

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INTERVENTIONS

### **Intervention #C-PA-S1**

Implement policies and practices that create active schools by increasing opportunities for non-motorized transportation (walking and biking to-and-from school) and access to school recreation facilities

#### **DESCRIPTION AND SCOPE**

Active schools provide safe and convenient opportunities for physical activity in the school and around the school grounds. Having an active school provides students, staff and community members with opportunities for active living. Active living integrates physical activity into daily routines such as walking or biking for transportation or recreation, playing in the park, working in the yard, or using recreation facilities. Active living policies and practices for community design, land use, and facility access have been proven effective to increase levels of physical activity. A number of specific policies and practices that create active schools are those that support non-motorized transportation and access to school recreation facilities. (Reference: See Evidence section.)

Non-motorized transportation is generally defined as walking and biking; however, it includes the use of wheelchairs, strollers, and other forms of wheeling like in-line skates and skateboards. Non-motorized transportation also includes transit use such as buses and trains because other forms of non-motorized transportation are usually combined with transit to complete the trip (such as walking to and from the bus stop). Depending on the natural environment surrounding the school and seasonal weather, non-motorized transportation may also include ice skating, skiing, snowshoeing, swimming, canoeing or kayaking. Non-motorized transportation features can be addressed through community design and land use policies and practices that include street and community design standards, ordinances, zoning regulations, form-based codes, building codes, builders' practices and Complete Streets policies. Examples of non-motorized transportation features that these policies and practices may be applied to include:

- Sidewalks, walking and biking paths, and bike lanes
- Safe and convenient pedestrian street crossing features such as crosswalks, stop signs, stop lights, and other street crossing elements
- Motorist traffic calming and speed-reduction measures
- Street landscaping and pedestrian-level street lighting
- Bike racks, lockers, or other bike parking and storage facilities
- Mixed-use development patterns to locate homes, worksites, schools, stores and other community services and amenities within reasonable walking distances (pedestrian-oriented development) and within easy access to transit (transit-oriented development)

There are typically a variety of recreation facilities in the school or around the school grounds. They include athletic fields, playgrounds, and other open outdoor space; gymnasiums, swimming pools and ice rinks; classrooms and other rooms equipped with activity or fitness equipment; and walking and biking paths, trails, greenways, and

boulevards within two miles of the school. Ideally, school recreation facilities are conveniently located close to the school and homes in the community; affordable; age-, ability-, and culturally-appropriate; and safe, clean and aesthetically appealing. Access to school recreation facilities can be provided through policies and practices that address hours of operation, safety, maintenance, and community connectivity. Examples of access to school recreation facilities that policies and practices may be applied to include:

- Expanding hours of availability for before- and after- school use and when school is not in session
- Allowing classrooms and other rooms to be equipped with activity or fitness equipment that supports active classrooms and staff wellness
- Offering free or low-cost use of facilities and transportation to facilities
- Providing access to school buildings for indoor walking
- Improving safety at and around facilities by providing adult supervision for children and adolescents under 18 years of age, police or security patrols, bullying prevention, and adequate lighting
- Maintaining upkeep of facilities by providing clean indoor space, well-maintained outdoor grounds and landscape, trash removal, and graffiti prevention
- Establishing liability policies
- Developing facilities that enhance school and community connectivity such as pedestrian boulevards, bicycle greenways or linear parks
- Replacing or improving facilities that do not meet state or federal accessibility requirements (Americans with Disabilities Act)

Simply having a variety of accessible school recreation facilities is not enough to effectively increase levels of physical activity. The facilities must also be promoted. In other words, people need to be aware of the recreation options in order to use or access them. Examples of promotions include:

- School and community stakeholder training on safe and appropriate use of non-motorized transportation and school recreation facilities, such as through safe routes to school events and bike rodeos
- School staff training on integration of physical activity opportunities into the school day including age-, ability- and culturally-appropriate use of the facilities for children and adolescents
- Print, radio, TV and cable media promotions of facilities
- Websites featuring school walking, biking and recreation facilities location, hours, programming and fees
- Signage directing people to school walking and biking paths and trails along with print or internet maps of the routes

Although increasing opportunities for non-motorized transportation and access to school recreation facilities are evidence-based environmental changes that can have a large impact on increasing physical activity, they are issues that often require a long-term commitment of time and money to change to the built environment. While working on these interventions, schools can facilitate staff, student, and community support and engagement by initiating policy changes and practices that increase activity levels in students. In a time when many children do not get the recommended amount of daily

