest overweight level for low-income children ages 2 to 5 at 11.6 percent. The state spent an estimated \$289 per person in 2003 on medical costs related to obesity, which was the 11th highest amount in the nation. These are staggering figures that could, in part, be tackled by the wellness policies districts are required to adopt before fall 2006 by the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act of 2004.

In preparing this report, the council brought together diverse perspectives from varying stakeholders, including numerous wellness advocates and Ohio high school students. The best practice models gathered for this report, as well as the assistance of ODE wellness trainers located throughout the state, can guide school districts in establishing realistic wellness policies and effective plans.

Together, let's build a brighter future for Ohio's children by creating healthier schools today.


Susan Tave Zelman
Superintendent of Public Instruction


Deborah Owens Fink
Chair, Physical Fitness and Wellness Advisory Council



**SCHOOL PHYSICAL FITNESS AND
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INTRODUCTION

THE CASE FOR A SCHOOL WELLNESS AGENDA

Today, 75 years after the Great Depression, a time when many Americans worried about putting their next meal on the table, we ironically are faced with the contrasting and significant public health issue of obesity. U.S. society has moved from the Industrial Age, when physical activity was a necessary part of everyday life, to the Information Age, in which passive activities requiring minimal physical exercise (watching television, playing video games and using a computer) have become the habitual and sometimes necessary aspects of everyday working and living. Exercise from everyday activities such as walking to work or school is less prevalent and in fact, there are fewer sidewalks available for people to use. Many commuters drive their cars from doorstep to doorstep because there is no conveniently available public transportation.

Compounding the problem with inactivity are issues surrounding food choices and nutrition. The fast food industry has doubled in size from 1972 to 1997, increasing access to quick and affordable, but often high-calorie but low-nutrient choices. Some families and schools have mirrored this trend, offering children food and drink choices that are easy and inexpensive but of little nutritional value to meet students' basic needs. Researchers are now finding that many children from very low socio-economic backgrounds are undernourished and obese. As a result, students are gaining weight because their fat and sugar intake is excessive and because their physical activity level is too low.

Additionally, eating disorders are particularly prevalent among adolescents. Some students develop unhealthy, unbalanced eating habits in order to reduce their body weight, boost self esteem, and achieve an idealized, though often unattainable, model-like appearance. Ultimately, being either underweight or overweight puts students at risk for diseases and, more immediately, may contribute to attendance and behavioral problems that keep them from academic achievement.

A study released in 2005 found that Ohio had the 13th highest level of adult obesity in the nation at 24.4 percent, the fourth highest overweight high school student level at 13.9 percent and the 30th highest overweight level for low-income children ages 2 through 5 at 11.6 percent. The state spent an estimated \$289 per person (\$3.3 billion) in 2003 on medical costs related to obesity, which was the 11th highest amount spent in the nation (Trust for America's Health, 2004). Since 1990, the rate of overweight Ohio adults (ages 18+) has remained steady, while the rate of the more severe problem of obesity has more than doubled (Healthy Policy Institute Issue Report, 2005).

Schools can partially address these staggering figures by offering healthy, nutritious food and drink options; opportunities for physical activity during the school day; and education for students about making healthy choices.

NEW FEDERAL LEGISLATION ON SCHOOL WELLNESS

Congress addressed these national health issues by passing the following law (P.L. 108 - 265): "Each local educational agency participating in a program authorized by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq) or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq) shall establish a local school wellness policy by School Year 2006."



According to the federal legislation, the local school wellness policy must include:

- Goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities that are designed to promote student wellness (in a manner that the local educational agency determines is appropriate);
- Nutrition guidelines (selected by the local educational agency) for all foods available on each school campus (under the local educational agency) during the school day with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity;
- An assurance that guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by (the U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA]);
- A plan for measuring implementation of the local wellness policy, including designation of one or more persons within the local educational agency or at each school, as appropriate, charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the local wellness policy; and
- The involvement of parents, students, and representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, and the public in the development of the school wellness policy (P.L. 108-265).

OHIO LEGISLATION ON SCHOOL WELLNESS

In June 2005, the Ohio General Assembly, recognizing the responsibility this new federal law places on school districts, passed legislation through House Bill 66 to form a School Physical Fitness and Wellness Advisory Council. The purpose was to support school districts in implementing the federal legislation. The council, formed in August 2005, was comprised of members representing educational, business and governmental organizations that have demonstrated leadership in the area of health education and wellness. More specifically, the charge of the council was to develop guidelines for best practices regarding nutrition education, physical activity for students, school-based activities and school-business partnerships that promote student wellness. In addition, the council was asked to provide districts with strategies for evaluating their local implementation of wellness policies to determine whether goals and objectives are met.

THE WORK OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL

The council met in person five times between September and December 2005 and had additional communications between meetings to determine how best to support school districts through the best practice guidelines and evaluation strategies. In order to produce guidelines that would be most helpful to school districts, the council listened to opinions from a number of key stakeholders, including students. Following a research review, the council formulated a guiding framework with core themes that schools can use when creating their own wellness plans. These initial steps led to creating a wellness logic model that includes desired school and student outcomes and that leads to the ultimate goals of creating lifelong healthy behaviors and attaining higher academic achievement for all students. From that logic model, the council established action objectives for reaching the desired school and student outcomes. Evidenced-based best practices supporting these objectives were gathered from throughout Ohio and other states, with particular emphasis on what can be learned from other states.



VOICES FROM SCHOOLS, WELLNESS ADVOCATES AND STUDENTS

Meaningful input to inform the council’s efforts was gathered from as many key stakeholders as possible. Council meetings included presentations from food service directors, students, school nurses, teachers, school board members, school administrators, business leadership, evaluation experts, nutrition educators and a former NFL football player. These stakeholders are strong advocates for adopting wellness plans in Ohio schools and their feedback informed the council.

To gain perspectives from high school students, scholars from the University of Akron and Ohio University conducted four focus group sessions in Summit County and four additional sessions in southeastern Ohio (rural Appalachia). Students within each focus group were all of the same gender and included a moderator, also of the same gender, in order to allow for maximum comfort during the discussion. The students volunteered to participate and obtained parental consent.

Each focus group session lasted one hour. Sample questions included: What are your perceptions of healthy food choices? Do your friends make healthy choices? Why or why not? What types of foods do you traditionally eat for meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner or snacks)? Do your eating habits differ between home and school? What does physically fit mean to you? What types of physical activities are you now participating in (formal sports or other school-based or community-based athletics)?

The focus groups provided many consistent responses. Students reported that they ate two to three meals per day. During evenings and on weekends, because of their families’ busy schedules, meals were reported as “catch as catch can.” During the school day, the majority bought their lunches at school and ate the food that was available to them. They expressed the belief that if schools wanted them to eat healthier foods, they should offer healthier options. They also mentioned the effects of adult role models (e.g., coaches and teachers) as well as the important role that courses, such as health classes, have in teaching nutrition and making healthy food choices. A number of students suggested that access to schools’ weight rooms with supervision after school would be more useful than many other after-school activities. Students felt that they would benefit from ongoing, consistent programs in making healthy choices and becoming more physically fit if they believed that schools demonstrated a commitment to the issue. Most of the students indicated that they were satisfied with their current level of physical fitness. None of the students linked being physically fit today with their respective future well-being.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE COUNCIL MEETINGS

In addition to the focus groups, the council brought in guest speakers to each meeting to bring a diversity of perspectives on wellness. Many of their wise suggestions are included within our best practice guidelines. In addition, highlights from these presentations, which enriched, inspired and informed our work, are presented here.

1. The Importance of Branding and Marketing

At the very first council meeting, Cheryl Agranovich of WellCorp, the council’s content developer, described the important role that marketing and branding has played in wellness programs her company has developed within companies. Although often overlooked, or looked upon as “a bonus if there are resources,” she commented that marketing must be an essential part of any wellness plan.



Because striving toward wellness takes discipline, it also takes a personal commitment to work toward that goal. Wellness cannot be enforced or externally driven. As a result, raising awareness of — and commitment to — wellness among students (and parents, teachers and school administrators) must occur before any change is to take place.

The council then discussed how successful promotional campaigns have increased interest in nutritional foods. The national “Got Milk?” campaign, sponsored by America’s milk processors and dairy farmers, is a good example of raising public awareness about the health benefits of drinking milk while appealing to a young audience through celebrities wearing a milk mustache. In a related example, milk “chugs” — fun, innovative packaging — were introduced to make the product more appealing, and students responded by purchasing more milk.

2. Stress Management

WellCorp also discussed stress management, a topic that is particularly helpful in opening people’s minds about wellness. Staff and students in schools experience high levels of stress, and they are interested in easing its negative effects. Feeling better from increased healthy choices and reduced stress levels can be the greatest motivator toward further commitment to wellness.

3. Leadership; A Champion for Wellness

Kate Horning, a high school student from northeastern Ohio, believes her school should take action in the area of wellness, although she doesn’t know of any school champions for the issue. She makes healthy choices for herself, but the majority of her friends do not. Kate’s critical reminder to the council was that there must be someone in a leadership role who is committed to addressing the issue in order to create and sustain efforts.

4. Small, Incremental Steps

The saying, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with one single step,” applies to wellness plans in schools. Lisa Morrison, Food Service Supervisor with Manchester Local Schools, illustrated this point by talking about her strategies. One single step she took toward more nutritious foods was to begin serving sandwiches with one piece of white bread facing up and a piece of wheat bread on the bottom of the sandwich. Students either did not notice or did not mind the difference. Small, incremental steps, as opposed to big commitments, can steadily move individuals toward lifelong healthier habits.

5. Student Decision-makers

No committee, no board, nor any school staff members are going to determine the foods that are served in Columbus Public Schools. The students themselves will be the judge when new foods are introduced, reports Dudley Hawkey, food service director of Columbus Public Schools. If students demonstrate they will eat a new food, he will continue to offer it. He also introduces healthy options incrementally so that students can easily adjust to a new way of eating.

6. Integration with Academics

Without an educational component to wellness, how will students continue to know what choices to make? How will schools sustain a wellness agenda if it is not directly tied into academics? Julie Winland, school nurse and wellness policy coordinator for Columbus Public Schools, challenged the council to consider that nutrition education, physical activity and physical education must be integrated



into academics to help students increase their knowledge of how best to prevent disease and promote their own well-being.

7. All Can Participate in Physical Activities

The council “walked the talk” by participating in a series of physical activities from the CATCH curriculum, facilitated by Dan Young, physical education instructor from Huntsville Elementary School of the Indian Lake Local School District. CATCH is a nutrition education and physical activity curriculum offered in many Ohio schools. Council members tried out movements that encouraged social interactions and team building. None of the movements were strenuous or required any athletic ability, so all could participate. The exercise offered a rare opportunity to move during a long day of meetings. It serves this same important purpose in schools.

8. Setting Goals for Personal Nutrition Choices

The council also set personal nutrition goals through the guidance and coaching of Susan Patton, an Ohio Department of Education child nutrition consultant. Council members used the USDA My Pyramid guide book, “Your Goals to a Healthier You,” to establish these goals. Choosing healthier foods in the grocery — or on the school meals line — becomes easier if individuals set goals and plan their strategy ahead.

9. Stages of Change

To understand what a person or a school might go through in order to increase their wellness, WellCorp presented a “Stages of Change” model (Prochaska, 1982). The stages include pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance and relapse. In this model, a person might go backward or forward when attempting to make a permanent and lasting change. In considering a wellness practice, the school might consider a different plan based upon where it believes its school culture (or its student population) is, related to wellness.

10. Simple, Fun Ways to Stay Active at Home

For former NFL and Ohio State University football star Tom Cousineau, staying active at home is a family motto. No sitting around watching television in his household. He and the kids pick fun activities that they can do and enjoy together in order to remain active and fit. He said, “Many people use the excuse of ‘it is too cold outside,’ but we just bundle up and walk or hike, or do inside fun activities like seeing who can do the most jumping jacks in a minute or stand on their head the longest!” In the midst of their busy lives, the Cousineaus find time to prepare fresh, nutritious meals and sit down and eat together as a family.

11. Fitness as a Necessary Discipline

If one is paid to be in top physical shape on a day-to-day basis, then it’s a lot simpler to become just that. But when Tom Cousineau left professional football, he wanted to maintain his health and fitness level; thus, he has assumed a fitness routine that requires tremendous discipline. Cousineau relays that he has gone through times when he could not exercise regularly, and his body suffered the consequences. Now, in order to remain challenged and interested, he changes his workout regularly. He is a role model for his children and for students in Ohio, who admire athletes with his level of ability.



12. Staff Wellness

In order to promote a wellness agenda for students, it also becomes important for a district and a school to support the health and wellness of staff, faculty and administration. This theme arose as a resounding imperative in the Wellness Advisory Council's final discussion. An agenda for addressing the health and wellness of the staff will only contribute to the school's level of ownership in the wellness plan. Ultimately, staff involvement will be a key to the integrity and sustainability of these important efforts.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

To assure that this document serves as a useful guide for district and school leadership in establishing and implementing a wellness policy, the council focused on 11 school outcomes that research shows will support the goals of creating lifelong healthy behaviors and attaining higher academic achievement for all students. These statements of outcomes are:

- Schools provide an environment that offers and promotes healthy and appealing food and drink choices;
- Parents, families and students are educated about healthy lifestyle choices;
- Schools collaborate with public and private entities to promote student wellness;
- Schools maximize their participation in federal child nutrition programs;
- Schools maximize their participation in student fitness and physical activity programs;
- Schools integrate nutrition education and physical activity into their everyday curriculum;
- Schools provide professional development, support and resources for staff about wellness;
- School community leadership demonstrates a commitment to wellness through policies, plans and actions;
- Schools provide a positive dining environment that encourages a pleasant eating experience;
- Schools provide and promote social, noncompetitive fitness and activity opportunities;
- Schools use data to develop, structure and support their wellness plans.

Using these outcomes as a guide, the council gathered best practices from associations, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, schools, universities, businesses and others that have implemented wellness plans or strategies. Many options are included that can serve as first steps or easy, quick "wins" before taking on more comprehensive programs. Each guideline includes a measurable objective, three to five best practices, and several resources to support implementing these practices.

The final section of this document focuses on tools and strategies to support schools in complying with the federal requirement for evaluation components in local wellness policies. Although no comprehensive and holistic wellness evaluation tool exists at this time, this document lists a number of resources, including needs assessments, student surveys and school nutrition surveys. As a follow-up to this document, information available electronically on the Ohio Department of Education Web site will contain additional resources to support evaluation efforts.

We hope that these guidelines support and enhance your work toward wellness. With the many pressures and requirements placed upon schools, we hope that through this work, both now and in the future, we can support the adoption and implementation of meaningful policies and practices that will truly help improve the health and well-being of Ohio students.



Best Practices Guidelines and Evaluations

GUIDELINE 1

Schools provide an environment that offers and promotes healthy and appealing food and drink choices.

BEST PRACTICES

- ★ Beaver Creek City Schools, Beaver Creek, Ohio
- ★ Kettering City Schools, Kettering, Ohio
- ★ Healthy school nutrition environment, Whitefish, Montana
- ★ Healthy eating across the curriculum, Bristol, Rhode Island
- ★ Connecticut's Team Nutrition program, Stratford, Connecticut
- ★ Project Nutrition, Great Falls, Montana
- ★ Improving the nutrition environment, South Windsor, Connecticut
- ★ Healthy Snackers UltraMarathon, Tolland, Connecticut
- ★ Healthy Kids, Opelika, Alabama
- ★ Urban Nutrition Initiative, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- ★ CATCH, Texas State Schools
- ★ Nutrition Network, Hawthorne, California

*"I believe that if healthier alternatives were provided,
students would make better choices."*

Kate Horning, Copley High School senior, Summit County



GUIDELINE 1





GUIDELINE 1

Schools provide an environment that offers and promotes healthy and appealing food and drink choices.

During the Wellness Advisory Council’s focus group sessions, high school students consistently reported that if healthier foods were made readily available, they would eat them at school. The availability of nutritious foods and drinks can significantly contribute to students’ desire and motivation to select healthier options. Moreover, the appearance, placement, display and packaging can either promote or detract from food and drink selections. Simple adjustments to the way the food is presented can help students make the best decisions when selecting what to eat.

OBJECTIVE

Schools, families and communities, including business partners, will cooperate to implement a healthier and more nutritional environment.

It could be said that “it takes a village” to fuel a healthy child. Schools have a great responsibility to ensure that every student succeeds. Through a partnership with families and community stakeholders, schools can strengthen their abilities to provide a healthy school nutrition environment. This goal requires a commitment from the school food service, food service vendors, vending companies, school administrators, faculty, parents and students to set common goals for nutritional offerings. With community support, schools can offer a greater variety of foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables, and promote student consumption of healthy foods.

BEST PRACTICES

★ 1. Beavercreek City Schools, Beavercreek, Ohio

Background: Beavercreek City Schools has earned awards for its work in implementing healthy breakfast and lunch choices. Vegetarian options are served for both breakfast and lunch, and vending machines sell milk, cereal, fresh fruit and baked chips. Much of the Beavercreek school district’s food preparation staff has received 10 hours of safe food handling training, and many educational staff members have taken 10 hours of nutrition training. In its high school government classes, the district educates students on the importance of government legislation for the school meal program.

Success: Beavercreek City Schools has seen increased consumption of fresh fruits and low-fat milk.

