



Schools at a Glance

About this strategy

Schools are a critical setting to model healthy eating and regular physical activity. They can provide students with opportunities to learn about and practice healthy behaviors that can continue throughout their lifespan. Through the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP), schools will focus on the best practice approach of implementing both healthy eating and active schools activities in a comprehensive manner.

What does the evidence say?

- Poor diet and physical inactivity among youth can lead to increased risk for certain chronic health conditions, including high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and obesity.
- School settings hold a realistic and evidence-based opportunity to increase physical activity and healthy eating among youth.

Activities

School-based strategies are divided between healthy eating and active schools activities.

The goal of Healthy Eating in Schools is to increase fruit and vegetables, decrease sodium, decrease saturated fat, and decrease added sugars in foods and beverages available and sold.

Evidence-based activities to reach these goals include:

- Farm to School, School-Based Agriculture
- Healthy Snacks During the School Day
- Healthy Snacks Outside of the School Day
- Smarter Lunchrooms

The goal of Active Schools is to increase physical activity opportunities both during and outside the school day, helping students to meet the national guidelines of 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day. Evidence-based strategies to reach these goals include:

- Quality physical education
- Active classrooms
- Active recess at the elementary level and drop-in time options at the junior and high school levels
- Before and/or after school physical activity opportunities including Safe Routes to School

Priority populations

Through SHIP school strategies, Minnesota youth in K-12 settings will be the target population. However, layering worksite wellness strategy with school sites will leverage employees more directly along with the youth they serve. Selection of schools should consider those identified school sites that have a high percentage of free and reduced meal eligibility, and also a willingness to work on both healthy eating and physical activity strategy work.

Requirements

Through the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP), schools will work on a comprehensive approach, addressing both healthy eating and physical activity. SHIP school coordinators will assist school partners in convening or participating in the school health council/wellness team and complete or update the School Health Index on an annual basis. Based on the results, schools will select at least one activity in the healthy eating strategy and one in the physical activity strategy. SHIP grantees will then provide technical assistance to meet their goals.

Important dates

Optional monthly school strategy webinars are set for 2:30-3:30 p.m. on the following dates:

- August 13, 2019
- Sept. 10, 2019
- October 8, 2019
- Nov. 12, 2019
- December 10, 2019
- January 14, 2020
- February 11, 2020
- March 10, 2020
- April 14, 2020
- May 12, 2020

Resource

- [School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/npao/strategies.htm)
(<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/npao/strategies.htm>)

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