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physical activity, schools can begin to create an active school culture through the promotion of physical activity throughout the school day. There are a number of strategies to encourage and incorporate activity into the school environment and encourage active lifestyles:

- Provide training for staff to assure quality physical activity during recess, as well as, in before and after school opportunities
- Integrate physical activity into existing curriculum, such as math, science, language arts, spelling and geography through staff development (Action For Healthy Kids)
- Provide physical and social environments that encourage and enable safe and enjoyable physical activity (CDC, 1997)
- Include opportunities for students and families to be active at school events, such as family nights and conferences
- Encourage and enable school personnel to be active role models by their participation in physical activity
- Plan fitness breaks: periodic 5 minute aerobic activities to break up the school day or class
- Provide extracurricular opportunities, e.g. walking clubs, jumping rope, in-line skating
- Encourage teachers to provide time for unstructured physical activity during recess
- Provide quality, accessible physical activity opportunities for children with disabilities
- Provide a listing of community physical activity resources to students and parents
- Display posters and banners with physical activity themes
- Ask the librarian to prepare a book display and list of books about various physical activities and sports
- Send home activity homework that parents and children can do together

Implementing this intervention will be unique in each school based on the characteristics of the natural and built environment, existing transportation and recreation facilities options, interest in and resources available for new transportation and recreation facilities, and school and community demographics.

### **Target population/geographic area**

- School populations within the CHB geographic boundaries and the communities surrounding the schools

### **Recommended staff knowledge, skills and abilities**

- Knowledge of policy, systems, and environment
- Ability to collaborate with school and community partners
- Knowledge of basic issues to identify and increase opportunities for non-motorized transportation and school recreation facilities, including promotion of the facilities
- Ability to communicate effectively

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- Knowledge of community organizing and policy advocacy

### **Recommended partners**

- Parents and guardians
- Community partners
- Community planning departments
- School:
  - Administration
  - Transportation
  - Nurses
  - Support staff
  - Teachers
  - Students
  - District and community partners
  - Before and after school program staff
  - Police and school patrol
  - Policy makers

### **Acceptable use of funds**

- Staffing
- Meeting expenses to convene partners and stakeholders
- Survey and data analysis
- Action plan development, printing and posting
- Training for school staff and community stakeholders to increase access to non-motorized transportation and school recreation facilities
- Other educational and promotional materials that directly relate to intervention
- Start up costs associated with cost-effective, evidence based-programs to make them affordable to participants including training instructors if the programs directly contribute to the implementation of a selected intervention and another sustainable funding source is identified for the program's on-going costs
- Evaluation purposes

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## **ACTION STEPS**

### **Core (Getting Started)**

1. Review existing school and community planning documents to become familiar with the current status of school and community design, land use, transportation and recreation facility issues. Planning documents could include school wellness policies and plans, school site designs, community comprehensive plan, master plans, pedestrian plans, bike plans, or multimodal plans.
2. Meet with school staff responsible for school wellness, school transportations, and physical education to discuss mutual goals in non-motorized transportation and access to school recreation facilities.
3. Meet with community staff working in planning, transportation, public works, parks and recreation, and public safety functions that supports the school as a part

- of the community. Share mutual goals in non-motorized transportation and access to school recreation facilities discussed at the school staff meeting.
4. Conduct a school assessment of non-motorized transportation and recreation policies, practices and facilities. Include determination of number of K-12 students who live in designated “walk zones” or that do not receive busing, number of students already walking or biking to school, and street safety issues that may prevent safe non-motorized travel. Also include staff and teacher training needs. See RESOURCES for sample assessment tools.
  5. Conduct an additional school assessment of physical activity and its promotion in the school environment: curriculum integration, current before and after-school opportunities, recess, equipment, etc.
  6. Engage school and community stakeholders and decision-makers in an active school workshop to address school walkability, bikeability, and recreation opportunities. Include school and community stakeholders such as parents and guardians; teachers; district and community partners; school administration, transportation, nurses, and support staff; students; before- and after-school program staff; police and school patrol; and policy makers.
  7. Develop an initial active schools action plan as a result of the workshop. This may include priorities in non-motorized transportation, new recreation facilities, access to existing recreation facilities combined with promotion of the facilities. Prioritize based on feasibility, cost, resources, and sustainability.
  8. Rank and prioritize strategies, using the assessment results, based on feasibility, cost, resources, and priority. Work with partners to develop action plan and to set action steps for selected strategies.