★ 2. Kettering City Schools, Kettering, Ohio

Background: Kettering City Schools is now in its third year of offering healthy snack choices to its elementary and middle school students. Healthy snacks include those that are:

- Offered in single-serving sizes;
- Contain seven grams of fat or less;
- Include either 100 percent juice in beverages, 12-ounce bottled water or 1 percent milk.



Kettering also has limited the availability of vending machines to after school use, implemented National School Breakfast Week and encouraged parental involvement during National School Lunch Week. The district regularly hires dietetic interns to teach nutrition lessons, and nutritional education is mailed to students' homes.

Duration: The program is in its third year at the elementary school level and in its second year at the middle school level.

Success: An average of 71 percent of students participate in programs in more than nine elementary schools. At the middle school level, participation is 69 percent in one school and 64 percent in another.

✦ 3. Healthy School Nutrition Environment, Central Middle School, Whitefish, Montana

Background: The Central Middle School adapted the healthy school nutrition environment concept after recognizing an association between nutrition and school behavior. While picking up trash covering the school grounds, the school realized students were consuming great amounts of soda, chips, candy and other snack foods instead of eating nutritious meals served in the cafeteria. Further, many discipline issues affecting the overall learning environment needed to be addressed.

All soft drinks were removed from vending machines and replaced with bottled water, milk, sports drinks and juices. Candy was removed from all machines and is not sold during school hours. The vending machines were stocked daily with yogurt, string cheese, pudding, beef jerky, baked chips and fruit. A la carte offerings in the lunch room included homemade pretzels, bagels, salads, sandwiches, baked chips and fresh fruit. In addition to changes in the nutritional quality of the food offered, lunchtime recess was rescheduled to take place before lunch rather than after lunch. Because students got moderate exercise during the pre-lunch recess, teachers reported that students were more relaxed and less likely to cause disciplinary problems.

Duration: The program began in the 2002-2003 school year. All changes took effect within the first week of the school year in 2002.

Success: Improvements in afternoon academics have been noted at the middle school. Teachers reported that student behavior and attentiveness had improved during the class period that immediately followed lunch. They said that students now were "...rested, relaxed and ready to learn." One math teacher reported that she has "... gained 10 minutes in instruction time" per period, which adds up to 30 hours per year.

Lunchroom discipline problems decreased from 183 incidents during 2001-2002 to 36 incidents within the first eight months of the 2002-2003 school year. More specifically, after-lunch referrals to the principal's office also decreased from 96 in 2001-2002 to 22 in the first eight months of the 2002-2003 year.



Lastly, earnings from vending and a la carte sales each month stayed the same or slightly increased. Although total sales decreased, greater profits from sales of the higher-priced healthier items, as compared to the profits from lower-priced unhealthy items, meant that the earnings for the school's food service were higher than before the changes.

For more information:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/nutrition/Making-It-Happen/>

★ **4. Healthy eating across the curriculum, Byfield Elementary School (K-3), Bristol, Rhode Island**

Background: The school established a committee of parents, teachers, administrators and community members to review current student nutritional habits and suggest necessary changes. This committee determined which key groups to reach out to, including students, parents and school staff members.

Meetings and programs were presented on the nutritional merits of fruits and vegetables. (Some events featured a chef.) Parents attended programs on preparing nutrient-rich snacks for children to take to school. The school promoted these snacks with stickers and rewards. The school held health fairs and "sample days" throughout the school year to encourage students to try new, healthy foods. For example, ice cream was replaced with frozen yogurt and high-fat snacks were replaced with bagel chips and air-popped popcorn. In addition, the after-school program began serving fruit juice and fresh fruit instead of high-calorie and high-fat snacks.

Duration: Menu changes and student and parent education programs were put into place starting in 2003.

Success: Refreshments for classroom parties now include choices such as 100 percent juice, cheese and cracker trays, vegetables with dip and multi-grain crackers. According to the food service director, the students simply cannot get enough of snacks such as rice cakes and yogurt. Physical education and nutrition activities are now an integral part of all grade levels, due to the program. A nutrition program called "Snack Attack" is now part of the regular curriculum, as well as Hispanic foods, a nutrition unit and jazzercise classes.

Through continued education programs and meetings with parents and staff, the successful healthy snacking program continues to grow. Plans are in the works for an incentive program called "Dairy Dollars," linking mathematics and nutrition. This program would allow students to redeem earned coupons for milk and yogurt. A new program entitled "Caught Healthy Eating" rewards students for choosing healthy snacks in the classroom.

For more information:

<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/nutrition/Making-It-Happen/>



★ 5. Connecticut's Team Nutrition program, Stratford Public Schools, Stratford, Connecticut

Background: A comprehensive school health committee was formed to limit student access to low-nutrient foods and to help students make better nutritional choices. The school district brought a chef into each school and exposed the students to healthier meals, such as salads, fruit, granola, yogurt parfait and vegetable pizza. Along with menu changes, portion sizes were reduced.

At the elementary schools, teachers kept a tally of fruits and vegetables consumed during lunchtime for competitions held several times a year.

Duration: The program began in the fall of 2002 and continues.

Success: All the healthier foods offered a la carte are being sold just as fast as they are stocked. Some schools have offered "salad creation," allowing students to create their own salads by choosing their own toppings and dressings.

In the elementary schools with the fruit and vegetable competitions, the food service director maintains that, "The enthusiasm among the kids was more than I could have ever imagined. On some days, we sold eight times the usual numbers of apples! This program was the most successful that I have ever seen."

For more information:

<http://www.team.uconn.edu/index.htm>

★ 6. Project Nutrition, East Middle School, Great Falls, Montana

Background: Students at East Middle School teamed up with teachers to develop a nutrition education program and to market highly nutritious foods in a student store. The store formerly sold school supplies and low-nutrition snacks.

Students developed daily nutrition announcements and other advertising for the snacks. For example, students announced store selections over the school's public address system. They also contacted the school's vending service about changing the snacks offered in school vending machines.

Duration: Project Nutrition began at the beginning of the 2002-2003 school year, with educators hoping that the program would continue the following year at the new middle school.

Success: Due to the success of the student store and marketing by the students, the a la carte line in the cafeteria now offers healthier food choices. After discovering that some of the healthier food choices were selling as well as the other snacks, the vending company replaced a candy vending machine with one selling healthier snacks. By the end of the year, the remaining four vending machines, previously full of unhealthy choices, were shut down during the school day.



For more information:

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/schoolfood/teamNutritionNEW.html>
<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/nutrition/Making-It-Happen/>

★ 7. Improving the nutritional environment, South Windsor Schools, South Windsor, Connecticut

Background: The South Windsor school system made gradual changes within the schools to surround students in a positive nutritional environment. Vending machines selling flavored milk, bottled water, 100 percent fruit juices, and bottled smoothies were introduced into the middle and high school cafeterias. Milk served in 10-ounce bottles was introduced at the middle schools during lunch time. Snack items sold in the schools were reviewed and priced according to their nutritional value. High-priced items with low nutritional value either were eliminated or priced to discourage sales. For example, the price of a doughnut was set at 90 cents, while small bagels were sold for 60 cents and larger bagels for 75 cents. The sale of cookies was only allowed during specific days of the week, and all fried snacks were replaced with baked snacks. To reduce the overall fat content of the menu, the number of times high-fat menu items could be served during the school year was limited.

Giant, multicolored menus were developed at the elementary schools, so students could see what was being served in the cafeteria. These menus were also sent home to families, instead of being published the traditional school calendar manner. The nutrition services department offered employee workshops on wellness and on the links between obesity and disease. These classes were focused on developing healthy lifestyles and on becoming positive role models within the school system.

Duration: The new vending machines and price changes in the a la carte serving line started in September 2002. Breakfast programs were implemented in schools in December 2002, with all elementary schools participating by September 2003.

Success: According to the company responsible for filling the milk machines, “we can hardly keep them filled.” In the middle schools, the 10-ounce milk bottle purchases increased by 2,000 bottles, which in turn decreased total meal calories to satisfactory levels, increased calcium consumption and resulted in less waste of milk in the disposed bottles.

The sales of healthier a la carte menu items were very strong. For example, while doughnut sales dwindled, bagel sales were “very hot.” These gradual changes increased participation in the school lunch program from 32 percent in the 1980s to almost 60 percent currently. Almost 100 percent of the students participate in some aspect of the food service offerings.

For more information:

<http://www.team.uconn.edu/index.htm>
<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/nutrition/Making-It-Happen/>



✦ 8. Healthy Snackers UltraMarathon, Birch Grove Primary School, Tolland, Connecticut

Background: Carol Goodrow, an elementary teacher, developed the Healthy Snackers UltraMarathon program. The program allows the class or a group of students to vote on their favorite time of day to snack and to choose from a list of their 50 favorite nutritious snacks. The first student to bring in a snack from the list gets his or her name posted on the chart next to the food, and the item is then checked off. If a student brings in any healthy snack, he or she is rewarded with stickers or some other way of recognition. The students bring in 40 snacks and the teacher brings the last 10 snacks to help provide a positive example.

This program was designed to encourage teamwork, healthier eating and to teach the value of different snacks from each of the food groups.

Duration: This program began in the fall of 2003 and still continues.

Success: Once all the snacks had been successfully checked off the list, each child gets to pick a reward or prize, as determined by the teacher or leader of the program. Throughout the entire program, students became eager to try new foods, bring in additional healthy snacks that were not included on the list and learn information that would be passed on to their parents at home. According to Carol Goodrow, “Children will take the nutritional message home, and this way teachers can educate parents through the children.”

For more information:

<http://www.kidsrunning.com/columns/whatkidsneed2.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/nutrition/Making-It-Happen/>

✦ 9. Healthy Kids, Opelika City School System, Alabama

Background: For the past decade, Opelika City Schools in Alabama has been encouraging its schools to improve their cafeterias and focus on nutrition. Their progressive policies included banning all vending machines, eliminating fried foods from menus and providing nutritional analysis on all menu items, to ensure children receive proper nutrition and meet the nutritional recommendations for their age group. The district also has made an effort to include locally grown produce on its menus. In addition, schools made it a policy that students remain on campus during lunchtimes. All a la carte items are analyzed for nutritional content and are only offered as extra side items.

Duration: The Opelika schools have been working toward improving their school lunches since the early 1990s, when vending machines were banned.

For more information:

<http://www.rwjf.org/files/publications/other/HealthySchools.pdf>



★ 10. Urban Nutrition Initiative, Drew Elementary School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Background: The University of Pennsylvania and Philadelphia City Schools have collaborated to provide elementary school students access to nutritious foods and to teach healthy eating habits. The program members include teachers, university faculty and staff members employed by the Urban Nutrition Initiative (UNI). A majority of Drew Elementary students are African-American and are from lower income levels. The program focuses on urban agriculture and nutrition education using fun activities and projects. Nearby University City High School students, who help run the school's garden and greenhouse, mentor the younger students. Together, they have class salad parties, learn how to cook the vegetables they grow and keep "garden diaries." Every day after school, the elementary students sell apples, pears, kiwis, baby carrots, bell peppers and other produce for 25 cents to parents and other students.

Success: Both the University City High School and Drew Elementary School are model UNI schools. Two hundred students from the high school and 350 elementary students participate in the program. Students run a Saturday Farmer's Market and Winter Buying Club with the produce, retail milk and eggs. Profits last year were \$12,000-\$14,000 from this program. The subsidized vegetable stand run by the elementary students successfully competes with vending machine items. Program coordinators have noticed more students choosing healthy snacks. They hired an evaluator to assess the effectiveness of the program. Next, UNI is working with schools in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and in South Africa to develop similar programs.

For more information:

<http://www.rwjf.org/files/publications/other/HealthySchools.pdf>

<http://www.upenn.edu/ccp/index.shtml>

★ 11. CATCH, Texas State Schools

Background: Coordinated Approach to Childhood Health (CATCH) is a program based in Texas, aimed at teaching elementary school children the importance of nutrition and physical activity. Teachers, volunteer parents, food service managers, counselors and administrators use fun activities and mascots to educate students in grades three through five. Hearty Heart, Flash Fitness, Salt Sleuth and Dynamite Diet are the names of characters created to teach children about choosing a diet filled with fruits and vegetables, watching out for high sodium foods and keeping active. Children are also taught to classify foods into "go," "slow," and "whoa" foods. "Go" foods are those that are OK to eat at any time, such as fruits and vegetables. "Slow" foods are OK to eat in moderation, and "whoa" foods should only be eaten occasionally or on special occasions. The cafeteria posts signs labeling the foods on the school lunch menu. Schools have also eliminated fried foods from their menu, stopped using butter, switched to low-fat ice cream and low-fat milk, and introduced a salad bar and fruits for dessert.

Duration: This program started in 1997 and continues today.

Success: The CATCH program is used in more than 1,000 Texas schools and is expanding to 30 other states and Canada. Studies and research on the pilot program indicate that it was able to



improve the nutritional value of school lunches and the eating habits of children. Furthermore, a three-year follow up study showed how the lessons learned during elementary school and the subsequent behavioral changes in the children's eating habits continued into adolescence.

For more information:

<http://www.sph.uth.tmc.edu/chppr/catch>

★ **12. Nutrition Network, Hawthorne School District, Hawthorne, California**

Background: The goal of Hawthorne Schools is to provide students with high-quality, nutritious foods and life-long healthy habits. All the school's cafeterias have a "Garden Bar" and a monthly "Harvest of the Month," which promote a new food in season. In addition, teachers receive a monthly newsletter with tips on incorporating nutrition education in their classrooms, along with easy recipes. Two schools are testing a new "Breakfast Buffet," highlighting healthy foods to start the day. Several cafeteria staffers, called nutrition education activity assistants, interact with children during lunch times to encourage them to sample the month's featured food. Parents are encouraged to reinforce the lessons at home through public service announcements aired on a local cable channel.

Duration: Ongoing.

Success: Observers claim students are eating more fruits and vegetables. Breakfast participation has increased in several of the pilot schools.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=209





RESOURCES

Beverage choices for each grade level.

The American Beverage Association documents its specific objectives with parents, community leaders and school officials to provide improved beverage choices within schools.

http://www.ameribev.org/schools/vending_policy.asp

The Ohio Soft Drink Association adopts new ABA school vending policy.

The Ohio Soft Drink Association documents a new policy aimed at reducing childhood obesity. The policy has its foundation with the American Beverage Association and encourages offering more nutritious and lower-calorie beverages in school vending machines.

<http://ohiosoftdrink.com/index.php?p=8&id=11>

Summary of national research findings for the American Beverage Association.

This document provides surveyed facts and statistics addressing the adopted proposal by the American Beverage Association for vending machines in schools. The data shows support for the policy change and an individual grade analysis referencing varying terms of support.

<http://www.ameribev.org/pressroom/sept2005overwhelmingsupport.asp>

Ohio Department of Education, Neighborhood Network of Trainers.

The Neighborhood Network of Trainers (NNT) is an education and training service provided through the Ohio Department of Education, Office for Safety, Health and Nutrition. Qualified instructors use specialized programs and materials to assist local school food service programs in staff development. The American Food Service Association has approved all NNT training sessions for specialized training and continuing education credit.

http://www.ode.state.oh.us/food_service/CNS_Calendar/cns_calendar_NNT.asp

Symons, Cynthia, et. al. "Bridging Student Health Risks and Academic Achievement Through Comprehensive School Health Programs," *Journal of School Health*, 67.6 (1997), California School Boards Association, "Linkages Between Student Health and Academic Achievement," West Sacramento, CA, 2004

United States Dept. of Agriculture, Foods Sold in Competition with USDA *School Meals Programs: A Report to Congress* January 12, 2001. Washington, DC: USDA, 2001



GUIDELINE 1





GUIDELINE 2

Parents, families and students are educated about healthy lifestyle choices.

BEST PRACTICES

- ★ St. Albert the Great Elementary School, Dayton, Ohio and Ascension Elementary School, Kettering, Ohio
- ★ Eat Well & Keep Moving, Baltimore, Maryland
- ★ Healthy Kids, Toledo, Iowa
- ★ Comprehensive Wellness for Life, Erie, Pennsylvania
- ★ Go the Extra Mile, State of Wisconsin
- ★ Healthy Kids Challenge, Dighton, Kansas
- ★ Program Energy, State of Colorado
- ★ Walter Kidder Elementary, Brunswick, Ohio
- ★ Monthly nutrition newsletters
- ★ Grocery lists
- ★ Positive thinking

“One of our favorite after-school activities for demonstrating good eating habits is to have each child bring in a recipe from home and substitute ingredients to make it healthier. Kids love to cook, and this hands-on approach is a great way to get them involved in making better nutritional choices.”

Leslie Moss, executive director, Ohio University’s Kids on Campus



GUIDELINE 2

Parents, families and students are educated about healthy lifestyle choices.

Both environment and adult role models have a powerful influence on whether students make healthy lifestyle choices. In order for students to develop healthy habits that will last a lifetime, they need to know and understand what choices to make, why those choices are important and how they can move from unhealthy habits toward healthier ones. Since parents and families can learn how to support and model these healthy choices, providing them with guidelines for incorporating healthier lifestyle options into daily routines can increase the likelihood that students will try new ways of eating, drinking and being active. School and family, therefore, can become partners in promoting healthy choices by enhancing student knowledge, values, beliefs and, ultimately, actions.

OBJECTIVE

Develop and implement a communication plan regarding healthy lifestyle choices for parents, families, students and school staff.

