
Student Wellness Toolkit: Elementary School

More information can be found at
www.HealthierGeneration.org/schools

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

Student Wellness Elementary School Criteria at a Glance

Bronze: 4 Checklist Criteria Silver: 7 Checklist Criteria Gold: 11 (All) Checklist Criteria	
701	At the elementary school level, school offers at least 20 minutes of recess daily
702	At the elementary school level, classes participate in recess before lunch
703	Before and afterschool programs dedicate at least 20% of their time to physical activity
704	All before and afterschool program staff participate in annual professional development including physical activity and healthy eating as an element of their program
705	Snacks are served as part of the After School Snack or Meal Program (reimbursed through the USDA) or an independent snack program that meets the Alliance Competitive Foods and Beverage Guidelines
706	Afterschool programs (academic enrichment and tutoring) that serve snacks incorporate nutrition education
707	School provides opportunities for students to participate in daily physical activity during the school day (excluding recess and physical education)
708	School utilizes community resources to provide physical activity and/or nutrition education opportunities before or after school
709	School connects students and families with physical activity opportunities in the community
710	School actively supports and promotes walking or bicycling to and from school
711	School policies and practices support that physical activity is not used for or withheld as punishment for students

Rationale

Increasing rates of obesity in children and teenagers have occurred at the same time that physical activity in schools has been decreasing. An estimated 31.2% of children ages 6 to 11 in the United States are overweight or at risk for overweight. In adolescents, ages 12 to 19, 30.9% are overweight or at risk for overweight. While childhood obesity rates increase, opportunities for students to be active have decreased. Between 1991 and 2003, enrollment of high school students in daily physical education classes decreased from 41.6% to 28.4%. Fewer and fewer children walk or ride bicycles to school, eliminating that source of daily physical activity. Recess has been reduced or eliminated in many elementary schools.

Today, obesity is one of the most pressing health concerns for children and physical inactivity is a leading contributor to the epidemic. Children who are overweight or obese face many of the same health problems as adults: high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and high cholesterol. The Surgeon General recommends that children should engage in 60 minutes of moderate activity most days of the week; yet most youth are accumulating far less. Schools serve as an excellent venue to provide students with the opportunity for daily physical activity, to teach the importance of regular physical activity for health and to build skills that support active lifestyles. Unfortunately, most children get little to no regular physical activity while in school.

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

Physical activity should not be confused with physical education or exercise. Physical activity in an educational setting is defined as behavior consisting of bodily movement that requires energy expenditure above the normal physiological (muscular, cardio-respiratory) requirements of a typical school day (Tennessee Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance).

Before and afterschool programs are an array of structured programs that provide students with a range of supervised activities intentionally designed to encourage learning and development outside of a typical school day. These programs present an ideal opportunity to help slow the rise of childhood obesity by providing a safe and supervised environment for children to be active and develop healthy eating habits.

Principles that Guided the Development of the Student Wellness Criteria

- Students are on school grounds a significant amount of time each day and physical activity can be integrated in many ways.
- Schools have several opportunities to promote and provide physical activity which can lead to the adoption of a physically active lifestyle outside of the school environment.
- Before and afterschool programs have the potential to improve the health of children by providing programs and services that promote nutrition education and healthy eating habits.
- Before and afterschool programs act as the missing link for many schools unable to provide children with enough physical activity during the school day and also work to enhance the skills being taught in physical education classes.
- Before and afterschool programs serving healthy snacks/meals provide children with the energy they need to fully benefit from educational and enrichment activity offerings.
- Afterschool programs offer a unique opportunity to influence the lifestyles of many children and their families.
- The success of before and afterschool programs rely heavily on staff that is reflective of the school community and receive continued professional development in health-related areas.