### **Intermediate (Moving Forward)**

1. Meet with school staff responsible for school wellness, transportation, and physical education to review the initial action plan drafted at the active school workshop.
  - a. Decide to further develop the initial action plan or incorporate it into existing school or community plans such as the school wellness plan, comprehensive plan, master plan, pedestrian plan, or bike plan.
  - b. Finalize action plan so next steps are clearly identified. For each action step selected, determine and develop needed partnerships including teachers, administrators, parents, community partners, district department staff, such as wellness staff, and other relevant professionals to set action steps in motion. Action plans include goals, action steps, responsible party, timeline, budget, resources, and outcome measures.
2. Work with school staff, teachers, and community staff to attend training opportunities based on needs identified in assessment and prioritized in action plan.
3. Hold follow-up meetings with school and community stakeholders to review action plan, priorities, and next steps.
4. Present action plan to school administration, school board, and other community elected officials, key decision makers, and community groups that have a stake in the school’s walkability, bikeability, and access to recreation facilities.

5. Implement school policies that have been identified in the action plan supporting non-motorized transportation and access to recreation facilities. See RESOURCES for sample policies.

### **Advanced (Looking Beyond)**

1. Work with school staff and community staff and groups to implement additional policies and practices that support active schools, non-motorized transportation to-and-from school and access to school recreation facilities. Include promotion activities.
2. Develop design plans and funding proposals to implement non-motorized transportation infrastructure projects based on action plan recommendations such as for new or renovated sidewalks, trails, or crosswalks. Include promotion activities.
3. Develop design plans and funding proposals to create new school recreation facilities based on action plan priorities such as for new playgrounds, athletic fields, or walking and biking paths and trails. Include promotion activities.
4. Develop a school pedestrian, bicycling, or multimodal transportation plan if one does not already exist.

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## **ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION TOOLS**

### **Tool: School Health Index**

**Description:** The School Health Index is a self-assessment and planning guide that enables schools to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the school's policies and programs that promote health and safety; develop an action plan to improve student health and safety; and involve teachers, parents, students, and the community to improve school policies, programs, and services. It is a nationally-recognized assessment, and schools are familiar with this tool. The physical education portion of the assessment starts in Module 3 of each document, with some relevant questions in Modules 1 and 2.

**Should be completed by:** This assessment should be completed by various school staff and administrators.

**Link:** <https://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/shi/default.aspx>

### **Tool: Healthy Schools Builder**

**Description:** The Healthy Schools Builder is a self-assessment tool that enables schools to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the school's policies and programs that promote health and safety; develop an action plan to improve student health and safety; and involve teachers, parents, students, and the community to improve school policies, programs, and services. The tool is provided by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation and is a nationally-recognized tool based on the School Health Index described above.

**Should be completed by:** This assessment should be completed by various school staff and administrators. The individual who enrolls the school will become the contact person.

**Link:** <http://www.healthiergeneration.org/schools.aspx>

### **Safe Routes to School**

**Resource: Safe Routes to School: Practice and Promise. Chapter Three, titled “Evaluation and Outcomes: How Do You Measure Success?”**

Source: [National Center for Safe Routes to School](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/)

**Description:** This guide discusses the Safe Routes to School Program, outlines examples of successful programs, and provides resources for communities and schools to implement Safe Routes to School. Chapter Three is titled “Evaluation and Outcomes: How Do You Measure Success?” and includes a table of relevant indicators.

**Link:** (Copy and paste link) <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/bike/Safe-Routes-2004/images/SafeRoute2Schlo.pdf>

### **Tool: Safe Routes to School Student Travel Tally Sheet**

Source: [National Center for Safe Routes to School](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/)

**Description:** The Student Travel Tally Sheet is intended to help track the number of children walking and biking to and from school at participating schools. Forms can be filled out online or sent to be processed by the National Center for Safe Routes to School.

**Should be completed by:** This tool should be used by teachers or adults in the classroom to collect information from students.