When implementing a wellness plan, a strategy for communication is critical. Sending a common message to school staff, students and families can elevate wellness as a priority and can provide an ongoing reminder of its importance. A communication plan should succinctly and clearly outline the best ways to reach each audience. The plan should also outline how communication will occur. With good planning, these common wellness messages will be conversation topics within the school community.

BEST PRACTICES

✦ 1. St. Albert the Great Elementary School, Dayton, Ohio, and Ascension Elementary School, Kettering, Ohio

Background: St. Albert the Great and Ascension Elementary Schools have created and provided opportunities for students and parents to learn about healthy lifestyle choices. Their approach allows students to learn healthy habits in the classroom and then practice those habits at home. The different programs the schools have developed include a health fair that provides students, parents and staff a fun opportunity to learn about healthy habits and behaviors; an armed forces day; holiday cafeteria decorating; and health-promoting special events. The schools have done an excellent job developing relationships with the students and showing that they actually care about their health and well-being. As a result, there are more choices and healthier options for students.

Success: The overall response of the program has been very positive. Parents are appreciative of the school staff and their continued efforts to “go the extra mile.” Students, parents and staff all enjoy their involvement in the various health programs.



★ 2. Eat Well & Keep Moving, Baltimore, Maryland

Background: Initially designed as a joint research project between the Harvard School of Public Health and Baltimore City Public Schools, the Eat Well & Keep Moving program was launched in 1993 to give children the information they need to choose nutritious foods, be physically active, and reduce their risk of obesity and chronic diseases. During the 2001-2002 school year, the program was introduced to Boston public schools. Eat Well & Keep Moving is inexpensive, fits within the curriculum, and utilizes existing school and local facilities, such as classrooms, cafeterias, gymnasiums, hallways, homes and community centers. The program also involves parents and family members in school activities and newsletter publishing and sponsors nutritional and physical activities with community-based health organizations.

Duration: Established in 14 Baltimore elementary schools during a four-year period.

Success: Feedback indicates that Eat Well & Keep Moving persuaded students to make healthier choices, like eating more fruits and vegetables, eating less fat, watching less TV and being more physically active. Students rated the program very highly. Principals gave it a high priority and 100 percent of teachers said they would teach the lessons again.

For more information:

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu>





GUIDELINE 2





★ 3. Healthy Kids, Toledo, Iowa

Background: The Healthy Kids program brings students and their parents together once a week. While the children participate in aerobic exercises, crafts, nutrition lessons and eating healthy snacks, the parents are involved in parenting or nutrition discussions. Throughout the school year, the program is targeted to children ages 2 to 5. During the summer, it is offered to children ages 6 to 10 and their parents.

Success: Nutrition awareness improvement between pre- and post-tests.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=218

★ 4. Comprehensive Wellness for Life, Walnut Creek Middle School, Erie, Pennsylvania

Background: The Comprehensive Wellness for Life program involves demonstrations and role-plays to better educate students about healthy lifestyle choices. An annual “Wild for Wellness Day” includes physical activities for the entire school, nutrition presentations and a fitness-nutrition motivational speaker. Throughout the year community leaders offer classes on plyometrics, yoga and line dancing. Students get involved in essay contests. Preschool nutrition programs are presented throughout the school year as well.

Success: Student surveys taken at the end of the school year showed improvements when compared to surveys at the beginning of the school year. Sixth-grade teachers noticed an increase in healthy choices for students’ daily snacks. The PTA has also increased funding to assist the cafeteria in encouraging students to choose healthier foods.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=191

★ 5. Go the Extra Mile, Wisconsin Department of Education

Background: The philosophy behind Go the Extra Mile is that the family that plays together stays together, and that conducting daily fitness activities enhances family life. Children who exercise with their parents and other adults they know view exercise as a value. Therefore, education for students focuses on teaching different avenues of exercise and that equal parts of work and play are very important for a healthy lifestyle. The program began as an after-school program, but quickly was incorporated into the school day. Activities include field trips and class nature hikes.

Rewards and incentives make the program competitive among the school’s classrooms. For example, classrooms with the highest weekly average of walking miles logged receive the “Golden Sneaker Award” for the next week.



Success: One hundred percent of the students in kindergarten through grade four participated. Students constantly thought of activities that would count as “miles” for their class. The high participation suggests the students were absorbed with the leadership, incentives and overall philosophy of the program.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=206

★ 6. Healthy Kids Challenge, Dighton, Kansas

Background: Healthy Kids Challenge is a program designed to create opportunities for children and their families to learn about making healthy living a habit. The program provides a Web site, written materials, electronic newsletters, onsite consultation, workshops and training sessions, mentoring for children, and phone and e-mail assistance on healthy eating and physical activity. Services, teamed with corporate sponsors, provide all children with the necessary funding.

Success: A pilot survey of 900 adults reported that a majority increased their nutrition awareness and education, spent more family time discussing and practicing healthy changes, and chose healthy snacks. Regarding physical activity, 62 percent said they decreased their time spent in sitting activities, 57 percent recognized a positive impact upon their family and 91 percent wanted to continue their efforts. In the same survey, 91 percent of 1,400 students in kindergarten through grade five responded that they had fun in the program. In addition, 89 percent said they increased healthy eating both at home and at school, 85 percent reported they increased their level of physical activity and 89 percent noticed an increased number of opportunities to practice healthy choices at school.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=216

★ 7. Program Energy, State of Colorado

Background: Program Energy developed to prevent obesity among second graders in Colorado. This program has two parts. The first part, called “Scientists in the Classroom,” provides hands-on, challenging and fun lessons about how the body works. The second part involves researching how children communicate with their parents about maintaining a healthy weight, being physically active and eating a healthy diet.

Success: Tests showed meaningful increases in health and science knowledge and in positive attitudes and behaviors regarding good nutrition and physical activity. Parents increased their knowledge of diabetes and other health topics. Activity surveys showed an increase in moderate and total physical activity among parent participants.

For more information:

<http://www.the-aps.org/press/conference/eb03/9.htm>



★ 8. Walter Kidder Elementary, Brunswick, Ohio

Background: Kidder Elementary has adopted healthy snack practices. Parents are requested to provide healthy snacks for birthday treats and holiday parties. Halloween parties are candy-free. This year, healthy snacks were served in place of candy. Straight “A” student parties have a new menu this year. Instead of pizza, chips and pop, straight “A” students enjoy pizza, salad, 100 percent fruit juice and an all-fruit bar for dessert. Only baked snacks are available in the cafeteria.

Success: Number of student participants: 405.

★ 9. Monthly nutrition newsletters

Monthly newsletters that offer information about how to eat healthfully provide examples of how nutritious foods can be fun, enjoyable and delicious. The newsletter might offer delicious recipes, nutrition goals and ideas on how to replace refined food ingredients with healthier choices, such as whole-grain breads and cereals. The newsletter might promote how to make popular foods people enjoy healthier.

★ 10. Grocery lists

Explain how grocery shopping for nutritious items doesn’t break the bank. Examples of nutritious budget shopping might include buying in bulk, buying at local produce or farmer’s markets and avoiding time-consuming recipes that require extensive preparation.

★ 11. Positive thinking

Educate students and parents that nutritious food is not “rabbit food.” Teach them to stop thinking that healthful eating is expensive, boring, tasteless, unpleasant or unsatisfying.

RESOURCES

National PTA

This Web site includes resources for parents on how to encourage children to develop a healthy lifestyle. The Web site also provides information on finding and contacting one’s local PTA.
http://www.pta.org/pr_category_details_1117232379734.html

Parents can play a role in preventing childhood obesity

The Institute of Medicine addresses the interventions available to a parent for addressing childhood obesity. The document addresses best practices for each life stage of child development and includes key components that influence childhood obesity.
<http://www.iom.edu>



President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports (PCPFS)

Encourages, promotes and motivates physical fitness and sports participation for all Americans of all ages. The Web site includes information on the school-based President's Challenge Youth Physical Fitness Awards program.

<http://www.fitness.gov>

Nutrition and the health of young people

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention introduced a fact sheet of statistics regarding diet and disease among youth. The collection includes data regarding overweight youth, diet and academic performance, and eating behaviors of young people.

<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/Nutrition>

Preventing childhood overweight and obesity: Parents can make a difference

Resources and information on how parents can take an active role in helping their child live a healthy lifestyle.

http://nutrition.psu.edu/projectpa/frames_html/frames_homepage.html

CartSmart: Get Rolling.

A newsletter found on the Ohio Food Industry Foundation's Web site that informs its audience about nutritional standards and options to promote health and wellness. The newsletter provides daily recreational activity ideas, balanced eating guidelines, tips for healthy snacking and "Smart Links" to other nutrition and wellness sites.

<http://www.ohiofoodindustryfoundation.org/>

Powerful Girls have Powerful Bones

An interactive site geared toward young girls and their bone health, providing games to learn about calcium as well as information on exercise and weight-bearing physical activity. The site is animated and includes free icons and screensavers that are available for downloading.

<http://www.cdc.gov/powerfulbones/>

USDH Dietary Guidelines

United States Department of Health. (2005). Dietary guideline for Americans 2005. (Publication No.03-4082). Retrieved October, 19, 2005.

The executive summary of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005 has recommendations for both students and adults on weight loss, physical activity, as well as caloric needs and information.

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/dga/>

BAM! Body and Mind

Designed for children 9–13 years old, BAM! Body and Mind gives them the information they need to make healthy lifestyle choices. Designed for children, the Web site includes information on health and nutrition, physical activity, safety, and diseases. The site provides games, quizzes and an activity calendar that can be specialized for each child.

<http://www.bam.gov/index.html>



American Academy of Pediatrics

Includes information on children's health topics, such as ailments and weight control.
<http://www.aap.org>

American Dietetic Association

Provides information on finding local nutrition professionals. The Web site also includes nutrition fact sheets, nutrition tips of the day, and National Nutrition Month information.
<http://www.eatright.org>

Body Positive

Targets 6- to 18-year-olds and teaches how to have a positive body image and healthy relationship with food. The Web site gives information on how to have an education plan customized for one's area, educational tools and information for parents.
<http://www.thebodypositive.org>

Diabetes Services, Inc.

The latest information on food, nutrition, food safety and health for diabetics.
<http://www.diabetesnet.com>

March of Dimes

Nutrition and information for newborns and pregnant women.
<http://www.modimes.org>

Milk Processor Education Program

Education and resources targeting mothers and teens, addressing the importance of milk.
<http://www.whymilk.com>

National Institute of Health

Information on why milk is important to teens and preteens. Aimed at parents, with fun games for the children.
<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/milk/kidsteens.cfm>

Nemours Foundation's KidsHealth

Three individual sites targeting parents, kids and teens. Provides health-related information, including nutrition and fitness.
<http://www.kidshealth.org>

Pear Bureau

Information on pears: their nutritional value, recipes, activities, stories and recipes using pears. The just-for-kids site has interactive games and recipes for children.
<http://www.usapears.com/justforkids/default.asp>
<http://www.usapears.com/>



Rutgers University Cooperative Research & Extension

Links to resources dealing with nutrition. Information on the local extension office and their services; programs for children, community, gardening, nutrition and 4-H.

<http://www.rce.rutgers.edu/health/nutritionlinks.asp>

Girl Power

Purpose is to encourage and motivate 9- to 13-year-old girls to live a healthy life. Includes games, resources, facts and other items aimed at the interests and challenges of girls.

<http://www.girlpower.gov>

GUIDELINE 2





GUIDELINE 3

Schools collaborate with public and private entities to promote student wellness.

BEST PRACTICES

- ★ New London Local Schools, New London, Ohio
- ★ Hawthorne School District Nutrition Network, Hawthorne, California
- ★ Fayette County Public Schools, Lexington, Kentucky
- ★ Green Bay Area Public School District, Green Bay, Wisconsin
- ★ Kinglsey Middle School, Kingsley, Michigan
- ★ Waiakea High School, Hilo, Hawaii
- ★ Westlake Middle School, Thornton, Colorado
- ★ McComb School District, McComb, Mississippi
- ★ Manchester Team Nutrition, Merrimack, New Hampshire
- ★ Coulee Region Childhood Obesity Coalition, LaCrosse, Wisconsin
- ★ Gold Medal School Initiative, State of Utah
- ★ Healthy Children, Healthy Futures, New York, New York
- ★ Project Fit America, Novato, California
- ★ Reading School District's Health & Fitness Focus, Redding, California

*“As a busy working mother, I strive to be a good role model for my children.
I run, bike or swim at least three days per week.
We can’t just tell our kids what to do; we should show them.”*

Kristi Pielstick, M.D., Akron



GUIDELINE 3





GUIDELINE 3

Schools collaborate with public and private entities to promote student wellness.

Because all community partners — government agencies, nonprofit organizations, schools and businesses — have a vested interest in overall student success, including their health and well being, there are many opportunities for partnership. Public and private organizations can provide human, financial and other in-kind resources to support a greater variety of foods, more appealing packaging and displays for promoting healthy foods, and out-of-school time activities for students. A partnership can yield short- and long-term benefits. In the short term, the wellness of a partnering community organization can be increased as it works with a school to help promote and implement a wellness plan. In the long term, the community gains a pool of healthy citizens that can contribute to its growth, vibrancy and success.

OBJECTIVE

Public and private entities will partner with a school on a wellness initiative at least once per school year.

Setting small, reachable goals and celebrating success are important as schools implement a wellness plan. Setting a fairly easy goal to accomplish will ensure a quick win for all. When administrators, teachers and students, along with their community partners, see and experience those small successes, others will want to join in, commit to and support this important work. Showcasing the partnership in the local media can be an excellent way to raise awareness and recognize the efforts of those involved in implementing the plan.

BEST PRACTICES

★ 1. New London Local Schools, New London, Ohio

Background: The district's Healthy Initiative Advisory Committee sponsored a daylong wellness fair with more than 40 health-related agencies. Students from all grade levels could take part in the fair. After the school day, the fair was open to the community. The school health team was instrumental in coordinating the event.

The district also includes healthy tips on monthly menus and recruits student taste-testers to influence what choices may be included on school menus.

Duration: A one-time event plus ongoing activities.

Success: Before the wellness fair, students' response to lunchtime programs on health-related topics was mixed. After the fair, students displayed better attitudes toward nutrition and were more likely to frequent the salad bar.



★ 2. Hawthorne School District Nutrition Network, Hawthorne, California

Background: The Hawthorne School District Nutrition Network was created in order to improve the health and well-being of students by educating them to make healthy food choices. The program involved parents and all stakeholders in the school community. School cafeterias provided a “Garden Bar” where students were allowed to choose from an assortment of fruits and vegetables. “Harvest of the Month” was implemented, allowing students to try seasonal fruits and vegetables. The program also is implementing a “breakfast buffet” at two schools.

Each school is provided with nutrition information by the Nutritional Network Team, which also provides training to students about the importance of nutrition and physical activity. Each elementary school in the Hawthorne School District has a cooking cart, which allows teachers to use and organize cooking lessons. Six of the eight elementary schools have working gardens, and the Nutrition Advisory Councils are now exploring the possibility of gardens at the middle schools. To reach out to the community, the Hawthorne Nutrition Network works with a local newspaper in publishing a weekly article, joins forces with local nonprofit organizations at health fairs and conducts nutrition classes for parents. A local television station broadcasts information about the Hawthorne breakfast program and runs public service announcements about the wellness program.

Success: Due to the introduction of the “breakfast buffet,” breakfast participation has risen, with one school noting an 8 percent increase in a one-month period. Student consumption of fruits and vegetables also has increased, especially during and after the “Harvest of the Month” promotions.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=209

★ 3. Fayette County Public Schools, Lexington, Kentucky

Local health department staff promoted healthy living and lifestyles to high school students. As part of the presentation, each student received a free healthy snack.

★ 4. Green Bay Area Public School District, Green Bay, Wisconsin

The Green Bay area public schools partnered with area hospitals and community agencies to sponsor a nutrition assembly program for 20 area elementary schools, called “The Opera of Health.”

★ 5. Kingsley Middle School, Kingsley, Michigan

Kingsley Middle School worked with the United Dairy Industries of Michigan and Michigan Team Nutrition to secure a grant for purchasing a milk vending machine. Once the machine was installed, the school started a calcium nutrition program.



★ 6. Waiakea High School, Hilo, Hawaii

Waiakea High School established a partnership with local food companies to set lower prices on healthy foods and snacks that are sold within the student-managed school store. The high school also worked with local companies to donate a vending machine that served bottled juices, water and low-fat milk. The students were then responsible for the marketing, selling and management of the products.

★ 7. Westlake Middle School, Adams 12 Five Star School District, Thornton, Colorado

Westlake Middle School's nutrition services department started an a la carte options program, called "eat smart," during fall 2003. This program replaced a la carte selections with more healthy food choices. Working with the USDA's Eat Smart Play Hard™ campaign, Westlake Middle School coordinated its "eat smart" snacks with the Eat Smart Play Hard™ logos and posters.

★ 8. McComb School District, McComb, Mississippi

McComb School District developed relationships and partnerships with local pediatricians, who gave presentations to the school board on issues such as childhood obesity, cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

★ 9. Manchester Team Nutrition, Merrimack, New Hampshire

Background: Manchester Team Nutrition is a collaboration of a registered dietitian, food service workers, students, school nurses, teachers, parents and many community organizations serving 14 elementary schools in the Manchester School District. This group provided nutrition and physical activity education through the Healthy Hearts program, which consisted of nutrition contests, creative classes, monthly school lunch menus, newsletters and health fairs for children. The program also held luncheons for parents and developed a Web site.