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701	At the elementary school level, school offers at least 20 minutes of recess daily
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Rationale

Recess provides the opportunity to accumulate part of the daily physical activity recommendation of 60 minutes of moderate activity most days of the week. Recess is regularly scheduled time within the elementary school day for unstructured physical activity and play and provides physical activity, social and cognitive benefits. Recently, some schools have eliminated recess altogether, reportedly due to safety concerns and a desire to increase time for academic instruction. However, studies have found that students who do not participate in recess become fidgety and less able to concentrate on tasks and the longer children sit in classrooms without a recess break, the less attentive they become. Recess also offers students one of their few opportunities during the school day to interact and develop social skills, such as negotiating and cooperating, with minimal adult interference. The National Association of Elementary School Principals has endorsed recess as “an important component in a child’s physical and social development.”

(Source: Wechsler H, Devereaux AB, Davis M, Collins J. Using the school environment to promote physical activity and healthy eating. Preventive Medicine 2000;31:S121-S137).

Action Steps

- Evaluate the master schedule to determine the number of minutes dedicated to recess each day.
- Work with scheduling committee and administration to ensure 20 minutes of recess each day (this can be broken into multiple sessions).
- Provide training to recess supervisors so they can facilitate and encourage physical activity.
- Provide enough trained adults on hand to enforce safety rules and prevent aggressive, bullying behavior.
- Provide space, facilities, equipment and supplies that can make active participation in physical activity during recess appealing to children.
- Encourage students to be active.
- Schedule recess before, rather than after, lunch. Studies have found that students eat more, lunchroom behavior improves and time on task after lunch increases when recess comes before lunch.
- Complement, rather than substitute for, the physical activity and instruction children receive in physical education classes.
- View recess as a necessary educational support component for all children—students should not be denied recess so they can complete class work or as a means of punishment.
- Ensure adequate, safe and developmentally appropriate equipment is provided for students to engage in enjoyable physical activities.
- Reinforce students’ positive personal and social skills (e.g., cooperation, conflict resolution).

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Recognition Documentation

Indicate how many minutes of recess each grade receives each day.

Grade	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
K					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

Resources

- [Recess Rules](#) (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation)
- [Recess for Elementary Students Position Paper](#) (National Association for Sports and Physical Education)
- [Playworks Playbook](#) (Playworks)

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702

At the elementary school level, classes participate in recess before lunch

Rationale

A research team at the Montana Team Nutrition Program found classes participating in recess before lunch had improved student behavior on the playground, in the cafeteria and in the classroom. In addition, plate waste studies found that students waste less food and drink more milk when they attend recess before lunchtime. This decreased waste leads to increased nutrient intake. Improvements were also noted in the cafeteria atmosphere. The lunchroom (post-recess) is more conducive to eating and is more relaxed as students are not rushing through lunch to get outside. Finally, reports also show that children are more settled and ready to learn upon returning to the classroom in the afternoon directly following recess. (Source: Montana Office of Public Instruction: Nutrition Sense. Recess Before Lunch.)

Action Steps

- Build support within your school and community.
 - Share information and work with staff throughout the building. Food service staff are integral in the planning process and are key members in accommodating the schedule change.
 - Keep parents and students informed of the change and reasoning behind it.
- Plan the new recess and lunch schedule.
 - Understand this will be a work in progress but work to solicit teacher “buy-in” and input. A trial run may be helpful to work out schedule conflicts.
 - Modify the schedule as needed, checking in with teachers and staff for feedback.
- Include a hand washing plan in the lunch schedule.
 - It is imperative that students have the opportunity and time to wash their hands following recess and preceding mealtime. Hand washing with soap is preferred to using hand sanitizer.
- Allow adequate time for the children to eat lunch.
 - It is recommended that children have at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, from the time they sit down.
- Increase the presence of school staff in the lunchroom initially.
 - During the initial transition, staff should be available to assist students with the transition. This also provides additional supervision as students learn the new routine.

Recognition Documentation

Indicate the date when recess before lunch was implemented **for all grades**.

Describe the challenges to implementing recess before lunch and how the school overcame these challenges and developed a successful implementation of recess before lunch.