**Links:** (Copy and paste link)

[http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/collateral/Specific%20Form%20Instructions\\_2007Scanrev.pdf](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/collateral/Specific%20Form%20Instructions_2007Scanrev.pdf) ; [http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/collateral/TravelBehaviorIn-ClassTallySheet\\_scan2007.pdf](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/collateral/TravelBehaviorIn-ClassTallySheet_scan2007.pdf)

### **Tool: Safe Routes to School Parent Survey**

Source: [National Center for Safe Routes to School](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/)

**Description:** The Safe Routes to School Parent Survey is intended to collect information from parents about how their children travel to and from school; identify barriers to walking or biking to and from school; and understand parents’ attitudes about walking and biking to school. This information can be used to understand why students do not walk or bike to school and how attitudes change as a result of Safe Routes to School activities. Forms can be filled out online or sent to be processed by the National Center for Safe Routes to School.

**Should be completed by:** This tool should be used by school officials or administrators to collect information from parents.

**Links:** (Copy and paste links)

[http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/collateral/Specific%20Form%20Instructions\\_2007Scanrev.pdf](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/collateral/Specific%20Form%20Instructions_2007Scanrev.pdf);  
[http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/collateral/SRTS\\_Parent%20Survey\\_scan2007.pdf](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/collateral/SRTS_Parent%20Survey_scan2007.pdf)

### **Tool: Minnesota Department of Transportation Bicycle & Pedestrian Toolbox: Tools to Develop an Active Transportation Network. Appendix: Bikeability and Walkability Checklists.**

Source: [Bicycling in Minnesota. Minnesota Department of Transportation.](http://www.mn.gov/)

**Description:** Included in this toolbox are two short checklists that help assess the bikeability and walkability of the surrounding area.

Should be completed by: This tool should be used by school officials or administrators to collect information about the surrounding area.

Links: (Copy and paste link)

[http://www.dot.state.mn.us/bike/pdfs/Bicycle%20and%20Pedestrian%20Toolbox\\_2008\\_04.pdf](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/bike/pdfs/Bicycle%20and%20Pedestrian%20Toolbox_2008_04.pdf) See Appendix.

## **KEY EVALUATION STEPS**

### **Evaluating Implementation**

1. Outline the results of the assessment.
  - a. Describe existing policies, systems, and environments currently in place that are relevant to this intervention. Consider activities and initiatives already underway that are relevant to this intervention.
  - b. Identify current needs of the community that could be addressed by this intervention.
  - c. Document the extent to which the community supports activities relevant to this intervention. Include information about support from key leaders, elected officials, and community residents.
2. Assess the functioning of partnerships, coalitions, and the Community Leadership Team.
  - a. Determine the extent to which relevant interests and groups have been adequately represented in implementing this intervention. Describe how these partnerships contributed to the successful implementation of the intervention. Consider problems that arose from inadequate representation of interests or groups.
  - b. Describe how well these groups worked together to implement the intervention. Include information about the recruitment, engagement, and retention of members, as well as successes and challenges that arose as a result of members' differing goals and interests.
3. Describe the execution of key Action Steps that were essential for implementation of the policy, systems, and environmental changes supported by this intervention. Include analysis of the successes and challenges involved in completing these key steps.

### **Evaluating Effectiveness**

1. Describe the policy, systems, or environmental changes that were implemented.
2. If appropriate, approximate how many sites or organizations have been affected by this intervention.
  - a. Estimate the number of sites or organizations that this intervention could potentially affect.
  - b. Estimate the number of sites or organizations that intervention actually affected.
3. Approximate the number of people that have been affected by this intervention.
  - a. Estimate the number of people that this intervention could potentially affect.
  - b. Estimate the number of people that this intervention actually affected.

4. Document the changes in health behavior that have occurred as a result of this intervention.
  - a. Collect, analyze, and interpret information about health behaviors related to this intervention **prior** to the implementation of this intervention. Consider appropriate measures from the KEY OUTCOME MEASURES listed below.
  - b. Collect, analyze, and interpret information about health behaviors related to this intervention **following** the implementation of this intervention at regular intervals. Consider appropriate measures from the KEY OUTCOME MEASURES listed below.

### **Evaluating Sustainability**

1. Describe how the policy, systems, or environmental changes that were implemented are being enforced.
2. Describe how the policy, systems, or environmental changes that were implemented are being maintained.

### **KEY OUTCOME MEASURES**

#### **General Outcomes**

1. K-12 schools/districts offer increased opportunities for non-motorized transportation to and from school.
2. K-12 schools/districts offer increased access to school recreational facilities.
3. Physical activity among students and community residents has increased.

#### **Recommended Outcomes & Associated Methods**

1. Recommended Outcome: Documentation of critical actions and activities that have been (or are being) taken to offer increased opportunities for non-motorized transportation to and from school and increased access to school recreational facilities.

