

Promoting In-School Physical Activity

Providing opportunities for physical activity inside and outside of physical education class helps teach children the importance of being physically active for a lifetime. Every school should offer different types of physical activities to encourage students to develop an appreciation and enjoyment of movement.

Needs Assessment:

It may be helpful for you to begin by conducting a physical activity “needs assessment” of your school. Identify which physical activities are being offered.

- Does your school offer daily recess and/or activity breaks?
- How often are they offered?
- What other ways does your school encourage children to be physically active?

Ways to Promote Physical Activity in Schools:

There are many ways to get involved in promoting physical activity at your school.* Here are a few suggestions to get you started.

1. **Volunteer to help your child’s physical education teacher** to learn more about the school’s physical education program. There are many ways to get involved, such as participating with a class, helping students develop their motor skills, assisting with supervision, serving as a role model, recording and assisting with classroom assessments.
2. **Serve on your school’s wellness committee.** If your school doesn’t have a committee, help get one started. For more information regarding coordinated school health and wellness committees visit www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/cshp.
3. **Encourage and support quality physical education.** The following website describes what quality physical education should look like and provides additional resources: www.aahperd.org/naspe/publications/teachingTools/QualityPE.cfm.

Why support quality physical education? Here’s a top 10 list that explains the benefits of offering quality physical education: www.aahperd.org/naspe/publications/teachingTools/upload/top10reasonsforQualityPE.pdf.
4. **Ask other parents to get involved with school-wide activity promotions,** such as health fairs, walking school buses, after-school activity clubs, and/or field days. If your school doesn’t currently have these programs offer to help start one. For example you could help start a “Walk or Ride a Bike to School Club” with your children and friends. Visit www.walkingschoolbus.org to learn more.
5. **Learn more about the nutrition program and policies at your child’s school.** Are their policies in place for snacks, beverages, and/or fundraising? If not, can you think of ways that they can improve their nutrition program?
6. **Encourage and support school policies on healthy eating and nutrition.** Visit the following website for more information: www.healthiergeneration.org/schools.aspx?id=5655.
7. **Write a letter to the administration** in support of physical education, physical activity opportunities and/or healthy eating policies and behaviors.

*Please keep in mind many schools require permission and/or background checks in order to volunteer. Each school has their own policy so make sure to follow your schools necessary guidelines.

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8. **Support or advocate for health policies** with key decision makers such as administration and school boards. Check out the following website to help you get started: www.aahperd.org/naspe/advocacy/governmentRelations/toolkit.cfm.
9. **Promote physical activity** in the afterschool care program.

| I plan to promote active and healthy schools by: | Start Date | Completion Date |
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| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |
| 4. | | |
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