Resources

- [Recess Before Lunch Report and Resources](#) (Montana Office of Public Instruction)

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703

Before and afterschool programs dedicate at least 20% of their time to physical activity

Rationale

Before and afterschool programs offer an excellent opportunity to provide physical activity for many children during a time of the day when they would most likely be sedentary if not given active options. The current recommendation from leading scientific organizations is children should accumulate at least 60 minutes of age-appropriate, moderate and vigorous physical activity on most, if not all, days of the week. Before and afterschool programs provide a prime time opportunity for children to participate in enjoyable, safe, unstructured and structured forms of physical activity.

Physical activities can take place in a traditional afterschool setting, can be integrated into homework time and tutoring sessions and they can be part of a broader approach in which before and afterschool activities are part of a coordinated plan to address school health concerns. Some of the guidelines for developing or enhancing physical activity programs include giving children a choice of activities, an equal opportunity to participate regardless of physical ability, the opportunity to be involved in program planning, age-appropriate activities under the guidance of a qualified adult and providing adequate facilities and equipment.

Action Steps

- Incorporate quick physical activity breaks throughout homework time, tutoring sessions, academic enrichment offerings and clubs that are mainly sedentary
For example (websites provided in Resources section below):
 - Alliance Fitness Trail Stations
 - JAMmin' Minutes
 - NC After-School Energizers
- Implement a "best practice" physical activity curriculum from the Healthy Schools Program Resource Database
- Implement a thematic approach by coordinating movement activities with content (see Take 10! below)
- Math tutorials can use physical activity as a basis for math 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?)
- Academic enrichment lessons can connect geography with physical activity by asking students to walk for 10, 20 or 30 minutes and then plot the distance the group traveled on a map as if they were actually walking from coast to coast
- Use physical activity as a discussion starter for oral language development or as a writing prompt (i.e., "I like soccer because...")
- Make physical activity a part of transitions
- Use music as a cue for transitions and incorporate running in place, jumping jacks, toe touches, etc.
- Start a before or afterschool walking/running club
- Create a fitness club that includes physical activity circuits as well as teaches strength, stamina and flexibility concepts
- Offer weekly intramural sports for each grade level (Soccer, Golf, Tennis, Bowling, Basketball, Volleyball, Swimming, etc.)
- Utilize stimulation video games (Dance, Dance Revolution, Wii Sports and Wii Fit)
- Offer new physical activity opportunities for students to experience such as:
 - Dance (Zumba, Salsa, Step, Stomp, Hip-Hop)
 - Martial Arts
 - Yoga
 - Pilates
 - Weight Training

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Recognition Documentation

Provide a copy of the before or afterschool weekly schedule showing physical activities offered and the time allotted each day for all students to participate.

OR

Complete the chart below

Activity/Curriculum Used	Minutes per Day/Week Offered	Grades Participating

Resources

- [Active Recreation Curricula](#) (SPARK PE)
 - [Discount Available](#)
- [GO FAR Walking and Running Club](#) (GO FAR)
 - [Discount Available](#)
- [Afterschool Physical Activity Website](#) (San Diego County Office of Education)
- [Fitness Trail Stations](#) (Alliance for a Healthier Generation)
- [Just-a-Minute School Program](#) (Jammin' Minutes) (Health E-tips)
- [After-School Energizers](#) (East Carolina University)
- [Take 10!](#) (ILSI Research Foundation)

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

704	All before and afterschool program staff participate in annual professional development including physical activity and healthy eating as an element of their program
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Rationale

The quality of before and afterschool programs depends heavily on the ability and professional development training of the program's staff. Before and afterschool staff must be able to relate effectively to the children they serve, understand their diverse needs, develop and execute age-appropriate and engaging activities, help them resolve behavioral problems and issues between themselves and others and interact effectively with parents and school staff. Professional development opportunities help to increase the retention of staff at all levels as well as expose before and afterschool providers to current research and best practices in the field which can then be integrated at the program level.