##### Associated Methods:

- a. Policy Tracking
- b. Key Informant Interviews with school/district officials

2. Recommended Outcome: Increased percentage of K-12 schools/districts in the local jurisdiction that have a policy to facilitate access to non-motorized transportation to and from school.

##### Associated Methods:

- a. Administrative Data from schools/districts
- b. Key Informant Interviews with school/district officials
- c. Policy Tracking
- d. Surveys of school/district officials

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3. Recommended Outcome: Presence of environmental supports located in the local jurisdiction that facilitate non-motorized transportation to and from school.

Associated Methods:

- a. Key Informant Interviews with school/district officials
- b. Observational Studies of the environment surrounding schools

4. Recommended Outcome: Increased percentage of students who walk or bike to school during the school year.

Associated Methods:

- a. Administrative Data from schools/districts
- b. Key Informant Interviews with school/district officials
- c. Surveys of students or families

5. Recommended Outcome: Increased percentage of K-12 schools/districts in the local jurisdiction that have a policy to allow for the public use of recreation facilities during non-school hours.

Associated Methods:

- a. Administrative Data from schools/districts
- b. Key Informant Interviews with school/district officials
- c. Policy Tracking
- d. Surveys of school/district officials

6. Recommended Outcome: Increased percentage of K-12 schools/districts in the local jurisdiction that are actively and effectively enforcing a policy to allow for the public use of recreation facilities during non-school hours, of those that have a policy.

Associated Methods:

- a. Observational Studies of schools/districts
- b. Key Informant Interviews with school/district officials

7. Recommended Outcome: Increased percentage of K-12 schools/districts in the local jurisdiction that have a policy to provide opportunities for students to be physically active for each of the following:

- Before the school day begins
- During the school day
- After the school day ends

Associated Methods:

- a. Administrative Data from schools/districts
- b. Key Informant Interviews with school/district officials
- c. Policy Tracking
- d. Surveys of school/district officials

8. Recommended Outcome: Increased percentage of schools/districts in the local jurisdiction that are actively and effectively enforcing a policy to provide opportunities for students to be physically active, of those that have a policy, for each of the following:
- Before the school day begins
  - During the school day
  - After the school day ends

Associated Methods:

- a. Observational Studies of schools/districts
- b. Key Informant Interviews with school/district officials

9. Recommended Outcome: Increased use of school recreational facilities by community members.

Associated Methods:

- a. Observational study or count of community members who use school recreational facilities.

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## **KEY RESOURCES**

### **General**

#### **Background**

- School Health Index (SHI). Sample assessment tool. <https://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/shi/default.aspx>
- Healthy Schools Builder. Sample assessment tool. [http://www.healthiergeneration.org/builder/?ekmense1=1ef02451\\_10\\_14\\_btnlink](http://www.healthiergeneration.org/builder/?ekmense1=1ef02451_10_14_btnlink)
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Guide to Physical Activity in the Schools. <http://dpi.wi.gov/fscp/pdf/neschphyed.pdf>
- Coordinated School Health Minnesota: Linking Health and Learning. <http://www.health.state.mn.us/schools/csh/>
- MN School Safety Center. This resource provides a nationally recognized standard for school safety and emergency planning strategies promoted by the U.S. Department of Education. <http://www.mnschoolsafetycenter.state.mn.us>

#### **Specific Topics and Toolkits**

##### *Active Classrooms*

- Michigan Department of Education. Brain Breaks: This resource is a physical activity idea book for classroom teachers. [www.emc.cmich.edu/BrainBreaks](http://www.emc.cmich.edu/BrainBreaks)
- Cup Stacking: Get the whole class engaged in this fast-moving activity. <http://www.speedstacks.com/>
- Energizers: Short classroom lessons that incorporate academic concepts into activity breaks for elementary and middle school students. <http://www.ncpe4me.com/energizers.html>