Success: The program was influential in increasing school lunch participation by 1,010 meals per day in 2000.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=233



★ 10. Coulee Region Childhood Obesity Coalition, LaCrosse, Wisconsin

Background: The Coulee Region Childhood Obesity Coalition was created to increase awareness of childhood obesity and help prevent the problem by encouraging healthy eating habits and physical activity. Many local organizations were involved in providing the community with ideas for healthy eating and exercising. Local grocery stores provided shoppers with healthy recipes and tips. Schools provided healthier lunch choices and removed pop machines from the school buildings. A Walk-to-School-Day event was held to encourage children to increase their physical activity. Parents also joined their children during the walk and then attended a healthy breakfast with them at school.

Success: Childhood obesity awareness increased in the La Crosse area, and the school lunch choices have changed. The La Crosse School District now provides students with healthier lunch choices, and a la carte choices need to meet certain criteria in order to be served.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=196

★ 11. Gold Medal School Initiative, State of Utah

Background: The Gold Medal School Initiative was created to encourage students in Utah elementary schools to increase their physical activity and watch their food choices. Each school had three years to achieve either a bronze, silver or gold level. Each school was assigned a mentor to help meet the criteria for the desired level. The mentor also was available to assist each school when necessary. Each school was entitled up to \$1,000 toward physical education equipment and nutritional services once it met the criteria.

Success: Student and school participation increased in one school year. Each school wrote new policies for tobacco, nutrition and physical activity.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=205



★ 12. Healthy Children, Healthy Futures, New York, New York

Background: Healthy Children, Healthy Futures joined forces with MetLife Foundation to provide children ages 9 to 12 in Atlanta, Los Angeles and New York with an after-school program that would help them learn about nutrition and physical activity. The after-school program also motivated children to help their peers learn about nutrition and physical activity as well. The 12-session program, which contains nutrition and physical activity information, was developed and marketed to children through radio, television and/or the Internet. The programs core material was excerpted from 8 Habits of Healthy Kids, developed for the project by the Strange Cancer Prevention Center in New York City.

Duration: The program began development in October 2001 and is still in progress.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=212





✦ 13. Project Fit America, Novato, California

Background: Project Fit America provides schools with exercise equipment specifically designed to help children improve their scores on fitness tests. The program offers training workshops for teachers and provides support materials for encouraging children to participate in physical challenges and activities.

Duration: The program is currently in progress.

Success: More than 360 schools have implemented the Project Fit America program and have had reliable success in its use. Many children enjoyed increased levels of physical activity and performing many exercises, as measured by pre- and post-tests.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=252

✦ 14. Redding School District's Health & Fitness Focus, Redding, California

Background: The Redding School District implemented the SPARK physical education curriculum into their schools in order to educate their students, staff and parents about health and fitness. Teachers were trained in the curriculum and given nutrition information. The school district allocated \$25,000 for the equipment needed for each school, developed a physical education policy and hired a health educator to train all the teachers. The Redding district also hosted a nutrition Olympics, a cross-country meet, a track and field day, and a health presentation.

Duration: The program began in the 2004-2005 academic year and continues today.

Success: The program saw an increase in physical fitness and academic scores. Students, staff and parents became more knowledgeable about nutrition and fitness. Because the program was deemed a success during its first year, the second year funding costs were split between the school district and the public health department.

For more information:

<http://www.californiaprojectclean.org/brightideas/>



RESOURCES

Advertising, marketing and the media: Improving messages

The Institute of Medicine addresses the impact of advertising, marketing and the media on youth wellness. The Web site expresses current trends and offers alternatives for improvements.
<http://www.iom.edu>

Ohio Parks and Recreation Association

Resources with health and wellness program ideas as well as park locations for outdoor physical activity.
<http://www.opraonline.org/>





GUIDELINE 3





GUIDELINE 4

Schools maximize their participation in federal child nutrition programs.

BEST PRACTICES

- ★ Universal Breakfast, Oregon State Schools
- ★ Ohio Department of Education and Children's Hunger Alliance School Breakfast Partnership, Columbus, Ohio
- ★ Cleveland Universal Breakfast Program, Cleveland, Ohio
- ★ Second Chance Breakfast, Los Angeles, California
- ★ National School Breakfast Week, State of Massachusetts
- ★ Breakfast program, Ronan, Montana
- ★ Team Nutrition grant, State of Connecticut
- ★ Wisconsin Homegrown Lunch, Madison, Wisconsin

Obesity and overweight trends in the United States are alarming, and the complications can be devastating. Federal and state school-wellness legislation and programs provide the groundwork to enable schools to better meet these challenges. It is in the best interest of the community to see that every child has access to good nutrition and physical activity.

Elvira Jarka, director, USDA Special Nutrition Programs,
Midwest Regional Office, Chicago, IL



GUIDELINE 4

Schools maximize their participation in federal child nutrition programs.

Federal child nutrition programs are beneficial for both schools and students. Each school meal provides one-third of a student's regular daily allowance of nutritional needs. Research has shown that students who participate in the National School Lunch Program eat healthier meals on a more regular basis, and those who eat school breakfast are ready to learn when the school day begins.

OBJECTIVE

Offer school breakfast and lunch if not currently participating in the federal Child Nutrition Program.

Because all schools participating in the National School Lunch Program must adhere to nutritional standards, students are more likely to eat a well-balanced meal with high nutritional value than if they pack their own lunches or purchase meals through other sources on or around the school building.

In some schools, students who receive lunch through the federal child nutrition programs are stigmatized as being low income. However, when schools take proper precautions to ensure that students cannot distinguish between free, reduced or fully paid lunches, students do not make those distinctions and are encouraged to participate. Further, when schools promote their meals and make them visually appealing, more students tend to participate in the programs.

BEST PRACTICES

★ 1. Universal breakfast, Oregon State Schools

Background: Oregon has instituted a universal breakfast program with help from a USDA grant. More than 200 schools participate by offering free breakfast to all students.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=271

★ 2. Ohio Department of Education and Children's Hunger Alliance School Breakfast Partnership, Columbus, Ohio

Background: The Children's Hunger Alliance and the Ohio Department of Education work together to assist local schools in promoting school breakfast programs. They work with school officials to overcome barriers to participation. In addition, Children's Hunger Alliance hosts local media events, including legislators and other key community leaders, to raise community awareness and celebrate the good work that school districts are doing in providing school breakfasts.



Duration: 2003-2006.

Success: From 2003 to date:

- More than 250 schools have joined the School Breakfast Partnership program;
- The number of school breakfasts served annually statewide has increased by approximately 7 million (from 34.7 million in 2003 to 41.7 million in 2005); and
- Teachers and principals have noted improvements in both attendance and behavior among students participating in the program.

★ **3. Cleveland universal breakfast program, Cleveland Municipal School District, Cleveland, Ohio**

Background: Cleveland area schools are promoting free breakfast and lunch programs to all students. By obtaining a USDA outreach grant, the district can offer free breakfast to 77,000 students in 122 schools. Through the grant, the district also promotes the free breakfast program through mailings to all students' homes and by creating programs to increase student awareness. Special contests have been held on "Lucky Tray Days" for students who participated in the program, with local vendors donating prizes.

Duration: The program started in the 2000-2001 school year and is ongoing.

Success: During the first year, more than 5 million breakfasts were served to approximately 28,200 students. The program has seen increased participation, especially among students at the secondary level, where an additional 325,000 more breakfasts were served since the program was implemented. A 2001 survey found that nearly 46 percent of parents stated they would not have been able to provide a breakfast for their children without the program.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=190

★ **4. Second Chance Breakfast, Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles, California**

Background: Second Chance Breakfast was created as an alternative for those schools where other breakfast options such as Breakfast in the Classroom were not viable. Often, bus schedules did not allow students enough time to eat breakfast before school started. Under Provision 2 of USDA's National School Lunch Program regulations, a free breakfast is provided either during morning recess or during a specially scheduled snack break between 9 and 10 a.m. A breakfast is still offered in the cafeteria for those who arrive early. To ensure that students only receive one breakfast per day, a swipe card system is used. This program allows students to receive a nutritious meal when otherwise they may have grabbed unhealthy snacks during breaks.



Duration: Started in 2004 and is ongoing, with significant rise in participation expected.

Success: By fall 2005, 700 schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District were expected to initiate Second Chance Breakfast. In 2004, 75 percent of the schools had already started the program, and reports indicate that it is most popular in secondary schools. Increased federal and state revenue is expected in the future as participation increases.

For more information:

<http://www.breakfastfirst.org/2ndChance.html>

★ **5. National School Breakfast Week, Massachusetts Department of Education, Nutrition Programs and Food Service**

Background: In order to promote the National School Breakfast Program, the state of Massachusetts distributed a poster and a suggested menu to all schools. For each day of the week, the program designated a fun nutritional theme that incorporated the name of a healthy breakfast item. The themes included “Know Your Sign,” with items such as “Addition Breakfast Sandwich,” “Multiplication Milk” and “Friendly Fractions,” with “Fruit-on-the-Bottom Yogurt” and “1/2 and 1/2 Whole Wheat Bagel.”

Duration: The American Food Service Association and the USDA started National School Breakfast Week in 1989.

For more information:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/cnp/news03/0206memo.html>

<http://www.ces.org/infobase/hotlinks/newsletter%202-04/nsbw.htm>

★ **6. Breakfast program, Ronan School District #30, Ronan, Montana**

Background: The Ronan school district collaborated with the Department of Defense’s Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Purchasing Program to offer a variety of nutritious offerings to their students. Prior to participating in the program, students involved in the breakfast program were only choosing fruits and vegetables 10 to 20 percent of the time in the upper grades, and 70 percent of the time at the elementary level.

The program offered students more choices of fruits, and provided the option of fruit cups “to go.” The staff took more time to ensure that the fruits and vegetables were attractively arranged. For example, fruit that browns quickly when exposed to the air was dipped in a solution to better maintain its fresh appearance longer.



Success: After the inception of the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Purchasing Program, participation in the School Breakfast program increased 10 percent (a total of 300 to 475 students now participate. Students choosing fruits and vegetables every day increased from about 25 to 150, with most of the increase seen in the middle and high school ages.

For more information:

<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/nutrition/Making-It-Happen/>
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/dod/default.htm>

★ **7. Team Nutrition grant, Department of Education, Connecticut**

Background: The state Department of Education was presented with a Team Nutrition grant, awarded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service. The goal of Connecticut's grant is to provide a support system to help school foodservice professionals with planning, preparing and serving nutritious meals that are appealing to children. The grant will provide regional training workshops, including multiple sessions of 12-hour courses and three-hour workshops, for foodservice personnel. The focus of the workshop training is increasing the serving of fruits and vegetables in school meals. On-site assistance will also be provided to school staff.

Duration: The grant was received and implemented in September 2004 and will continue through September 2006.

For more information:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/>
<http://www.team.uconn.edu/>

★ **8. Wisconsin Homegrown Lunch, Madison, Wisconsin**

Background: Through a two-year federal Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE) grant, three elementary schools in Madison, Wisconsin, are piloting a program to bring farms and school programs together. This program includes activities such as field trips, classroom visits by farmers, taste-testing of local foods, schoolwide food fairs and local meals, lunchroom composting and recycling, school gardening, curricula enrichment, and art projects focused on themes of food and community. For many schools, farm-to-school programs have an immense appeal, because they bring fresh produce to the school lunchroom.

Duration: Begun in the 2005-2006 school year, it will conclude at the end of the 2006-2007 school year.

For more information:

http://www.theorganicreport.com/pages/345_organic_food_in_schools_part_1.cfm



RESOURCES

Communities can play a role in preventing childhood obesity.

The Institute of Medicine addresses a community's ability to positively impact childhood obesity. The document addresses health disparities mobilizing communities, and the community's food environment as key factors for involvement and interaction.
<http://www.iom.edu>

Help school children make the grade in nutrition.

This document reviews the success of the National School Lunch Program and its nutritional value in participating schools. The article highlights competition from "outside food," local healthy school policies, resources, cafeteria environment and healthy recipes.
<http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/AR/archive/oct05/school1005.htm>

Institute of Medicine of the National Academies: Nutritional standards for foods in schools

This site provides reviews and resources for food service professionals and addresses issues surrounding nutritional standards for schools and youth. The food and nutrition board has been established to address food supply and food safety. The site provides numerous references for best-practice requirements and recent research findings.
<http://www.iom.edu/fnb>

Keystone Center Youth Policy Summit

This is the final report of the "Keystone Youth Policy Summit Student Agreement, Child and Adolescent Nutrition in America Policy Recommendations." Forty high school students, along with 10 specialized science and math teachers from across the country, researched nutrition and then met in order to produce recommendations helping youth to lead healthier lives. The report includes those recommendations, along with further useful resources to improve wellness.
<http://www.keystone.org>

Food and Drug Administration

Information on all types of programs sponsored by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, including useful information on nutrition and food safety resources.
<http://www.fda.gov>

Nutrition.gov

A guide to nutrition and health information on various federal government Web sites, provided by the United States Department of Agriculture.
www.nutrition.gov

US Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service

Information on nutrition assistance programs, child nutrition, food stamps and other nutrition assistance programs.
<http://www.fns.usda.gov>



Regulations, USDA Child Nutrition Programs

Information and regulations for participating in the USDA child nutrition programs.
<http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov/Regulations/index.html#lunch>

Ohio Department of Education Child Nutrition Services

Resources on teaching children the link between nutrition, health and educational success.
<http://www.ode.state.oh.us> (Search for food service or nutrition education.)





GUIDELINE 4





GUIDELINE 5

Schools maximize their participation in student fitness and physical activity programs.

BEST PRACTICES

- ★ Huntsville Elementary, Indian Lake, Ohio
- ★ TASIS School in Dorado physical education program, Dorado, Puerto Rico
- ★ Conant School physical education curriculum, Acton, Massachusetts
- ★ Fitness Fun Forever, State of Florida
- ★ Charleston County Community Education Rural Recreation Programs, Charleston, South Carolina
- ★ Its Funner to Be a Runner, El Cajon, California
- ★ Take 10!, Atlanta, Georgia
- ★ Move Across America: A Patriotic Endeavor, Winfield, Kansas

“Physical activities can be what you make them – fun, social and uplifting. Teachers can be models for students while providing lifelong enjoyment and benefit of physical activity. In my class we make enjoyment of physical activity the number one priority!”

Dan Young, national board-certified physical education teacher,
Indian Lake Local Schools, Logan County



GUIDELINE 5

Schools maximize their participation in student fitness and physical activity programs.

Fitness activity programs can produce a number of positive benefits for students. They not only offer students opportunities to become more physically fit but also contribute to camaraderie and stress release. Furthermore, positive experiences and fun with fitness programs can instill an enjoyment of, and commitment to, lifelong fitness and wellness.

OBJECTIVE

Provide time and available resources for students to participate in noncompetitive physical fitness activities outside the physical education class.

Schools have found many creative ways to offer noncompetitive physical fitness opportunities in the classroom and on the playground. Movement can be an easy way to change the energy level in a classroom and get the mind more active along with the body. Though schools have less time to spend on nonacademic activities, discipline and behavioral issues often remain problems that take away from learning time. Physical activity can contribute to a more positive climate. Engaging students and teachers in fun activities together can reduce behavioral issues, allowing for increased learning time. Noncompetitive activities also encourage students who may not be inclined to participate in athletics, but who do have the capacity to participate in activities and have fun with their classmates.

BEST PRACTICES

★ 1.1. Huntsville Elementary CATCH physical education program, Indian Lake, Ohio

Background: The Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) has provided guiding principles for the Huntsville Elementary physical education program. CATCH PE is designed to promote children's enjoyment of and participation in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity during PE classes, recess and extracurricular activities, and recreation time with family and friends.

Duration: Beginning with the 2002-2003 school year until the present, Huntsville Elementary has worked toward these CATCH PE goals by:

- Scheduling student recess time before lunch;
- Providing time for students to walk or do aerobic exercise in the gym during indoor recess;
- Teaching students yoga, scarf-juggling and speed (cup) stacking;
- Measuring student fitness levels twice a year;
- Having students use pedometers in physical education class to keep track of their steps during activities;



- Organizing games for third- and fourth-grade students with a small number of students on each team to promote more activity, greater learning of sports skills and team-building;
- Teaching health-related fitness skills along with sports-related skills;
- Involving families in events such as Juggling Nights, Field Days and square dances;
- Holding a health fair for parents of kindergarten students that combined nutrition education with ideas for fitness activities at home.

Success: When activities are presented with students' enjoyment in mind, they become more involved in physical education class and increase their activity level at recess time. Students are also more active during recess because they are not trying to run and play on a full stomach. Recess before lunch also has decreased the amount of food wasted and has drastically decreased the number of discipline referrals during recess. Many students have extended PE class activities by purchasing their own pedometers. Parents have reported fun family times exercising together. Overall, CATCH PE principles have energized the physical education of students at Hunstville Elementary and, more importantly, have helped improve their fitness levels, as can be seen from testing.

For more information:

<http://www.schoolhealthusa.org/>

★ **2. TESIS School in Dorado physical education program, Dorado, Puerto Rico**

Background: This well-rounded physical education program exposes pre-kindergarten to sixth-grade students to a variety of activities as part of the curriculum, including elective classes or extracurricular activities. Options include team sports, sports clinics, clubs, individual and dual activities, outdoor recreational pursuits, rhythms, dance, games and popular events.