Action Steps

- Encourage and provide opportunities for before and afterschool staff to participate in free Webinars offered by the Healthy Schools Program
- Provide in-service training on physical activity and nutrition to before and afterschool providers
- Dedicate time for physical education teachers to share their ideas and expertise with before and afterschool staff
- Connect with your state affiliate of the National Afterschool Association or Afterschool Alliance state networks to offer cross-city and cross-state professional development opportunities
- Provide opportunities for before and afterschool staff to attend training seminars and resource centers provided by external organizations such as YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs, Parks and Recreation Programs, etc.
- Attend local and national conferences focused on physical activity and nutrition education
- Make staff aware of higher education training, such as continuing education courses and degree programs
- Create mentoring programs where experienced staff model best practices for new staff
- Distribute ongoing informal resources such as newsletters, flyers and brochures that focus on physical activity and nutrition

Recognition Documentation

Indicate the training date, the organization that provided the professional development and the physical activity and healthy eating training topics (not CPR, first aid, behavior management, etc) covered.

Training Date	Provided By (name, organization, or agency)	Topics Covered

Examples: Participated in Webinars provided by the Healthy Schools Program, received SPARK, CATCH or another physical activity and nutrition education curriculum training, attended school district trainings, local community trainings or national conferences with a focus on physical activity and nutrition education, etc.

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

Resources

- [Professional Development Resources](#) (Collaborative Communications Group)
- [The Importance of Professional Development for Youth Workers](#) (Child Trends)
- [Promising Practices in OST Professional Development](#) (University of Pennsylvania)

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

705	Snacks are served as part of the After School Snack or Meal Program (reimbursed through the USDA) or an independent snack program that meets the Alliance Competitive Foods and Beverage Guidelines
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Rationale

Congress improved the federal child nutrition programs to make it easier for programs serving children after school, on weekends and during school holidays to serve a meal in addition to or instead of a snack. The federally-subsidized meals and snacks attract children to out-of-school-time programs, where they can be active, engaged and safe while their parents are at work. The food also helps keep hunger at bay so children can fully participate in the activities going on during the program.

Providing healthy meals and snacks is particularly important given the rapidly increasing prevalence of childhood obesity in the U.S. Since 1980 the number of young people who are overweight has more than tripled. By providing healthy food, nutrition programs can play a critical role in preventing obesity and improving overall health.

Since there are many hours between lunchtime and a child's dinner, it is critical to offer nutritious snack options to children participating in afterschool programs. When afterschool programs provide nutritious snacks, they improve the health and well-being of the children they serve and they provide children with the energy they need to fully benefit from educational and enrichment activity offerings. Afterschool snacks can also play an important role in combating childhood obesity by reinforcing healthy eating habits and ensuring that children are not filling their bodies with sugar filled drinks and high fat foods.

Source: The Food and Action Center

Action Steps

1. After School Snack Programs reimbursed through the USDA

The **National School Lunch Program (NSLP)** provides reimbursement to school-sponsored afterschool programs for snacks. A school-sponsored program can be operated by a school (on school grounds or elsewhere). It can also be operated by another organization, such as a YMCA, on or off school grounds, if the school sponsors the program. School-sponsored programs usually participate through NSLP unless they want to serve an evening meal.

The **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)** provides reimbursement for snacks and, in some cases, meals to afterschool programs that are operated by schools, local government agencies and private non-profit organizations.

USDA determines eligibility by:

- The afterschool program **MUST** be run by a school that is eligible to operate the National School Lunch Program.
- The school provides students with free and reduced lunch through the NSL program during the school day.
- Purpose of the program **MUST** be to provide care in afterschool settings.
- Afterschool program **MUST** provide children with regularly scheduled educational or enrichment activities in a supervised environment.

Area eligible reimbursement

- Site is located at a school or in the attendance area of a school where at least 50% of the enrolled children are eligible for free and reduced price meals
- All snacks served by the afterschool program will receive free reimbursement rate

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

Non Area Eligible

- Must count meals and claim reimbursement by type (free, reduced price and paid), and must have documentation of eligibility for all meals served free or at a reduced price.