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- Jammin' Minute: One-minute fitness bursts that include 5 very simple exercises students can do standing or sitting. Weekly activities can be used in the classroom, on morning announcements or as a student leader activity. <http://www.jamschoolprogram.com/>
- KidsRunning.Com. Read all about the strategies that a creative teacher has developed to incorporate healthy snacking and physical activities into elementary and special education classrooms. [www.kidsrunning.com/columns/whatkidsneed2.html](http://www.kidsrunning.com/columns/whatkidsneed2.html)
- Mind and Body: Activities for the Elementary Classroom. <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/health/Mind&Body.pdf>
- International Life Sciences Institute. Take 10: This site provides creative strategies for increasing classroom physical activity. [www.take10.net](http://www.take10.net)
- SPARK. Spark operates summer and after-school programs that match students with apprenticeships in professions of their choice. [www.sparkpe.org](http://www.sparkpe.org)
- CATCH. This resource is a school health program designed to promote exercise & healthy eating. <http://www.catchinfo.org/resourcesfundingandgrants.asp>
- HOPSports. This resource is an interactive exercise program that gets kids excited about staying fit. <http://www.hopsports.com>
- Skate in School. This resource is an inline skating and rollerblading program for schools. <http://www.skateinschool.com/pepgrants.htm>

### *Recess*

- American Association for the Child's Right to Play. Elementary School Recess. This resource gives information on recess games. <http://www.ipausa.org/recess.html>
- National Association for Sport and Physical Education. Recess in Elementary Schools: Paper on elementary school recess. [http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/pdf\\_files/pos\\_papers/current\\_res.pdf](http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/pdf_files/pos_papers/current_res.pdf)
- Montana Team Nutrition. Recess Before Lunch Policy Guide: the how and why of recess before lunch policies. <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfood/recessBL.html>
- Fitness Fun Forever: This program is designed to allow recess instructors with little physical education training to easily and effectively implement fun physical activities with students. <http://uwf.edu/sryan/resources/contents.htm>
- Peaceful Playgrounds. This program introduces children and school staff to the many choices of activities available on playgrounds and field areas. [www.peacefulplaygrounds.com](http://www.peacefulplaygrounds.com)

### *Before and After School*

- Physical Activity Before- and After-School Guidelines for After School Physical Activity and Intramural Sport Programs. [http://www.aahperd.org/NASPE/pdf\\_files/pos\\_papers/intramural\\_guidelines.pdf](http://www.aahperd.org/NASPE/pdf_files/pos_papers/intramural_guidelines.pdf)
- After School Physical Activity: Creative games and activities for students in grades 4 – 8. [www.afterschoolpa.com](http://www.afterschoolpa.com)
- Do More – Watch Less! A toolkit for after-school programs to encourage tweens (ages 10-14) to incorporate more screen-free activities into their lives. (Copy and paste link)

[http://ww2.cdph.ca.gov/programs/schoolhealth/Pages/DoMore\\_WatchLessTVTool.aspx](http://ww2.cdph.ca.gov/programs/schoolhealth/Pages/DoMore_WatchLessTVTool.aspx)

- The Power of Choice: Guidance for after-school program leaders. [http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/power\\_of\\_choice.html](http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/power_of_choice.html)

*Walking and Biking to-and-from School*

- National Center for Safe Routes to School at [www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org)
- Kids Walk to School: A CDC guide to promote walking to school. [www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/index.htm)
- Walk to school. [www.walktoschool.org](http://www.walktoschool.org)
- Walking School Bus. [www.walkingschoolbus.org](http://www.walkingschoolbus.org)
- Walking School Bus at Rochester. The development of Walking School Buses at Rochester elementary schools has taken the Walk to School Day idea and made it a daily occurrence. A Resource Manual was created to aid schools in implementing these neighborhood walk-to-school groups. Three schools have developed active Walking School Bus routes and an additional four schools have initiated the process and are recruiting volunteers. All have been supplied with a Walking School Bus kit that contains a manual, brochures, safety vests, hand-held stop signs, large umbrellas and other route supplies.

<http://www.stepstohealthiermn.org/rochester.cfm?gcAreaType=Schools>

- Safe Routes to School. The Minneapolis Safe Routes to School: Helping Minneapolis Youth be Lean & Green report was released and presented to the Minneapolis School Board. Minneapolis Public Schools has hired a part-time Safe Routes to School Coordinator to develop relationships with internal and external partners; in addition, mini-grants have been awarded to schools to start their own Safe Routes to School program.

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/saferoutes.pdf>

- Minnesota Department of Transportation. Bicycle and Pedestrian Toolbox: Tools to Develop on Active Transportation Network. April 2008. (Copy and paste link) [http://www.dot.state.mn.us/bike/pdfs/Bicycle%20and%20Pedestrian%20Toolbox\\_2008\\_04.pdf](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/bike/pdfs/Bicycle%20and%20Pedestrian%20Toolbox_2008_04.pdf)
- Minnesota Department of Transportation. Pedestrian transportation resources. <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/peds>
- Minnesota Department of Transportation. Bicycle transportation resources. <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/bike>
- Minnesota Safety Council. Bike Safe, Bike Smart. This collection of bike safety resources for communities and families includes a bike rodeo planning guide designed to teach young riders how to bike safely.