For more information:

http://www.tasisdorado.com/curriculum/physical_ed.shtml

<http://www.actionschoolsbc.ca/Content/Home.asp>

★ **3. Conant Elementary School physical education curriculum, Acton, Massachusetts**

Background: Conant's curriculum was designed to involve all students in continuous physical education and activities and encourage them to continue this lifestyle as they grow up. The gender-neutral program features age- and skill-appropriate individual, partner, small group and team activities that focus on participation, cooperation and self-improvement rather than competition resulting in "winners" and "losers."

For more information:

<http://conant.ab.mec.edu/phys.ed/>



★ 4. Fitness Fun Forever program, State of Florida

Background: The Fitness Fun Forever program aims to provide modified, fun games and activities that maximize each student's participation, avoid eliminating or singling out students and encourage students to become fit, healthy adults. By offering age, skill and ability-appropriate activities that maximize participation and minimize failure, the program increases the ability of students to:

- Focus on the positive;
- Listen to popular music during the activity;
- Encourage and reward sportsmanship;
- Provide equipment for every child; and
- Play games with smaller groups, allowing more focus on the individual.

For more information:

http://uwf.edu/sryan/start_here_.htm

★ 5. Charleston County Community Education Rural Recreation Programs, Charleston, South Carolina

Background: The Charleston County Community Education Rural Recreation Programs provide youth and adults with recreational and physical activity programs for participants who do not have the luxury of participating in recreational or athletic events. It provides sports leagues such as football, basketball and baseball. It also provides cheerleading, golf programs for youth and gym activities.

Success: The program has been an outstanding success, since it has provided outlets for both youth and adults to participate in sports and recreational activities. It has allowed them to be more focused on their health and fitness.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=187

★ 6. It's Funner to Be a Runner, El Cajon, California

Background: It's Funner to Be a Runner is a program that promotes running as a physical activity to improve a child's cardiovascular and respiratory health. It also promotes social, mental and emotional health. The children find enjoyment in running and accomplishing a goal such as finishing a race or crossing a finish line. Through this aerobic exercise program, students enjoy an improved sense of well-being that carries over into their classroom behavior. The program also is cost effective, since no special equipment is needed.



Duration: The program has been running for 22 years and involves children from kindergarten through fifth grade, their siblings and parents.

Success: The program improves students' physical activity during the years they participate. Most students claim they continue running, biking and swimming after leaving the program.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=227

★ 7. Take 10!, Atlanta, Georgia

Background: Take 10! is a program to increase student activity levels by promoting multiple 10-minute periods of physical activity. The program is designed for use in conjunction with other forms of exercise. Teachers determine the best time to add the 10-minute breaks. They are encouraged to create their own activities for students and to use worksheets for documentation. Take 10! can be used by teachers to promote cooperation among students and to help enhance motor skills and health knowledge.

Duration: The program began in 1999 and has grown each year thereafter.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=264

★ 8. Move Across America: A Patriotic Endeavor, Winfield, Kansas

Background: The Move Across America: A Patriotic Endeavor program was implemented to educate students on the importance of physical activity and to fight physical inactivity and obesity. A quarter-mile track was outlined in red paint on the playground, and a red, white and blue border was made in one corner. A map also was wheeled onto the playground, displaying the number of miles from San Francisco to New York City. When students walked or ran a lap, they would receive a tongue depressor imprinted with a healthy tip. Students turned in their tongue depressors at the end of each week, so their number of laps could be recorded and their mileage noted on the map. The students also received a plastic shoe token each time they completed 10 laps.

Success: All of the students participated, and they were excited about having shoe tokens as well as increasing their distance covered on the map. Overall, the students learned about math, geography and fitness.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=236



RESOURCES

Get Kids in Action

This site provides information and activities for children and parents designed for increasing health and wellness through physical activity and healthy eating.

<http://www.getkidsinaction.org/>

Eat Smart, Play Hard

This is a promotional program targeting children and offering resources to promote healthy eating and physical activity.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard>

VERB™

“VERB™ It’s What You Do” is a campaign set up for adolescents ages 9 to 13 (called “tweens”), encouraging them to be physically active every day. The Web site includes information and resources to help parents and school staff make exercise fun for “tweens.” It also has a list of inventive games, as well as advertising and marketing strategies that those working with “tweens” can use. The site also can be viewed in Spanish.

<http://www.cdc.gov/youthcampaign/>

Ohio Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance

This organization promotes healthy, active lifestyles and lifelong learning.

<http://www.ohahperd.org/>

SPARK: Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids

This comprehensive program includes a lifelong learning curriculum, training for staff, and follow-up support to establish and maintain a wellness environment. SPARK is developed for elementary physical education specialists, classroom teachers, and after-school leaders to teach children and adolescents skills and techniques that will promote outdoor activities, thus enhancing lifelong wellness.

<http://www.sparkpe.org/programLifelongWellness.jsp>

The President’s Challenge: You’re it. Get Fit!

The President’s Challenge, a program that encourages all Americans to be active daily, offers programs just for educators, such as the physical fitness and health fitness programs. They work hand in hand with the Active Lifestyle and Presidential Champions programs, so schools can bring out the best in their students. The challenge also provides extras like Fitness File, a free, new online tool that makes fitness testing as simple as possible for schools. The Fitness File tracks all student fitness results in both programs.

<http://www.presidentschallenge.org>



Moving into the Future: National Standards for Physical Education, 2nd Edition

Developed by NASPE, in association with the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, the NASPE standards define student learning: what a student should know and be able to do as a result of a quality physical education program. The physical education standards outlined provide the framework for the development of realistic and achievable expectations for student performance in kindergarten through grade 12. The organization offers a variety of resource booklets on physical education.

<http://www.aahperd.org>

<http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/>

PE4life

A Web site that encourages healthy lifestyles and quality physical education programs for all students. The site includes resources on how to apply for grants, how to contact policymakers and tools for teachers.

<http://PE4life.org>

NASPE's STARS Program

The National Association for Sport & Physical Education's award program to recognize outstanding kindergarten through grade 12 schools is found here. This Web site offers information on the program and application process.

<http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/stars/>



GUIDELINE 5





GUIDELINE 6

Schools integrate nutrition education and physical activity into their everyday curriculum.

BEST PRACTICES

- ★ The Edible Schoolyard, Berkeley, California
- ★ PATH, New York, New York
- ★ 5-a-Day Power Plus, St Paul, Minnesota
- ★ 24-7 Let's Go!, Troy, New York
- ★ Integrated Nutrition and Physical Activity Program (INPAP)
- ★ Integrate nutrition and physical activity topics into classroom curriculum
- ★ It Just Takes One Brave Teacher, McMinnville, Tennessee

“Our district will continue to move forward simultaneously on both the nutrition and fitness fronts. We believe our success in addressing childhood obesity depends on our ability to affect youngsters’ behaviors. We also focus on communications with the parent, because impacting parental behavior is critical to the ultimate success of our efforts.”

Mike Collins, Westerville School Board member, Franklin County



GUIDELINE 6

Schools integrate nutrition education and physical activity into their everyday curriculum.

By incorporating nutrition education and physical activity into everyday curriculum, schools increasingly will help students to view both nutrition and physical activity as inseparable from the overall academic program and as an integral part of the fabric of everyday curriculum. This will make it easier for students to incorporate both nutrition and physical fitness into everyday life.

OBJECTIVE

School staff and administration will integrate age-appropriate curriculum into all subjects, starting in kindergarten.

By incorporating nutrition and physical education into the overall curriculum beginning in kindergarten, schools will help students see these topics as part of the overall curriculum and, theoretically, begin to incorporate healthy habits into their lives at an early age.

BEST PRACTICES

★ 1. The Edible Schoolyard, Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School, Berkeley, California

Background: Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School has created the Edible Schoolyard, a seed-to-table program. This is a one-acre organic garden, maintained by the sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students. The students also cook the food in the Edible Schoolyard Kitchen. This food is then served to the students. The mission of the Edible Schoolyard is to create and sustain an organic garden and landscape that is wholly integrated into the school's curriculum and lunch program.

The integration of this program into the curriculum includes lessons in history, writing, science, math, culture and geography. Students, for example, study food preservation during Neolithic times; keep a journal of experiences and celebrate a Mexican holiday by baking bread.

Duration: The program began in the 1994-95 school year; the first garden was planted during the 1995-96 school year.

Success: According to an April 2003 study, qualitative and quantitative studies were conducted in 2000 and 2001. For these studies, 165 sixth-graders were evaluated, with half in the Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School and the other half in a neighboring school without the Edible Schoolyard program. Based on surveys, interviews with parents, teachers and students, assessments, grades, tests and attendance, the program proved successful. Students in Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School demonstrated greater academic achievement, higher grade point averages and greater understanding of agriculture and ecosystems. Teachers ranked their school as more conducive to learning than those teachers in the school without the Edible Schoolyard.



For more information:

<http://www.edibleschoolyard.org/homepage.html>

<http://www.kristinreisinger.com/nutrition/edibleschoolyard.html>

★ **2. Physical Activity and Teen-age Health (PATH), New York City Schools**

Background: Paul Fardy, Ph.D., a cardiac specialist from the Department of Family, Nutrition and Exercise Science at Queens College, developed the PATH program. This program integrates both physical activity and cardiovascular disease education into the curriculum. For example, in physical education classes, students learn about the benefits of aerobic exercise; learn how to measure their heart rate; and then are given a task to perform. At the end of the task, the students record their heart rate again to observe a change. The program is intended to modify behavior, increase physical activity and reduce the future risk of health problems.

Duration: A pilot study completed in 1988 identified the need for a program integrating physical education and cardiovascular disease education into the curriculum. The study found that 53 percent of 500 high school students had one or more risk factors for cardiovascular disease.

Success: A study in 2004 was conducted on 442 multi-ethnic urban teenage girls. Of the total number of participants, 310 were part of the experimental group, while 132 were in a control group. Included in the program were 12 weeks of exercise and lectures on tobacco use, stress, exercise and nutrition. Testing was performed on the participants both before and after they completed the program. Girls who were a part of the experimental group had better results with blood pressure, body composition and comprehension of heart health information and healthy behaviors.

For more information:

<http://www.nysut.org/newyorkteacher/2000-2001/001108physed.html>

<http://www.ajph.org/cgi/content/abstract/94/9/1538>

★ **3. 5-a-Day Power Plus, St. Paul Public School District, St. Paul, Minnesota**

Background: The 5-a-Day Power Plus program is designed to promote healthy lifestyles among children by encouraging them to eat five servings of fruits and vegetables each day. The students work individually and in teams to establish goals and activities to improve their ability to choose and eat fruits and vegetables. The students learn about a particular fruit or vegetable and then prepare a snack using that item to share with the class.

Duration: The program was established, funded, tested and promoted through the state health department and the University of Minnesota through a four-year research study by the National Cancer Institute.



Success: The 5-a-Day Power Plus program increased fruit and vegetable consumption by a half serving per day and also increased the variety of fruits and vegetables available to students in the cafeteria.

For more information:

http://www.preventioninstitute.org/print/CHI_nutrition.html

★ **4. 24-7 Let's Go!, Troy, New York**

Background: The 24-7 Let's Go! program was piloted to 5,000 New York state students beginning in March 2005. The program involves having students track seven good health activities that they complete each day. The pilot group of students was provided with a chart as well as various stickers representing physical activity and nutrition. For example, performing a physical activity earns an "action sticker," while the nutritious activity earns a "happy food sticker." Students then place their earned stickers on their charts. The goal is for the students to fill all seven spaces on their charts every day. Teachers are encouraged to engage the students in a physical activity while transitioning between classroom activities.

For more information:

<http://www.nysut.org/247/20050309newyorkteacher.html>

★ **5. Integrated Nutrition and Physical Activity Program (INPAP)**

Science class focuses on healthy food and scientific descriptions of the ways certain foods help contribute to good health, and how unhealthy foods negatively affect the body. This program is available for elementary grades through high school, adjusting the level of difficulty in the curriculum.

★ **6. Integrate nutrition and physical activity topics into classroom curriculum**

Science classes include the physiology of exercise and how it affects the body, including how many calories are burned during certain activities.

Math classes use physical activity as a basis for story problems (i.e., running at a speed of x ; walking at a speed of y ; how many calories will you burn if you go two miles?).

★ **7. It Just Takes One Brave Teacher, McMinnville, Tennessee**

Background: The Warren County school system received a grant in April 2001 to establish a school health team and complete the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC's) School Health Index. A teacher at one Warren school decided she was going to implement many of the CDC's recommendations. She requested that her students be more active, but the majority chose to stay inside and play on



computers. She then motivated her students by bringing in a picture of herself when she was overweight to show the consequence of a lack of physical activity. The students began a walking program and worked harder in the classroom. By the end of the year, she noticed a decrease in discipline problems in the classroom and an increase in student morale and test scores. Her story was published in the local newspaper, and now students in 19 Hickory Creek Elementary school classrooms are walking, with six more planning to begin the program. The teacher also provides her classes with nutrition education.

Success: Many students have reported significant improvements. State achievement scores have increased and overall health has improved. Many students state that they “feel better, sleep better, are sick less and just feel happier.”

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=226

RESOURCES

Schools can play a role in preventing childhood obesity

The Institute of Medicine addresses the significance of the school environment in preventing childhood obesity. The key points include consumption of food and beverages in school and allowed physical activity.

<http://www.iom.edu>

Action for Healthy Kids

Information on nutrition and physical activity for parents and educators. Includes information on resources, tools, events and programs sponsored by Action for Healthy Kids.

<http://www.actionforhealthykids.org>

Nutrition Explorations

Has a section of resources for parents, educators and school food services. Also includes interactive nutrition games for students.

<http://www.nutritionexplorations.org>

Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association

School nutrition information for teachers. Also includes recipes.

<http://www.dairyspot.com>

Project PA

Project PA, a collaboration between the Pennsylvania State University Department of Nutritional Sciences and the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Food and Nutrition, partners with schools and their communities to provide sound nutrition education and to promote children’s healthy eating behaviors.

<http://nutrition.psu.edu/projectpa>



USDA Kids

This is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Web site for children, with resources, games, printable coloring books and more.

<http://www.usda.gov/news/usdakids>

Ohio Action for Health Kids Physical Activity Toolkit

A physical activity toolkit provided by Ohio Action for Healthy Kids. It assists parents, community health and fitness organizations, school staff, and local wellness committees with developing and enhancing school physical activity programs. The toolkit gives examples of methods for implementing and improving a physical activity program. It also lists resources for incorporating physical activity into other academic subjects as well as links to sites with lesson plan ideas.

<http://www.childrenshungeralliance.org/AFHK/GOAL3/pakit.pdf>

USDA Food Pyramid

This site helps determine the correct number of servings needed for an individual in each food category, based on the newly revised food pyramid. This interactive Web site helps determine one's correct portions, based on age, sex and level of physical activity. It lists tips and resources for consuming the right number of portions in each food group, as well as a section specifically geared toward elementary-age children. The site also comes with a section for professionals, with resources and information for developing education materials.

<http://www.mypyramid.gov>

Nutrition Decision

This is a fun Web site, with interactive games for adolescents designed to teach nutrition information, label reading and portion size.

<http://www.nutritiondecision.org>

The Responsive Classroom

This Web site contains curriculum and physical activities to promote wellness. The resources provide descriptive educational plans and an assessment tool for determining program effectiveness.

<http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/about/principles.html>

i4 Learning

This tool develops and delivers interactive, innovative, integrated and individualized educational programs that captivate and engage learners. The programs are multidisciplinary, multi-media, interesting, fun and intelligent. These programs also enable teachers and parents to enhance their effectiveness in educating youth and guiding them toward a healthy lifestyle.

<http://www.i4learning.com/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

This is a resource for nutrition and activity issues, highlighting national campaigns such as Kids Walk-to-School and Turn Off Your TV; the site also provides information on body mass index (BMI).

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa>



GUIDELINE 7

Schools provide professional development, support and resources for staff about wellness.

BEST PRACTICES

- ★ Do the D.E.W., Chapel Hill, North Carolina
- ★ Get Up, Get Out, Get Fit; Richmond, Utah
- ★ Maryland's 2001 Team Nutrition Training Grant, State of Maryland

“Since kids learn from and copy the behaviors of their adult role models, USDA and The Ohio State University Extension have nutrition and wellness resources for teachers, students and their parents. Adult wellness and nutrition education programs help provide students with better role models, so they will learn to be healthy for a lifetime.”

Joyce McDowell, leader, Community Nutrition Programs, Ohio State University Extension



GUIDELINE 7





GUIDELINE 7

Schools provide professional development, support and resources for staff about wellness.

A healthy staff can most significantly contribute to a healthy student body. In thinking through a wellness plan, consider what is currently done and what could be done to improve the health and well-being of the school staff. Role modeling can be one of the most powerful influences for students. In addition, teachers, food service and other staff need to understand how wellness contributes to learning and how to incorporate wellness activities and education into the classrooms and culture of the school.

OBJECTIVE

Schools will provide the opportunity for all certified and noncertified staff to participate in adult-focused staff wellness activities.

By instituting a wellness program that reaches school staff, schools will foster a healthier lifestyle for all. Instead of separate initiatives for students and staff, consider designing the wellness plan for both. Such a focus on wellness for all members of the school community can enhance the school climate and promote a greater sense of caring and belonging that, research shows, adds up to improved student success.