Reimbursement Rates for July 2011 through June 2012

NSLP Afterschool Snacks

Free	\$0.76
Reduced-price	\$0.38
Paid	\$0.07

CACFP Meals and Snacks

	Meals	Snack
Free	\$2.77	\$0.76
Reduced-price	\$2.37	\$0.38
Paid	\$0.26	\$0.07

**Meals and snacks served through the CACFP Outside School Hours Care option are reimbursed based upon the participating children's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals. This CACFP option can be used to serve children younger than 13 at before school, afterschool and weekend programs. (Summer programs are eligible only if they are a continuation of a year-round program.) A maximum of two meals and a snack can be served each day.*

- 2. Independent Meal Programs:** Snacks served in the before or afterschool programs are purchased from supermarkets, warehouse clubs such as Costco, Sams Club, etc. and snack food distributors.
- Reference Alliance Competitive Foods and Beverage Guidelines when creating snack menus
 - Utilize online tools to ensure the snacks and beverages served in the before and afterschool programs are compliant with the Alliance Competitive Foods and Beverage Guidelines
 - [Healthy Schools Product Navigator®](#)
 - [Healthy Schools Product Calculator](#)

Recognition Documentation

Afterschool snacks and/or meals served are part of the (check one):

- National School Lunch Program (NSLP)
- Child and Adult Care Feeding Program (CACFP)
- Independent Meal Program (*Snacks served are purchased by the afterschool program provider(s)*)

For snacks and/or meals served as part of the NSLP or CACFP, provide two months of snack menus.

For snacks and/or meals served as part of an independent meal program, complete the chart below to indicate that snacks and beverages meet the Alliance's Competitive Foods and Beverage Guidelines.

- List **four snacks and two beverage** items currently served in the afterschool program(s) that **meet** the Alliance Competitive Foods and School Beverage Guidelines.
- Use the [Healthy Schools Product Calculator](#) to ensure that snack products meet the Guidelines:
- Use the [Healthy Schools Product Navigator®](#) to ensure the snacks and beverages meet the Guidelines

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

Note: All fresh fruits and vegetables, 1.5 ounces of reduced-fat cheese (e.g., string cheese) and plain water in all sizes are compliant with the Guidelines.

SNACK FOODS			
<input type="checkbox"/> Check here if all snack items listed below were confirmed in the Product Calculator or Healthy Schools Product Navigator®			
Brand (Company) and Product Name (should be single serving)	Type or Flavor	Product Size (i.e. oz, g)	Name of Source (i.e. Local vendor, warehouse store, grocery store, other)
<i>SNACK EXAMPLE – Frito Lay - Baked! Doritos</i>	<i>Nacho Cheese</i>	<i>.75 oz</i>	<i>Costco</i>
BEVERAGES			
<input type="checkbox"/> Check here if all beverages listed above were confirmed in the Product Navigator or meet one or more of the following standards:			
Brand (Company) and Product Name (should be single serving)	Type or Flavor	Product Size (i.e. oz, g)	Name of Source (i.e. Local vendor, warehouse store, grocery store, other)
<i>BEVERAGE EXAMPLE - Tropicana Pure Premium Orange Juice</i>	<i>No Pulp 100% Juice</i>	<i>6 oz</i>	<i>Publix Grocery Store</i>

Water - Any size, no added sugars, artificial sweeteners or sodium

Plain fat-free or low fat milk - Up to 150 calories per 8 ounces for elementary schools, 10 ounces (188 calories) for middle schools. *Includes nutritionally equivalent milk alternatives per USDA*

100% juice (or 100% juice plus water) - Up to 120 calories per 8 ounces + 10% DV for at least 3 vitamins and minerals*, elementary schools 8 ounces (120 calories), middle schools 10 ounces (150 calories).

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

Resources

- [National Afterschool Snack Program](#) (U.S. Department of Agriculture)
- [Child and Adult Care Food Program \(CACFP\)](#) (U.S. Department of Agriculture)
- [Sample Snack Menu and Production Record](#) (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction)

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

706	Afterschool programs (academic enrichment and tutoring) that serve snacks incorporate nutrition education
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Rationale

The before and afterschool environment is ideally suited to introduce children to healthy snack options and to provide them with the skills and support needed to adopt healthy eating behaviors for life. This means creating an environment where all children feel comfortable trying new food items and by providing nutrition education lessons and activities that include taste testing and hands-on experiences that are fun, developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant.