<http://www.mnsafetycouncil.org/bicycle>

*School staff wellness*

- Healthy Staff for Healthy Schools: Resources and links for creating healthy school staff. <http://extension.missouri.edu/hes/healthystaff/index.htm>
- Heart At Work: American Heart Association's online health promotion program. <http://216.185.102.50/haw/>
- School Employee Wellness: A Guide to protecting the assets of our Nation's Schools. Resources and tools to implement an employee wellness program. <http://www.schoolempwell.org/>

- School Staff Wellness: National Association of State Boards of Education.  
[www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/resources/SchoolStaffWellness.pdf](http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/resources/SchoolStaffWellness.pdf)

#### Sample Policies

- Model Language for Writing Safe School Environment Component into School Improvement Plan. This exemplifies a non-policy option for incorporating the intervention into a school plan. (Copy and paste link)  
<http://www.dcp.ufl.edu/centers/trafficsafetyed/Documents/Safe%20Ways%20to%20School%20Tool%20Kit.pdf>
- Promoting The Kidswalk-To-School Program Through Policies:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/pdf/section09.pdf>
- Agreement for Community Programs and Joint Facility Use. (Copy and paste link)  
[http://www.preventioninstitute.org/sa/policies/policy\\_detail.php?s\\_Search=Physical+Education&policyID=232](http://www.preventioninstitute.org/sa/policies/policy_detail.php?s_Search=Physical+Education&policyID=232)
- NASBE has this page on its website that is a database of state policies on nutrition and physical activity in schools. (Copy and paste link)  
[http://www.nasbe.org/healthy\\_schools/hs/picks.php#Physical%20Activity%20Other%20Than%20Physical%20Education](http://www.nasbe.org/healthy_schools/hs/picks.php#Physical%20Activity%20Other%20Than%20Physical%20Education)

#### Talking Points

##### Recess

1. Recess is an essential component of education and that preschool and elementary school children must have the opportunity to participate in regular periods of active, free play with peers (NAECSSDE 2002).
2. With the advent of increased high-stakes testing, there is an alarming trend toward the elimination of recess during the school day. Reducing recess time is actually counterproductive to increasing the academic achievements of students (Skrupskelis 2000).
3. Recess contributes significantly to the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive (intellectual) development of the young child (Clements 2000).
4. Physical activity fuels the brain with a better supply of blood and provides brain cells with a healthier supply of natural substances; these substances enhance brain growth and help the brain make a greater number of connections between neurons (Healy 1998).
5. When students are given the chance to move around and be active, they return to the classroom more attentive and able to concentrate on the tasks presented. This change enables learning to take place more efficiently. Children who get at least 15 minutes of recess are also better behaved (Healy 1998; Barros, Silver, & Stein 2009).

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6. Children can remember more, focus better, and regulate their own behavior better in play than in any other context (Guddemi, Jambor, & Skrupskelis 1999).
7. Recess should not be viewed as a reward but a necessary educational support component for all children. Students should not be denied recess as a means of punishment, or to make up work (NASPE 2006)
8. Schools should provide the facilities, equipment and supervision necessary to ensure the recess experience is productive, safe and enjoyable (NASPE 2001).

### References for Recess Talking Points

The National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. 2002. Recess and the Importance of Play: A Position Statement on Young Children and Recess. <http://naecs.crc.uiuc.edu/position/recessplay.html>

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Healy, J.M. 1998. *Failure to Connect: How Computers Affect Our Children's Minds - For Better and Worse.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

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Guddemi, M., Jambor, T., and A. Skrupskelis. (Eds.).1999. *Play in a Changing Society.* Little Rock, AR: SECA.

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### Active Classroom

1. Nationwide, an estimated 19 percent of children (ages 6-11) and 17 percent of adolescents (ages 12-19) were measured and categorized as obese in the 2003-2004 NHANES study (CDC 2003-2004).
2. The National Association for Sport and Physical Education has issued physical activity guidelines suggesting that children should have an accumulation of more than 60 minutes, and up to several hours of physical activity each day to promote health and well-being (NASPE).