BEST PRACTICES

★ 1. Do the D.E.W., or Drop Everything and Walk, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Background: Glenwood Elementary School in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, implemented a 12-week walking program to increase the physical activity of their kindergarten through fifth-grade students and elementary school staff. Both staff and students were encouraged to walk 10 to 15 minutes, one day each week. Staff members were given pedometers, and if they recorded their steps weekly, they were entered into a weekly drawing for a prize. Students counted laps, and a schoolwide total was updated on a bulletin board. At the end of the program, students were recognized at a school awards ceremony.

Success: Student participation was 100 percent; staff participation 65 percent. The school gained a better awareness of the importance of physical activity, and students began understanding the long-term benefits of physical activity.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=197



✦ 2. Get Up, Get Out, Get Fit, Richmond, Utah

Background: The principal of North Cache Center (grades eight and nine) in Richmond, Utah, initiated this program to create a healthy school environment. It includes fitness and nutrition goals, with the staff serving as positive role models. Initially, each teacher was given a pedometer and asked to develop individual fitness goals and track his or her own success. Students became so involved in the program that they began cheering their teachers and asking for weekly updates on their success rates. As a result of these positive role models, the students set up their own physical activity and nutrition goals.

At the beginning of the program, fitness equipment was donated for teacher, student and parent usage in an after-school program. In 2003, old equipment was replaced through a grant from the National School Fitness Foundation that was worth more than \$200,000.

Duration: Ongoing since 2002.

Success: Initial success included participation rates of 95 percent from faculty and 100 percent from administration. Initially, four classrooms involving 135 participated. After the high success rates, all classrooms became involved and used incentives to encourage active participation. In 2003, they began a three-year study that measured and monitored more than 90 of the students' body fat, heart rate and body weight measurements in pre- and post-tests.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php

✦ 3. Maryland's 2001 Team Nutrition Training Grant, State of Maryland

Background: For this grant, the Maryland State Department of Education, School and Community Nutrition Programs Branch (SCNPB), joined with the Maryland Parent Teacher Association, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (MDHMH), MSDE Division of Instruction, and community partners to promote and support the initiative. The goals included providing the necessary training and technical assistance for serving student meals that look good, taste good, meet the nutrition standards; and educating students and parents on both the importance of healthy eating and the benefits of physical activity.

Duration: The grant, provided in 2001, was the third Team Nutrition grant received from USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, since 1996.

Success: During the year, the culinary and food service expert teams assisted 1,285 school food service staff in eight school systems. More than 500 school food service staff took part in the two-hour training program. Twenty school system teams attended training during the summer.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=234



RESOURCES

America on the Move

A national initiative dedicated to helping individuals and communities across our nation make positive changes to improve their health and quality of life. The initiative focuses on individuals and communities and provides fun ways to become active. A broad-based collaboration supports the effort, including many associations and nonprofit organizations.

<http://www.americaonthemove.org>

5 A Day

Several organizations promote the 5 A Day concept with information on ways to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into daily diets, including recipes and other resources. Sponsoring organizations include Produce for Better Health Foundation, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the National Cancer Institute.

<http://www.5aday.com>

<http://www.5aday.gov>

FoodFit

This organization provides information and resources for families on nutrition, cooking and fitness for a healthier lifestyle.

<http://www.foodfit.com>

Nutrition Education for Limited Resource Audiences

The Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program of Rutgers University provides research-based, behaviorally focused nutrition education materials for educators, including paraprofessional staff, who work with food-stamp eligible populations.

<http://www.fsnep.rutgers.edu>

Healthfinder

This service of the National Health Information Center through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provides health information, information on healthcare professionals, health news and links to other resources. Information is also available in Spanish.

<http://www.healthfinder.gov>

Comprehensive school health programs

A research and policy report documenting the position of the American Dietetic Association, Society for Nutrition Education and The American School Food Service Association regarding comprehensive nutrition services for all children from preschool through grade 12.

American Dietetic Association, Society for Nutrition Education & the American School Food Service Association. "Nutrition Services: An Essential Component of Comprehensive School Health Programs – Joint Position of ADA, Society for Nutrition Education, and American School Food Service Association. *Journal of American Dietetic Association* 103 (2003) 505-514.



GUIDELINE 7





GUIDELINE 8

School community leadership demonstrates a commitment to wellness through policies, plans and actions.

BEST PRACTICES

- ★ Healthy Ohioans — Small Steps, Big Strides, State of Ohio
- ★ Painesville Township Schools, Painesville, Ohio
- ★ Richland One School District, Columbia, South Carolina
- ★ Cortland Enlarged City School District, Cortland, New York
- ★ Virginia’s Nutrition and Physical Activity Scoreboard and Awards Program, State of Virginia
- ★ Los Angeles Unified School District Nutrition Network, Los Angeles, California
- ★ International Walk to School Initiative in USA, Chapel Hill, North Carolina
- ★ Food on the Run (FOR), State of California
- ★ Newark High School Wellness Center, Newark, Delaware

“We plan more structured physical activities with our two young girls — such as biking, tennis and hiking — but we have lots of informal activity too. We throw the Frisbee, play with our dog, and have contests to see who can do the most jumping jacks or stand on their head the longest. It’s important to keep it fun!”

Tom Cousineau,
former OSU All-American linebacker,
NFL player



GUIDELINE 8





GUIDELINE 8

School community leadership demonstrates a commitment to wellness through policies, plans and actions.

The research on school change is clear. Leadership must clearly articulate commitment through policies, plans and actions if a wellness initiative is to succeed. Partnership at the highest administrative levels will demonstrate the value of moving toward a healthier school environment.

OBJECTIVE

School community leadership will demonstrate a commitment to wellness by addressing the health and wellness climate of the school and by developing and implementing an effective comprehensive wellness policy.

Schools need to assess their current culture and climate to determine their readiness for implementing a wellness program. Does the school cafeteria provide healthy and fresh food selections, and are they visible? Do students have opportunities for physical activity outside of gym class? Such findings will provide needed information for decision-making about the school's needs and priorities. Establishing a healthy climate is a necessary condition for learning.

BEST PRACTICES

★ 1. Healthy Ohioans — Small Steps, Big Strides; State of Ohio

Background: Healthy Ohioans is a statewide health and wellness initiative under the direction of Ohio Governor Bob Taft and the Ohio Department of Health that encourages Ohioans to adopt healthier behaviors and lifestyles. The long-term goal of Healthy Ohioans is to reduce chronic disease by motivating Ohioans to change their unhealthy habits into healthy ones. The program provides information, resources and programs for Ohioans to improve nutrition, increase physical activity, prevent tobacco use or increase tobacco-use cessation. The program has four components: schools, businesses, state employees and the community. These four areas are addressed through the Governor's Buckeye Best Healthy Schools Awards program, the Governor's Healthy Ohioans Business Council, the State Agency Wellness Committee, the State Employee Health and Fitness Task Force, and the Healthy Ohioans-Healthy Community award program and community heart health programs. The program also partners with other organizations that share Healthy Ohioans' goals. Some tangible results of various Healthy Ohioans efforts include funding for population-based public health programming in 24 Ohio counties, developing agency wellness plans for all Ohio state government cabinet agencies, and enhanced assessment and wellness efforts within schools.

Duration: Ongoing since 2001.

Success: This program has been instrumental in establishing programming and making changes in state agencies, schools, businesses and communities. A fitness challenge event is held each May on the Statehouse lawn. Health and wellness plans have been adopted by state agencies offering education and



events to increase awareness about the importance of healthy lifestyle choices. Schools have been encouraged to complete self-assessments covering the areas of tobacco-use prevention, nutrition and physical activity. In addition the business council sponsored workplace wellness conferences in 2004 and 2005, added five regional business councils in 2005, and released a publication called *Doing Well by Being Well: Designing Win-Win Employee Wellness Programs*.

For more information:

<http://www.healthyohioans.org>

★ 2. Painesville Township Schools, Painesville, Ohio

Background: The Painesville Township school district started to serve breakfast in its six elementary schools after success at the secondary school level. A la carte and vending options also were updated to meet specific nutritional criteria. Recess already had been scheduled before lunch. The staff was offered training and in-service programs at least four times per year. The district also focused on marketing the new program and organizing games, activities and cafeteria promotions. Healthy choices such as juice or bottled water were emphasized throughout the school, and a soda vending machine was replaced with a milk vendor. Fryers were eliminated at secondary schools, and elementary school students were limited to only one “extra” snack per day.

Duration: Ongoing

Success: The principal and school health team is credited with implementing and supporting the program. Both were essential in making sure the food service staff was well trained, and that parents were informed about the program through menus, newsletters, a Web site and open houses.

★ 3. Richland One School District, Columbia, South Carolina

Background: Richland One School District established a nutrition policy prohibiting the sale of foods and beverages with minimal nutritional value throughout the entire district. Students, school administrators and school board members worked together throughout the process of implementing the nutrition policy. The students were encouraged to provide suggestions, which resulted in increasing the variety of choices offered in the cafeteria and asking for foods that not only looked good, but also tasted good.

For more information:

Food and Nutrition Services, U.S. Department of Agriculture; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and U.S. Department of Education. FNS-374, *Making it Happen! School Nutrition Success Stories*. Alexandria, VA, January 2005.



★ 4. Cortland Enlarged City School District, Cortland, New York

Background: Cortland established an all-inclusive nutrition policy that addressed the entire nutrition spectrum, including improving the vending machine selections. The policy addresses nutrition education, creating a healthy school environment, staff professional development for nutrition, referrals, counseling and screening for nutrition-related problems, while incorporating parent and community participation. Cortland Schools firmly believed that nutrition programs shouldn't stand alone; therefore, they implemented programs to expand opportunities for physical fitness and provided staff with weight management programs. As part of the elementary schools' nutrition activities, students were offered fruit and vegetable sampling days. To further their nutritional experience, the students created a color code system to distinguish healthy foods and snacks from those that are not so healthy.

Duration: The policy was implemented in 2001.

Success: The school district was awarded the Eat Well and Play Hard Award for increasing consumption of 1 percent milk, fruits and vegetables and for increasing physical activity opportunities. This is an award presented by the New York State Department of Health.

★ 5. Virginia's Nutrition and Physical Activity Scorecard and Awards Program, Virginia Department of Education

This incentive-based program rewards schools for promoting good nutrition, increasing physical activity, and improving student health and academic performance. Schools are awarded points for the best practices they implement and maintain. The points are added up, and then schools are presented with gold, silver or bronze awards based on their points. The program is intended to increase academic performance, promote practice and policy changes at the school and division levels, and enhance student health and wellness.

★ 6. Los Angeles Unified School District Nutrition Network, Los Angeles, California

Background: This program targets low-income students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. The entire school community works together to promote nutrition and physical activity within the classrooms, homes and the cafeteria.

Success: The program has touched more than 150,000 students and their families. Administrators and school staff have spent more than 30 hours educating students on nutrition.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=232



★ 7. International Walk to School Initiative in USA, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Background: Each year, students, teachers, parents and community members walk to school together one day in October. The walk is used to promote community involvement and participation in physical activity. It also enables parents and officials to examine the routes to help ensure safer walking to school for children.

Duration: In 1997, only two cities in the U.S. participated in the International Walk to School Initiative. In 2001, 3 million walkers from nearly all 50 states participated.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=225

★ 8. Food on the Run (FOR), State of California

Background: FOR works with communities to address and advocate policies within high schools that promote wellness and educate school boards and administrators on nutrition policies and practices. Materials and training are provided for understanding, creating and implementing wellness policies. Students are then trained to become peer advocates for wellness within their school systems.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=201

★ 9. Newark High School Wellness Center, Newark, Delaware

Background: Newark High School has partnered with Christina's Care, Department of Health and Social Services and the Delaware Division of Public Health to establish a school wellness center. The center, located within the high school, is NOT to take the place of a hospital or personal healthcare provider but is intended to help teens get the medical help and attention they need without contending with external barriers to service such as cost, transportation, confidentiality and inconvenient appointment times. Some of the services the wellness center offers include:

- Physical examinations;
- Health screenings;
- Nutrition and weight management;
- Crisis intervention and suicide prevention;
- Tobacco cessation counseling; and
- Health and nutrition education.



It is important to note that the wellness center has limits to the services it provides. As previously stated, it is not a hospital, and does not provide x-rays, complex laboratory tests, birth control prescriptions, hospitalization or ongoing treatments for complex medical conditions such as medical or psychiatric problems. The wellness center encourages the active participation of the students' parents or guardians.

For more information:

<http://www.christina.k12.de.us/newark/wellness>

RESOURCES

Ohio Department of Education wellness policy guidance and training

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) sent a memorandum to all superintendents and food service directors to provide clarification on the Child Nutrition Act of 2004, Section 204 Local Wellness Policy, and introduced the ODE Safety, Health and Nutrition staff members who can provide technical assistance in developing a wellness policy and plan. The document addresses the school wellness policy minimum legal requirements. Additionally, it offers the resource of wellness trainers who may be invited to a region to provide training support.

<http://www.ode.state.oh.us> (Search: Wellness.)

USDA Team Nutrition, Local Wellness Policy

The United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service initiative that features tools to help schools develop and implement their local wellness policies.

<http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Healthy/wellnesspolicy.html>

National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity, Model Wellness Policies

The National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA) advocates national policies and programs to promote healthy eating and physical activity to help reduce the illnesses, disabilities, premature deaths and costs caused by diet- and inactivity-related diseases such as heart disease, cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity.

<http://www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/nana.html>

National Association of School Boards of Education (NASBE)

The NASBE's Safe and Healthy Schools Project aims to assist policymakers and practitioners in creating safe, healthy and nurturing school environments for all the nation's children and youth. The NASBE has developed an array of landmark policy guides on a variety of issues concerning children, youth and school health that have helped inform the development of education policies across the country. The site provides various activities and services assisting with school wellness policies, physical health and activity concerns.

<http://www.nasbe.org/healthyschools/>

School Nutrition Association

The School Nutrition Association offers a model for developing wellness policies and other supporting information related to healthy, nutritious school meals, as well as a support link for



food service professionals, administrators, teachers and students.

<http://www.schoolnutrition.org/>

HealthierUS School Challenge

Many schools already have made changes to their school nutrition environments, improved the quality of the foods served and now provide students with more nutritious, healthy food choices.

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) wants to encourage schools to achieve such results, and has established the *HealthierUS* School Challenge to encourage schools to go further and to recognize those who choose to do so.

<http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/HealthierUS/index.html>

Government leadership in preventing childhood obesity

The Institute of Medicine develops the role of government leadership in addressing childhood obesity. The document speaks about the federal commitment, state and local initiatives and support, as well as evaluating of efforts addressing the problem of obesity.

<http://www.iom.edu>

Center for Health and Health Care in Schools

Information, news, resources and grant alerts on topics related to health in schools. The site provides several fact sheets, including one on childhood obesity and a parents' resource link.

<http://www.healthinschools.org/home.asp>

South Carolina Department of Education Recommendations for Improving Student Nutrition and Physical Activity

South Carolina Department of Education Task Force on Student Nutrition and Physical Activity. (2004). South Carolina Department of Education recommendations for improving student nutrition and physical activity. South Carolina Department of Education.

A report written by the South Carolina Department of Education Task Force on Student Nutrition and Physical Activity, with guidelines and recommendations to schools to facilitate developing and improving student nutrition and physical activity. The report gives a list of recommendations for school nutrition environment, school meals, school nutrition, competitive foods and beverages, school assessment of physical activity, school opportunities for physical activity, as well as student physical activity requirements. A list of Internet resources is also available.

Healthy Ohioans

Ohio Department of Health. (2001, September). Healthy Ohioans. Healthy communities. Exploratory research report. Gerbig, Snell/Weisheimer & Associates.

This reference is an Adobe pdf file reviewing the governor's initiative to improve the health and wellness of Ohioans and Ohio's communities. The document reviews various attributes that affect health in school-aged children and company employees. The site also includes the criteria for applying for Buckeye Best School awards.

<http://www.healthyohioans.org/schools/schools.aspx>



GUIDELINE 9

Schools provide a positive dining environment that encourages a pleasant eating experience.

BEST PRACTICES

- ★ Action for Healthy Kids, State of Idaho
- ★ Focus on the Future, Roseville, Minnesota
- ★ Loveland City Schools, Loveland, Ohio
- ★ Mix It Up at Lunch Day, Springfield, Oregon
- ★ Ed's Place, Suffolk, England
- ★ Parkway School District, Chesterfield, Missouri

“Public health and wellness are truly community issues. Individual institutions, such as families and schools, are not equipped to resolve obesity problems alone. We must all band together to improve ourselves and the lifestyle choices made by our children. School food service departments must lead the way in Ohio by serving as role models for the community and by shaping the nutritional path for the future of our children.

D.E. Hawkey, director, Food Services, Columbus Public Schools



GUIDELINE 9





GUIDELINE 9

Schools provide a positive dining environment that encourages a pleasant eating experience.

Eating is most enjoyable and can be healthiest when it is experienced as a social event. Oftentimes, however, schools have limited time for lunch because of the sheer volume of students or the need to spend as much of the day as possible on academics. Allowing students time to sit down and eat in a pleasant and social environment may slow down their eating. Fresh fruits, vegetables and an overall well-balanced meal take more time to eat than chicken tenders and fries. Offering a dining experience similar to that of a restaurant — in which people socialize and eat a meal in a clean, pleasing environment — teaches students healthier eating habits and may even contribute to an alert classroom filled with students ready to learn after lunch.

OBJECTIVE:

Schools will provide an adequate amount of time for students to eat in a clean, comfortable and social environment.