Action Steps

- Invite health education teachers, school nurses or community partners to teach nutrition education lessons and discuss the importance of making healthy food choices
- Implement a “best practice” nutrition education curriculum developed for out-of-school time programs
- Start an afterschool garden and infuse hands-on nutrition education activities
- Introduce new fruits and vegetables into the snack menu every month and involve the students in menu planning to teach them about healthy food choices
- Provide students with taste tests when introducing new foods
- Start a healthy cooking club
- Ask local chefs to share their knowledge and healthy food preparation tips with students
- Visit local farmers market or produce store within the community
- Use multicultural cookbooks (i.e. Magical Melting Pot Cookbook, Cooking with Kids: Integrated Curriculum, etc.) to teach students about food, geography, language and to introduce them to international food and culture
- Implement the BodyWorks program to provide students and families with hands-on tools (shopping for healthier options, menu planning, portion sizes, etc.) to make small, specific behavior changes to prevent obesity and help maintain a healthy weight
- Create a “healthy snack” cookbook by asking families to share traditional snacks, supply them with recipe cards to fill out and return

Recognition Documentation

Describe how afterschool programs that serve snacks provide nutrition education opportunities for all students.

Examples: We implemented a “best practice” curriculum that provided nutrition education such as: CATCH Kids Club, Just Taste, Camp Boost or Food and Fun, we introduced students to new fruits and vegetables by holding weekly taste tests during snack time, we provided healthy eating messaging when serving snack each day (i.e. portion size, importance of drinking water, etc.), we started a healthy cooking club where students are taught healthy food preparation, we started an afterschool garden to teach nutrition education, etc.

Resources

- [empowerME4Life](#) (Alliance for a Healthier Generation)
- [How to Start a School Garden](#) (Alliance for a Healthier Generation)
- [Camp Boost](#) (Healthy Lifestyle Choices)
- [BodyWorks](#) (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

707	School provides opportunities for students to participate in daily physical activity during the school day (excluding recess and physical education)
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Rationale

Regular physical activity, even modest forms, has significant health benefits for students. Because students spend many hours in school, it is an ideal place to provide physical activity opportunities. Classroom teachers can help provide some of the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity throughout the school day. Several studies indicate that activity breaks can improve cognitive performance and classroom behavior.

Action Steps

- Provide multiple opportunities for students to engage in physical activities.
- Participate in fitness alarms. For example, ring the bell at 10 am and 2 pm and have all staff and students participate in physical activity.
- Incorporate brief physical activity breaks, one to two minutes, into each class period. Have students take turns leading various movement activities.
- Integrate movement within core academic lessons, tying physical activity to learner objectives.
- Provide “brain break” opportunities, which involve some type of movement or allows students to be creative. Have students practice spelling or vocabulary words while walking around the room or play a game of charades based on a topic the class is studying.
- Implement physical activity during the “homeroom” or “advisory” period in middle and high schools.
- Start a video exercise library for classroom use.
- Include physical activity opportunities in the school news or morning announcements.
- Incorporate “walk and talk” breaks—take your class out for a walk and have students discuss what they have learned during the class period.
- Model enthusiasm for physical activity by participating in breaks with students and in school employee wellness opportunities.

Recognition Documentation

Describe how the school integrates structured physical activity breaks into daily activities for **all** students.

Examples: Details from district/school written plan, school wide physical activity practices or teacher lesson plans that describe how he/she integrates physical activity breaks into daily activities.

Resources

- [Fitness Trail Stations](#) (Alliance for a Healthier Generation)
- [Just-a-Minute School Program \(Jammin' Minutes\)](#) (Health-E-tips)
- [Elementary Energizers](#) (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction)
- [Take 10!](#) (ILSI Research Foundation)

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

708	School utilizes community resources to provide physical activity and/or nutrition education opportunities before or after school
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Rationale

Increasing community involvement in before and afterschool programs can yield significant benefits to programs and the students that they serve. Community partnerships have the potential to meet a wide variety of needs, from improving participant recruitment and attendance to contributing volunteers or other resources to programs. Outreach is an important way to strengthen before and afterschool programs that promote physical activity and healthy eating. Potential community resources include park and recreation departments, fitness clubs, hospitals and youth-serving organizations. By tapping into existing resources, before and afterschool programs do not have to recreate the wheel but utilize available resources within their community.