3. For children, physical activity and movement enhances fitness, fosters growth and development, and helps teach them about their world (Elliot and Sanders 2002).
4. Children today find themselves more often in sedentary alternatives. For example, children ride in a car or bus to school, have less physical education, watch more television, play more sedentary games such as computer games, and do not have as much freedom to play outside on their own. Consequently, there is mounting evidence that even our young children are becoming less physically active and more overweight and obese (Epstein et al. 1995).
5. It is imperative that schools increase the amount of physical activity opportunities that children have during the school day. Being physically active not only provides important health benefits, but also provides children opportunities to learn through movement (Nichols 1994).
6. A major thrust in curriculum development in schools today is the integration of subject content across the curriculum. Including physical activity in all subject areas enhances learning (Nichols 1994).
7. Adding physical activity during the day in 5-10 minute increments was effective for increasing daily in-school physical activity and improving on-task behavior during academic instruction (Mahar et al. 2006).

References for Active Classroom Talking Points

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey Data. 2003-2004.

National Association for Sport and Physical Education. *Physical Activity for Children: A Statement of Guidelines for Children Ages 5 – 12.*

[http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/template.cfm?template=ns\\_children.html](http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/template.cfm?template=ns_children.html)

Epstein, L. H., Valoski, A. M., Vara, L. S., McCurley, J., L. R. 1995. Effects of decreased sedentary behavior and increasing activity on weight change in obese children. *Health Psychology* 14: 109-115.

Elliot E, Sanders S. (2002) *Children and Physical Activity: The Importance of Movement and Physical Activity*. PBS Teachers. Retrieved Aug 12, 2009, from <<http://www.pbs.org/teachers/earlychildhood/articles/physical.html>>

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### Walk/Bike to School

The following document provides talking points for communicating trends in school travel, reasons for walking, and safe routes to school with the public and media. Safe Routes. (2008) *Talking Points*. National Center for Safe Routes to School.

<http://www.walktoschool-usa.org/downloads/WTS-talking-points-2008.pdf>

### Safe Routes to School

1. Child pedestrian injuries occur more often in residential areas and on local roads that are straight, paved, and dry, according to Safe Kids USA (Public Health Law and Policy 2008).
2. Parents driving their kids to school make up 20 to 25 percent of the morning commute, according to the Local Government Commission. It's a vicious cycle: the more traffic there is, the more parents decide it is unsafe for their children to walk to school and opt to drive them instead (Public Health Law and Policy 2008).
3. Community design has changed. The number of schools decreased by about 1,000 between the years 1968 and 2001, while the number of students increased by over two million, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Consequently, fewer students live within a mile of their school (Public Health Law and Policy 2008).
4. The Transportation Authority of Marin County, California, issued a report on the impact of its Safe Routes to School program. Over the program's first two years, the percentage of children walking or biking to school increased from 21 to 38 percent. Adults reported that they appreciated the reduced traffic congestion around schools (Public Health Law and Policy 2008).
5. Safe Routes to School puts forth the "Four Es" as the key to a solution: Engineering, Enforcement, Education, and Encouragement. State and local officials can create environments that improve child safety by revising laws, ordinances, and practices to promote the following (Public Health Law and Policy 2008):
  - The construction of sidewalks
  - Neighborhood schools
  - Traffic-calming measures, such as roundabouts and speed humps
  - Requirements that city planners, engineers, real estate developers, and landscape architects consider pedestrian safety when designing new communities or modifying existing ones

### References for Safe Routes to School Talking Points

Public Health Law and Policy. (2008). *Safe Routes to School Talking Points*. Planning for Healthy Places. [http://www.healthypartners.org/factsheets/PHLP\\_SafeRoutes.pdf](http://www.healthypartners.org/factsheets/PHLP_SafeRoutes.pdf)

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**EVIDENCE**

Evidence for this intervention is based on the following evidence-based interventions for promoting physical activity defined in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Guide to Community Preventive Services, [www.thecommunityguide.org](http://www.thecommunityguide.org).

- Creation of or enhanced access to places for physical activity combined with informational outreach sessions
- Street-scale urban design and land use policies and practices
- Community-scale urban design and land use policies and practices

Story, M., M.S. Nannery and M. B. Schwartz. 2009. Schools and Obesity Prevention: Creating School Environments and Policies to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity. *The Milbank Quarterly* 87 (1): 71-100.