With a positive dining environment in place, students will reap the benefits of having more time to interact socially and enjoy their lunches. In an environment that is comfortable, students will have the time and space to sit down and eat their lunches, instead of grabbing something on the go. To provide a pleasant eating experience, schools may:

- Make meal periods long enough for students to eat and socialize;
- Provide adequate serving areas and lines, so students don't spend too much time in line;
- Schedule recess before lunch in the elementary schools;
- Practice food preparation safety techniques; and
- Provide hand-washing equipment, so students can wash their hands before eating.

★ 1. Action for Healthy Kids, State of Idaho

Background: In April 2005, the state of Idaho released its “Implementation Guide for School Wellness Policy: Action for Healthy Kids.” Guide recommendations include surveying students for their opinions on menu items and posting nutrition information on the back of menus that are then distributed to teachers and parents. Schools are encouraged to guarantee at least 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch, with no school activities planned during those times. Also recommended are cafeteria designs that focus on minimizing time spent waiting in lines for food and providing adult role models to encourage students to eat well-balanced meals.

For more information:

<http://www.actionforhealthykids.org>



❖ 2. Focus on the Future: What Eating at School Should Look Like, Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning, Roseville, Minnesota

Background: A focus group study and report, commissioned by the Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning, evaluated the perceptions of high school students regarding school lunch programs. Of the eight schools in the study, the student bodies from six were dissatisfied with their programs. Students from the two schools who were satisfied with their lunch programs attended schools where new lunch or cafeteria areas had been built within two years prior to the study.

The students answered numerous questions about menu items, environment and overall experience. One question, for example, was, “What atmosphere or environment would you like to have for school meals?”

Duration: The study was held in conjunction with food expositions that took place in the spring of 2001 in Fargo, North Dakota, and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Success: The answers received from the students fell into five categories. Here is a summary of their answers.

Less Crowding

“It needs to be less crowded. I just hate it when I’m sitting at the table and I’m eating and someone kicks your chair. I don’t even want to eat lunch, because there is not enough room. The tables get so crowded that you have to eat all scrunched up—with no elbow room.”

Many responses complained about a lack of space. Some students reported they were forced to eat standing up due to lack of space. Another student concluded that lack of accessibility might actually hamper the ability of disabled or injured students to move comfortably.

Flexible Table Configurations

“I would like to see round tables instead of long rectangular tables, so that you can interact more easily with the people at your table.”

Related is the students’ feeling that a break from classes should be a positive social time with their friends. Currently, they feel it is not a social break due to the limitations rectangular seating places on them.

A Relaxing, Comfortable, Appealing Environment

“Space out the tables and shorten lines to get less traffic and commotion. It feels like they are trying to speed you through, to get you to eat really fast and get out. All the bumping and jostling really bothers me.”

“Lunch time should be something to look forward to. You’re getting out of class and can get book work off your mind for a little bit. Instead, it is so crowded you can’t relax; and then it’s like a jail when you get your food...They just slop the food on your plate and move you along...It would be nice if you could go outside and eat when the weather is nice. If the feeling was springtime and freshness, I think I would tend to eat healthier foods and less greasy foods.”



Many students expressed concern about the time allotted for lunch. Many felt rushed, or that they spent so much time in line that they could not enjoy their food. In addition, students gave many comments about the appearance of the food, tables and chairs, as well as a desire to see plants or updated artwork added, to make the atmosphere more pleasant.

Improve the Attitude of Kitchen Workers

“If our cooks would have a better attitude, it would help improve the environment.” These students felt that the staff involved in the lunch program has as important an effect on the atmosphere of lunch as the food and the space layout.

Provide Natural Lighting

“It would be nice if we could have some skylights about the eating area to let a little daylight in. Or some windows, so that the only light wasn’t from fluorescent bulbs. That would improve the environment and make it more comfortable and relaxed.”

Student responses primarily focused on the benefits of relaxing, comfortable and appealing environments while eating meals in the cafeteria.

Here are some comments from the students that attended the newly updated schools:

“I like the eating area the way it is, but we have TV monitors on the wall showing school announcements. We should have some programs on to watch while you are eating—even if it was just a video on school projects.”

“Our eating area is a commons available to people all day long. I wouldn’t change anything about it. There are plenty of circular tables and chairs, it’s roomy, and there are skylights. It’s great for just talking to friends.”

The report is a good tool to support the decision-making process for school officials when they consider ways to improve the cafeteria environment for students in their building and remodeling programs.

For more information:

<https://fns.state.mn.us/FNSProg/NSLP/PDF/Resources/CFLFoodSumm.pdf>

★ 3. Loveland City Schools, Loveland, Ohio

Background: The Loveland City School District has implemented various techniques to encourage its students to eat healthier. After meeting with and talking to the students, the district applied the changes that the students requested. The district worked with a nutrition advisory council, which helped develop policies, projects and ideas to support the lunch program staff. A self-service fruit and vegetable bar is now available in every cafeteria. The cafeteria staff also prepares food “on time,” or on an “as-needed” basis. Finally, Loveland City School District has replaced white bread with whole wheat bread. It only offers fat-free and one percent milk and makes nutrition guidelines available for all products sold in the cafeteria.



Success: The program has helped encourage students to eat healthy not only at school, but also at home. Students now eat more fruits and vegetables and whole-wheat products for lunch. Parents let students buy their lunch at school more often because they trust that their students are better educated in the choices that they make.

✦ 4. Mix It Up at Lunch Day, Ferguson Middle School, Springfield, Oregon

Background: Mix It Up at Lunch Day occurs annually and encourages students to cross social boundaries to try and create a more positive lunch environment. The event encourages students to swap seats in the cafeteria with different groups of people and to break out of their comfort zones to meet new people. This initiative is important because a survey of middle and high school students showed that a majority of students feel that schools were quick to put people into groups. A survey also revealed that 40 percent of students admitted they rejected someone from another group and one-third said that it was hard to become friends and maintain a friendship with someone from another group.

Duration: The program, implemented in 2005, continues.

Success: The Mix It Up at Lunch Day project revealed that students felt that the diversity among groups of students was most evident in the cafeteria during lunchtime. Kathleen Jackson, assistant principal and organizer of Mix It Up at Lunch Day, said she was surprised to see tables filled with students chatting with classmates they didn't know. "I see several kids who usually eat lunch alone talking and mingling with everybody," Jackson said. "It's wonderful."

Pablo Martinez, a 16-year-old sophomore, is one of the students who sometimes sits alone at lunch. He said Mix It Up at Lunch Day is "a chance to sit with people you normally don't sit with and not be afraid about getting rejected or laughed at."

For more information:

<http://www.tolerance.org/teens/stories/article.jsp?p=0&ar=162>

<http://www.tolerance.org/teens/stories/article.jsp?p=0&ar=69>

✦ 5. Ed's Place, King Edward VI School, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, England

Background: Busy and demanding academic periods were taking critical time from school lunches, which had shrunk to just 40 minutes long. They were becoming chaotic, hurried, noisy and unhealthy. Students were hurried through lines and given no time to relax. This situation created behavior issues throughout the afternoon. As a result, King Edward VI School began placing an emphasis on creating a more positive eating environment for its students. One teacher, Geoff Barton, transformed a corner of the school into a healthy cafe-style space known as Ed's Place. Decorated with contemporary furniture, Ed's Place is open 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. daily, serving sandwiches, salads, fruit and pasta. Students can grab a skinny latte and a healthy snack while they study.



Duration: Ed's Place opened in 2002 and is still open today.

Success: Many students have opted for the laid-back atmosphere of Ed's Place over the noise and commotion of the lunch room. They are staying on campus and enjoying the relaxing, healthier foods. In fact, the success has been so great that a plan to build a brand new, larger Ed's Place is under way to accommodate more students. The feeling of independence to choose the foods they want to eat seems appealing to students. As one student stated, "This must be what it's like to be at university."

For more information:

<http://education.guardian.co.uk/schoolmeals/story/0,15643,1442749,00.html>

★ 6. Parkway School District, Chesterfield, Missouri

Background: The Parkway School District's Board of Education is proposing a five-year plan to adopt the USDA's Dietary Guidelines for Americans as the district's fundamental nutritional standard. Some of the guidelines include allowing adequate time and space for students to have an unhurried and pleasant atmosphere, which will lead to developing more positive eating behaviors.

Duration: The research to develop and implement these goals started in 2003 and is ongoing.

For more information:

http://www.pkwy.k12.mo.us/foodservice/Web_version.pdf

<http://www.pkwy.k12.mo.us/boe/bdgoalsHealthyKids.cfm>

RESOURCES

Customer Service and SIS Training

The Neighborhood Network of Trainers (NNT) is an education and training service provided through the Ohio Department of Education, Office for Safety, Health and Nutrition. Qualified instructors use specialized programs and materials to assist local school food service programs with staff development. The American School Food Service Association has approved all NNT training sessions for specialized training and continuing education credit.

<http://www.ode.state.oh.us> (Search: Food Service or Food and Nutrition.)

Kids First Rhode Island

This site provides resources for enhancing nutrition and physical education. The Kids First program puts special attention on cafeteria improvement and nutritional education. The site also offers best practice models for a successful cafeteria environment.

<http://www.kidsfirstri.org>



Training materials developed for food service personnel

This site includes a list of resources and contacts to help food service personnel make food attractive and nutritious for students. Materials were developed through the Pennsylvania Department of Education in collaboration with Pennsylvania State University.

<http://nutrition.psu.edu/projectpa>

Recess scheduling consideration in the school lunch environment

The importance of physical activity for children of all ages and supervised playtime for younger children is duly acknowledged. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines physical activity as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that results in an expenditure of energy. It is encouraged that schools provide recess before lunch or at a different time than lunch at all appropriate sites. Physical activity standards for Arizona Schools can be viewed in the Physical Activity section.

<http://www.ade.az.gov/>

Other recess-related resources include:

Recess in Elementary Schools, National Association for Sport and Physical Education

<http://www.aahperd.org/naspe>

Relationships of Meal and Recess Schedules to Plate Waste in Elementary Schools, published by the National Food Service Management Institute

<http://www.nfsmi.org>



GUIDELINE 10

Schools provide and promote social, noncompetitive fitness and activity opportunities.

BEST PRACTICES

- ★ Springfield Elementary Health Team, New Middletown, Ohio, Mahoning County
- ★ KEEP 57, Stevenson Elementary School, Ransomville, New York
- ★ Operation FitKids (OFK), San Diego, California
- ★ Running and Reading One Bay at a Time, Fairhope, Alabama
- ★ Kids on the Move, Atlanta, Georgia
- ★ Run to Read and Write, Fiskdale, Massachusetts
- ★ Healthy Choices, Boston, Massachusetts
- ★ Fine Arts Interdisciplinary Resources (FAIR) School, Crystal, Minnesota
- ★ Physical Activity Bright Idea, San Jose, California
- ★ Superintendent Challenge Winner, Palo Cedro, California

“Being active has always been a part of my life. When I wasn’t in school, I would be outside shooting hoops with my friends until it would be too dark to play. Kids need to know how important it is to stay active.

Just look at where it got me!”

LeBron James, Cleveland Cavaliers



GUIDELINE 10





GUIDELINE 10

Schools provide and promote social, noncompetitive fitness and activity opportunities.

Incorporating more physical activity opportunities for students at school will provide them with a chance to develop and learn new fitness and physical activity skills. In addition, the school will offer students an organized time to expend their physical energy. This in turn could contribute to greater classroom management and discipline, as students' physical exertion needs are met and they are more able to concentrate when it is time to learn.

OBJECTIVE

Schools will provide and promote social, noncompetitive fitness and activity opportunities.

With schools providing opportunities to be involved and participate in fitness and physical activity, all students will have opportunities to be active, not solely those who participate in school athletics. Students will learn that every person, athletic or not, needs to devote time to physical activity in order to stay healthy.

BEST PRACTICES

★ 1. Springfield Elementary Health Team, New Middletown, Mahoning County, Ohio

Background: The goals of the Springfield Elementary Health Team included improving the health and wellness of both staff and students by developing healthy lifestyles consisting of exercise and nutrition. In order to achieve these goals, the Health Team developed both exercise and breakfast opportunities for staff and all students, in conjunction with health screenings.

Every morning, for about 10 to 15 minutes, staff members led students through a series of activities, including aerobics, walking, running and calisthenics. After this light exercise routine, students were then offered a breakfast to reinforce the need to start each day with a healthy meal.

Success: The school experienced a 100 percent participation rate among students and staff. During the past two years, the nurses' office has noted an 8 percent decrease in visits, and the school has observed a 1.2 percent increase in student attendance. The teachers altogether lost 597 pounds.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=262



✧ 2. KEEP 57, Stevenson Elementary School, Ransomville, New York

Background: The program for students at Stevenson Elementary School includes a 40-minute exercise session, either before or after school; incorporating a warm-up; moderate to intense exercise; and a cool-down period. This program's success has led to developing a "time-in," or an exercise lab on the school campus. The exercise lab is equipped with a bike called Cyclefx which is hooked to a video monitor and PlayStation. To play the game, a child must pedal the bike. The faster he or she pedals, the quicker the game moves against one's PlayStation opponent.

Success: Behavior among the participating students has improved. Concurrently, these students have also experienced weight reduction and improved academic performance.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=228

✧ 3. Operation FitKids (OFK), American Council on Exercise, San Diego, California

Background: The purpose of OFK is to improve the health and fitness of America's youth through enhancing education about healthy lifestyles and increasing opportunities for physical activity. The program provides schools with services for building a fitness program utilizing commercial fitness equipment, educational materials, staff training and community partnering.

Duration: The OFK Program had its inception in 1990 and is ongoing.

Success: OFK has provided more than \$6 million in fitness equipment to more than 100 schools and youth facilities nationwide, positively impacting tens of thousands of students in grades six through 12.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=245

✧ 4. Running and Reading One Bay at a Time, Fairhope Elementary School, Fairhope, Alabama

Background: The Running and Reading One Bay at a Time program integrates physical activity and school reading programs. During physical education class, students run, jog or walk around a quarter-mile track. Running times are calculated, and the library supplies informative books about a particular bay or geographical area of the United States that was previously selected for students as a reading topic. Students also receive foot stickers. The students can add them up with their classmates to track their journeys on a large map of the U.S. in the school lobby.

Success: Students progressed from struggling in their quarter-mile run around the track to comfortably running a mile or more. Rewards gave them an immeasurable feeling of self-confidence.



Students began begging for “running days” in physical education class to try and log as many miles as possible. Many students took home this message of physical activity and began inspiring their parents to become active with their children outside the school environment.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=255

★ 5. Kids on the Move, Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta, Atlanta, Georgia

Background: The Kids on the Move program takes place during after-school programs at schools and includes three sessions of physical activity per week for eight weeks. Each session lasts for one hour and includes 15 minutes of education and 45 minutes of physical activity.

An important aspect of the program includes the fitness assessments that take place both before the students begin the program and at the end of the eight weeks. This allows for comparing and observing physical changes and behaviors that may have resulted from the exercise.

Success: During the eight-week program, positive changes in flexibility were achieved as shown in the results of a study done by some of the participants. Also, according to post-program phone interviews, 38 percent of parents noticed their children drinking more water, 29 percent noticed an increase in activity level and 78 percent noticed that their child was more aware of the harmful effects of tobacco use.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=229

★ 6. Run to Read and Write, Fiskdale, Massachusetts

Background: Run to Read and Write started as a small classroom project by Carol Goodrow, an elementary school teacher. Using traditional methods, reading and writing is taught four days a week, and the fifth day is spent writing in journals on topics such as running, health and fitness. On the writing day, students go for a run and immediately return and write about their day.

Success: The program has received positive feedback from hundreds of parents and schools, who have noted increased activity and excitement for learning among students and almost a 100 percent participation rate in classrooms participating in this program.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=256



✧ 7. Healthy Choices, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Boston, Massachusetts

Background: Healthy Choices is a school-based nutrition and physical activity program designed to increase student fruit and vegetable consumption and physical activity while reducing the time they spend in front of the television. The program's success results from the collaboration of staff, students and community members for development, implementation and evaluation.

Success: Students who participated in this intervention have reported they watch less television, are more active, and are less likely to play computer or video games. More specifically, girls involved with the program had a statistical increase in nutrition knowledge as well as a positive effect on body mass index (i.e., lower than among girls in control schools).

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=213

✧ 8. Fine Arts Interdisciplinary Resource (FAIR) School, Crystal, Minnesota

Background: The FAIR School, a fourth- through eighth-grade facility in Minnesota, has implemented physical activity and nutrition policies that focus on making healthy food selections and physical activity integral parts of the day in order to foster healthful nutrition and physical activity. Included among the school's food environment policy changes, no vending machines are available for school use, two fruits and vegetables are offered daily, food sales have been brought into the classroom and all foods offered at school functions must contain seven or fewer grams of fat per serving.

In the physical activity environment, the school ensures that every student will have opportunities to participate in daily physical education classes. The physical activity curriculum is designed to encourage all students to be active for at least 50 percent of the period. Hopefully, students will develop skills and habits for a lifetime of physical activity.

Success: Participation in school breakfast and lunch has consistently increased, and so have attendance rates, which are at 96 percent.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_profile.php?id=200

✧ 9. Physical Activity Bright Idea, San Jose Unified School District, San Jose, California

Background: Physical Activity Bright Idea was developed to increase student opportunities for physical activity through a pedometer challenge. The participants, ages 8 and 9, wore pedometers to track the number of steps they took each day walking to and from class. They kept a log of their steps, and competed with classmates to see who could go the farthest.