Action Steps

Assess your current community resources:

- Is the director of your before and/or afterschool program(s) on your school wellness council?
- Does your school or district wellness committee include before and afterschool stakeholders?
- Do you have programs administered by partner organizations like YMCA or Boys and Girls Clubs?
- Do you communicate with community-based youth organizations to provide students with weekly/monthly updates of physical activities offered in the community?
- Think outside your school building - are there community groups, parents or businesses (i.e. chef, master gardener, grocery store owner, sporting club, dietician, dance or martial arts instructor, etc.) who could provide resources for your before and/or afterschool program(s)?
- Consider partnerships with local park and recreation departments for access to public pools, golf courses, parks, walking trails, etc.

Examples of utilizing community resources:

- Schedule continuous fitness programming with a certified fitness instructor
- Hold an "Afterschool Olympics" fitness event and invite area schools to compete
- Celebrate physical fitness with local youth organizations such as the YMCA's "Healthy Kids Day"
- Invite a yoga instructor to lead activities that teach "stress relief" strategies
- Contact local fitness facilities and gyms to ask if students can utilize their facilities at a free or discounted rate and/or ask them to provide fitness instructors to visit the school to lead physical activities
- Partner with local hospitals and public health departments to provide nutrition education lessons
- Invite a chef from a local restaurant

Recognition Documentation

Describe how the school utilizes community resources to provide physical activity and nutrition education opportunities for students.

Examples: An instructor from a local fitness center comes to our school twice a week in January and February to provide Pilates classes for our students, our local hospital sends a registered dietician to our school three times a year to provide nutrition education to students, the owner of our grocery store donates fruits and vegetables to our school that are used for taste testing, our community racing club leads our spring walking/running club for students and provides registration costs for students interested in running the Memorial Day 5k, etc.

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

Resources

- [Building Community Partnerships](#) (Child Trends)
- [Building Healthy Communities](#) (The AfterSchool Corporation)
- [Promoting Physical Activity and healthy nutrition in Afterschool Settings](#) (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

709	School connects students and families with physical activity opportunities in the community
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Rationale

Healthy schools are integral proponents in the fight against childhood obesity. Equally important are safe, healthy home lives. Connecting students and families with opportunities to be physically active in their communities promotes a concerted culture of health and wellness. Engaging in physical activity as a family can be a fun way to get everyone moving. Studies show that kids who believe they are competent and have the skills to be physically active are more likely to be active. Those who feel supported by friends and family to become active, or surrounded by others interested in physical activity, are more likely to participate. Schools can act as mediators to engage and encourage families to be active. (Source: <http://www.letsmove.gov/active-families>)

Action Steps

Consider how you currently connect students and families to physical activity in the community:

- Do you send home flyers or post community events in your school newsletter or on the school website?
- Do you have information on physical activities in the community in the front office or on a parent bulletin board?
- Do you have programs administered by partner organizations like YMCA or Boys and Girls Clubs that also provide weekend and summer activities?
- Do you communicate with community-based youth organizations to provide students with weekly/monthly updates of physical activities offered in the community?
- Does your school reach out to community partners to collect information for families about programs/activities the community partners are offering?

Examples of connecting to the community:

- Provide students and families with information to participate in a charity walk or run
- Provide students with a monthly calendar of physical activity events in the community
- Create a bulletin board to post flyers/brochures of physical activity opportunities in the community for students and families
- Invite a guest to discuss bicycle safety and provide students and families with maps of community bike trails
- Ask your school's PTA/PTO to provide information about community fitness events

Recognition Documentation

Describe how physical activity opportunities in the community are promoted by the school.

Examples: Flyers were provided to our students and families to participate in a local 5K race/walk, our teachers and students participated in a benefit softball tournament for a local charity, at parent pick-up we have a "Fun & Active Families Bulletin Board" to post community events at local parks, public pools, golf courses, walking trails, etc., community events are included on the school/district website and in the monthly newsletter.