The Student Nutrition Services group assisted by providing fruit or vegetable samples once a month on campus during lunchtime. This allowed children opportunities to learn about and try new foods.

Success: Both students and parents learned important information through the program. The students were encouraged to integrate the information they learned into forming lifelong habits.

For more information:

<http://www.californiaprojectlean.org/brightideas/genBrightIdeasList.asp>

★ 10. Superintendent Challenge Winner—Improving Physical Education, North Cow Creek Elementary School District, Palo Cedro, California

Background: The North Cow Creek Elementary School District adopted a five-year plan to overhaul its physical education system after reviewing its students' results on the California Physical Fitness Test. In addition to the current policy, the district implemented the President's Challenge Program, which recognizes excellence in physical fitness. Through a board policy related to health, fitness and nutrition, the district was able to involve the community and its staff in developing fitness programs.

Success: The school board approved the policy and will continue to utilize the California Physical Fitness Test results to track the plan's progress and to continue making revisions as the need arises.

For more information:

<http://www.californiaprojectlean.org/brightideas/genBrightIdeasList.asp>



RESOURCES

Kidnetic

This site from the International Food Information Council provides games for children, along with facts on healthy eating and physical activity for parents and educators.

<http://www.kidnetic.com>

Healthy University™

This eight-week education program teaches teens what they need to know to create and sustain healthy behavior habits.

<http://www.opraonline.org/pdf/healthyuniversitytg.pdf>

The Walking Site

This site provides all the tips needed to start walking programs, walking competitions and more.

<http://www.thewalkingsite.com/>

Kids Walk-to-School: Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

This page supports physical activity through walking and biking to school.

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/>



GUIDELINE 11

Schools use data to develop, structure and support their wellness plans.

BEST PRACTICES

- ★ Guide to Healthy School Wellness Policies, State of Alabama
- ★ Arizona Healthy School Environment Model Policy, State of Arizona
- ★ Old Orchard Beach School District, Orchard Beach, Maine
- ★ What's Working, Action for Healthy Kids
- ★ Healthy Children Ready to Learn, State of California
- ★ Linkages between student health and academic achievement, State of California

“People often expect policy makers to fix society’s problems. As childhood obesity problems continue to escalate, the School Physical Fitness and Wellness Advisory Council was formed to develop best-practice guidelines to reverse this trend.”

John White, Ohio House, Health Committee Chairman



GUIDELINE 11





GUIDELINE 11

Schools use data to develop, structure and support their wellness plans.

Schools will collect and analyze data to make decisions about the types of policies and plans to put in place. Before finalizing a wellness policy, schools can determine their priorities for policy and action by assessing the current nutrition offerings, the way they are presented, the environment in the cafeteria, the school environment related to health and wellness, and the physical activity and education opportunities available to students and school staff. Through an initial assessment, a school can not only determine where the gaps, needs and resources are, but also set a baseline to measure how a policy and its subsequent implementation has improved the school's wellness.

OBJECTIVE

Schools will conduct an assessment to understand what they are doing well regarding wellness policies and how they can improve.

Because multiple stakeholders may be involved in building a policy that can be embraced by the school community, it is important that such a policy be supported with data collected through assessing the school's wellness conditions. Multiple tools and instruments are available that can easily be tailored to a school's environment so administrators do not have to create an evaluation tool from scratch. The following section offers evaluation tools and strategies that might help schools begin.

BEST PRACTICES

★ 1. Guide to Healthy School Wellness Policies, Action for Healthy Kids of Alabama

Background: The purpose for the Guide to Healthy School Wellness Policies was to help schools set standards for developing wellness policies within Alabama's school districts. Among the guidelines that Alabama adapted from those produced by the School Nutrition Association (SNA) include:

- Nutrition education will be integrated into other areas of the curriculum, such as math, science, language arts and social studies;
- Physical activity will be integrated across curricula and throughout the day, considering the "balancing equation" of food intake and physical activity; and
- After-school programs will encourage physical activity and healthy habit information.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/filelib/toolsforteachers/recom/AL_AL-%20Guide%20to%20Wellness%20Policies.pdf



✧ 2. Arizona Healthy School Environment Model Policy, State of Arizona

Background: This document supports school districts in Arizona that are developing wellness policies. Arizona provides detailed descriptions of ways in which a school district might consider improving its ability to promote healthy habits. Among these recommendations, a few examples are:

- Recognizing obesity, eating disorders and other health problems that may affect a student's eating habits;
- Complying with USDA nutrition requirements;
- Advertising appropriate foods and beverages in areas where students are likely to eat during mealtime;
- Offering physical education courses where students can learn, practice and assess their motor skills, social skills and knowledge; and
- Discouraging physical inactivity.

For more information:

<http://www.actionforhealthykids.org>

✧ 3. Old Orchard Beach School District, Old Orchard Beach, Maine

Background: The Old Orchard Beach School district has started to measure students' body mass indexes by collecting the height and weight of students in kindergarten through grade five and in grade seven. By collecting this data, the district can properly plan health programs and track student measurement data to determine whether implementing a program has been beneficial to the students.

For more information:

Food and Nutrition Services, U.S. Department of Agriculture; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and U.S. Department of Education. FNS-374, Making it Happen! School Nutrition Success Stories. Alexandria, VA, January 2005.

✧ 4. What's Working, Action for Healthy Kids

Background: Action for Healthy Kids has put together a number of best-practice profiles on its Web site, including school-based interventions, programs and practices. These can serve as helpful and specific examples of how various schools choose to implement a wellness plan.

For more information:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_topic.php?topic=14



★ 5. Healthy Children Ready to Learn, a White Paper on Health, Nutrition and Physical Education, California Department of Education (CDE)

Background: Through recommendations from various key stakeholders on wellness in California, the CDE has established a comprehensive approach to ensure that students are healthy and ready to learn. California schools are focusing on supplying high-quality physical education to support students in developing fundamental and advanced motor skills; improving self-confidence, self-esteem and self-control; and providing more opportunities for physical fitness. The CDE also has encouraged schools to set higher nutrition standards for food and beverages served or sold on campuses. Some of the recommendations include serving every student a school meal, thus ensuring that no child goes hungry; replacing high-sugar drinks and snacks with milk and snacks with higher nutritional values; and offering breakfast programs.

To ensure the success of nutrition and physical activity programs, the schools must provide an environment supporting the development of these habits. For this to happen, the CDE suggests that schools form a school health board with members including school staff, students, parents, administrators, health care professionals and other interested community members.

Success: Research has shown that schools offering high-quality physical education have shown higher achievement in both mathematics and reading. Schools offering breakfast programs along with physical activity see positive changes in student attendance and classroom behavior.

For more information:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/se/yr05healthychildrenwp.asp?print=yes>

★ 6. Linkages between student health and academic achievement, California School Boards Association (CSBA)

Background: In making the case for a wellness agenda, school districts will need to utilize the best research to demonstrate to their school boards that this issue directly promotes student success. The CSBA recognizes that children need to be in good physical and mental health if they are to fully participate and learn in school. It cites helpful research on the links between academic performance and student health and well-being.

For more information:

<http://www.csba.org/is/ch/linkages.htm>

For another article that synthesizes similar research:

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/filelib/facts_and_findings/fs_npaa.pdf



RESOURCES

USDA Team Nutrition

This Web site, set up by the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, provides many resources. One link provides sample legislation, outlines local wellness policy requirements, discusses the components of a wellness policy and gives several examples of wellness policies established in various states. The site also walks through, step by step, the process of developing a local wellness policy and then gives examples. Another link on implementing a local wellness policy includes topic-specific resources, organizations, programs, curricula and research. The resources cover topics like nutrition education, physical activity, guidelines for all foods served on campus, other school-based activities and a combination of those topics. Other sections list useful Web sites on funding a wellness policy and answer frequently asked questions.
<http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Healthy/wellnesspolicy.html>

Helping Kids Succeed, Ohio School Boards Association

The Ohio School Boards Association compiled this resources kit, which outlines the steps and components of developing a wellness plan, sample policies for wellness and ways that board members can help establish a wellness plan.
<http://www.osba-ohio.org/Files/SALTkit11.pdf>

Food and Nutrition Information Center

This site from the USDA's Food and Nutrition Information Center serves as a directory listing credible, accurate and practical resources targeting consumers, nutrition and health professionals, and educators. The site provides easy-to-use educational materials, government reports, research papers and other resources.
<http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic>

Model School Wellness Policies

Both the School Nutrition Association and the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA) provide model policies that promote healthy eating and opportunities for physical activities that reduce the risks of illness and associated societal costs.

<http://www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/nana.html>

<http://www.schoolnutrition.org>

HealthierUS School Challenge

Many schools already have made changes to their school nutrition environments, improved the quality of the foods served and provided students with more nutritious, healthy choices. USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) wants to encourage schools to achieve such results. It has established the HealthierUS School Challenge to encourage schools to go further in their wellness efforts and to recognize excellence for those schools that do.

<http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/HealthierUS/index.html>



Grant information sites

These sites tell where to look for available funding as well as how to apply.

<http://www.grants.gov/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/funding/index.htm>

<http://www.healthinschools.org/grants>

<http://www.fipse.aed.org>

<http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/HYFund/>

Ohio Department of Education — Wellness Policy Guidance and Training

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) released a memorandum to all superintendents and food service directors to clarify the Child Nutrition Act of 2004, Section 204 Local Wellness Policy, and to introduce the ODE Safety, Health and Nutrition staff members who can provide technical assistance with developing a wellness policy and plan. The document also addresses the school wellness policy minimum legal requirements. Additionally, it offers wellness trainers as a resource who may visit a region and provide training support.

<http://www.ode.state.oh.us> (Search: Wellness)



GUIDELINE 11





EVALUATION TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Part of the federal requirement for creating wellness policies and plans is for school districts to evaluate their implementation efforts. To assist with this process, the following evaluation tools are available and accessible in the public domain to guide and help districts measure their movement toward a healthy school environment. Ideally, only one comprehensive evaluation instrument would exist that schools could utilize to evaluate and assess a wellness policy and its implementation. However, schools are highly diverse and will have varying needs and emphases when establishing their own wellness plans. Therefore, numerous resources listed below can be used to help evaluate and assess each component of a wellness policy and its implementation. These tools evaluate various dimensions, including nutrition, the school environment, nutrition education, physical activity opportunities and physical education to ensure that best practices and outcomes are measured. Each tool will offer a different look at the key guidelines and objectives offered in this publication to support districts in their work.

Changing the Scene: Improving the School Nutrition Environment

This education and assessment kit includes a variety of tools for use at the local level to raise awareness and address school environmental issues that influence students' eating and physical activity practices.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/changing.html>

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/support.pdf>

The American Dietetic Association and WellPoint

This online survey evaluates family lifestyles and habits. The tool also highlights areas where families can change their home environment and daily routines to improve the wellness environment.

http://www.wellpoint.com/healthy_parenting/familyinvolvement.html

The Strategic Alliance ENACT

ENACT teaches about best practices and promising approaches and strategies for improving the nutritional and physical activity environment. ENACT is an organization that conducts assessments and determines priorities for changing environments to fit wellness models. The program serves as a report card for assessing the usefulness of an environment's wellness factors.

<http://www.preventioninstitute.org/sa/enact/enact/index.htm>

NOVA Southeastern University Recreation and Wellness

This is a sports and intramural survey that evaluates recreational environments. This tool provides listed expectations of a model wellness recreational environment and offers feedback.

<http://www.rec.nova.edu/surveys/intramural.html>

The National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion: School Health Index

This self-assessment tool was developed to help schools identify the strengths and weaknesses of their health and safety policies and programs; to help schools develop an action plan for improving student health; and to engage teachers, parents, students and the community in promoting health-enhancing behaviors.

<http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/SHI/Static/Introduction.aspx>



The New Hampshire Department of Education Local Wellness Policy Toolkit

The New Hampshire Department of Education offers an all-inclusive assessment tool to evaluate the complete school environment. This tool evaluates commitment to nutrition, quality of school meals, additional healthy food options, the dining experience, nutrition education and marketing.

<http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/programsupport/Localwellnesspolicy.htm>

Michigan's Healthy School Action Tool

This online assessment tool helps educators evaluate the current health of the school environment. It also offers methods for making improvements in five key areas.

<http://mihealthtools.org/schools/>

The Mississippi School Nutrition and Physical Activity Environment Assessment Tool

This tool evaluates the proficiency of the current school nutrition and physical activity environment and develops best practices for suggested improvements.

http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/HealthySchools/downloads/Environment_Assessment.doc

The National Center for Bicycling & Walking

This organization offers community assessment tools to evaluate and provide alternatives for competitive and noncompetitive outdoor activities.

http://www.bikewalk.org/vision/community_assessment.htm

USDA, MyPyramid Tracker

USDA's Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion offers the assessment tool MyPyramid Tracker to evaluate food intake and physical activity level. The intended purpose of the evaluation is to enable a student to make smarter choices, find a balance between food and physical activity, and get the most nutrition out of food intake.

<http://www.mypyramidtracker.gov/>

Michigan Surgeon General, Health Risk Appraisal

The Health Risk Appraisal allows one to create an individual personal health plan, and then it provides a confidential, in-depth assessment with recommendations for health improvement.

<http://www.michigan.gov/surgeongeneral>

FITNESSGRAM

FITNESSGRAM is a physical fitness assessment. Each of the test items was selected to assess important aspects of a student's health related to fitness. Students are compared not to each other, but to health fitness standards that are carefully established for each age and gender and that indicate good health. Health-related fitness components include aerobic capability, body composition, strength, endurance and flexibility.

<http://www.cooperinst.org/ftginfo.asp>



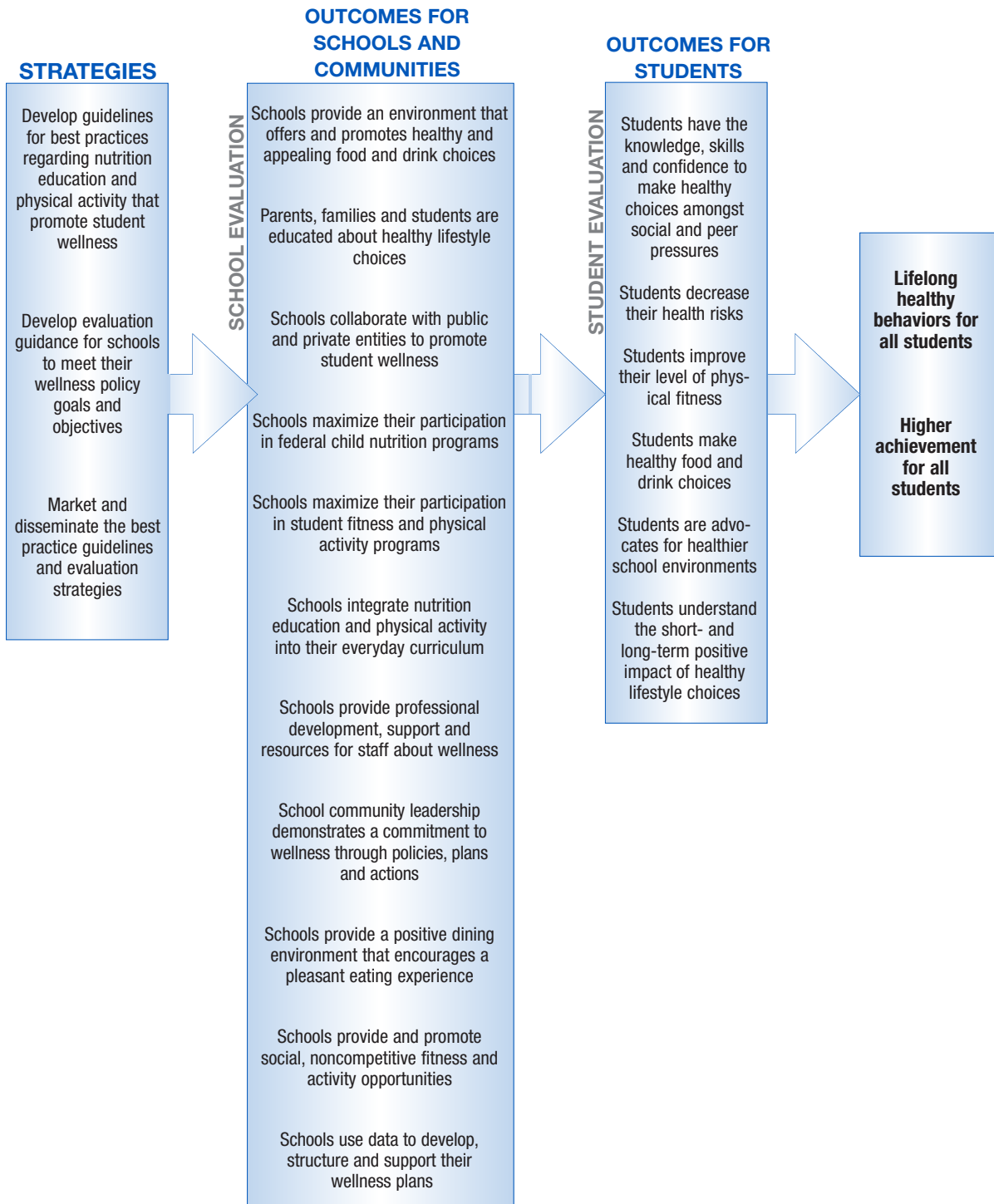
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