Resources

- [Building Community Partnerships](#) (Child Trends)
- [BodyWorks](#) (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

710	School actively supports and promotes walking or bicycling to and from school
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Rationale

Walking to school is a missed opportunity for physical activity. Roughly 10% of children nationwide walk to school regularly. Even among those kids living within a mile of their school, only 25% are regular walkers. Walking and bicycling to school can provide children with more opportunities to be physically active at no extra cost to parents.

Action Steps

- Convene a group and hold an informative kick-off meeting
- Conduct a walk/bike audit
- Identify issues such as community design, safety, time and convenience
- Identify solutions such as safe routes, crossing guards; educate staff, students and parents on pedestrian and bicycling safety; provide secure bicycle parking
- Make a plan—include solutions, resources necessary, timeline, etc.
- Fund the plan—federal funding is available through state departments of transportation
- Act on the plan
- Evaluate, make improvements and keep moving

Recognition Documentation

Check all the following the school uses to promote walking and bicycling to and from school:

- Students receive instruction on walking/bicycling safety
- Safe routes program is promoted to students, staff and parents via newsletters, websites, local newspaper
- Crossing guards are utilized
- Crosswalks exist on streets leading to schools
- Walking school buses are utilized
- Bicycle parking is provided
- Number of children walking to and from school is documented
- Number of children biking to and from school is documented
- Maps of school environment (sidewalks, crosswalks, roads, pathways, bike racks, etc.) have been created and distributed
- Other – please describe additional efforts the school has in place to promote walking and bicycling to and from school.

Resources

- [Safe Routes to School Online Guide](#) (The National Center for Safe Routes to School)
- [KidsWalk-to-School](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- [Safe Routes to School](#) (U.S. Department of Transportation)

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

711	School policies and practices support that physical activity is not used for or withheld as punishment for students
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Rationale

The Healthy Schools Program views the school setting and its administrators as a vehicle and actors of change. As advocates for health-promoting behaviors, the use of physical activity as a punishment is contrary to fundamental health-enhancing practice. When used as a punishment, physical activity can be viewed as unenjoyable and associated with consequence. To become and remain active into adulthood, youth need to encounter positive physical activity experiences. If a student needs to be disciplined, effective educators know what types of strategies to use, and if physical activity is being used for punishment, educators must be informed of appropriate discipline strategies. Most experts do not support the use of physical activity as a punishment, including the National Association for Sport and Physical Education and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Action Steps

- Compose a policy statement prohibiting the use of physical activity as a punishment
- Research appropriate, alternative discipline procedures
- Communicate the policy statement and alternative practices to staff, faculty, students and families

Alternatives to Physical Activity as Punishment

Successful teachers and coaches create positive learning environments without using physical activity as punishment. Managing and motivating children and youths require developing an effective preventive-management system; no one, simple solution works for all. Prevention is the key. The following list offers actions that are suitable alternatives to using physical activity as punishment. (*National Association for Sport and Physical Education, 2009*)

- Include students in establishing expectations and outcomes early in the year, and review those expectations and outcomes frequently
- Include students in meaningful discussions about goals and how to reach them
- Be consistent with enforcing behavioral expectations within the learning environment
- Practice and reward compliance with rules and outcomes
- Offer positive feedback and catch students doing things right
- Don't reinforce negative behavior by drawing attention to it
- Hold students accountable for misbehavior
- Develop efficient routines that keep students involved in learning tasks
- Wait for students to be attentive before providing directions

Recognition Documentation

Provide a copy of the policy, a policy statement or relevant letters to school staff, parents/families or students that support that physical activity is not used or withheld as punishment for students.

OR

Clearly explain how school practices support that physical activity is not used or withheld as punishment for students.

Student Wellness Elementary School Toolkit

Resources

- [Physical Activity Used as Punishment and/or Behavior Management \(Position Statement\)](#) (National Association for Sports and Physical Education)
- [Physical Activity School and Community Guidelines](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)