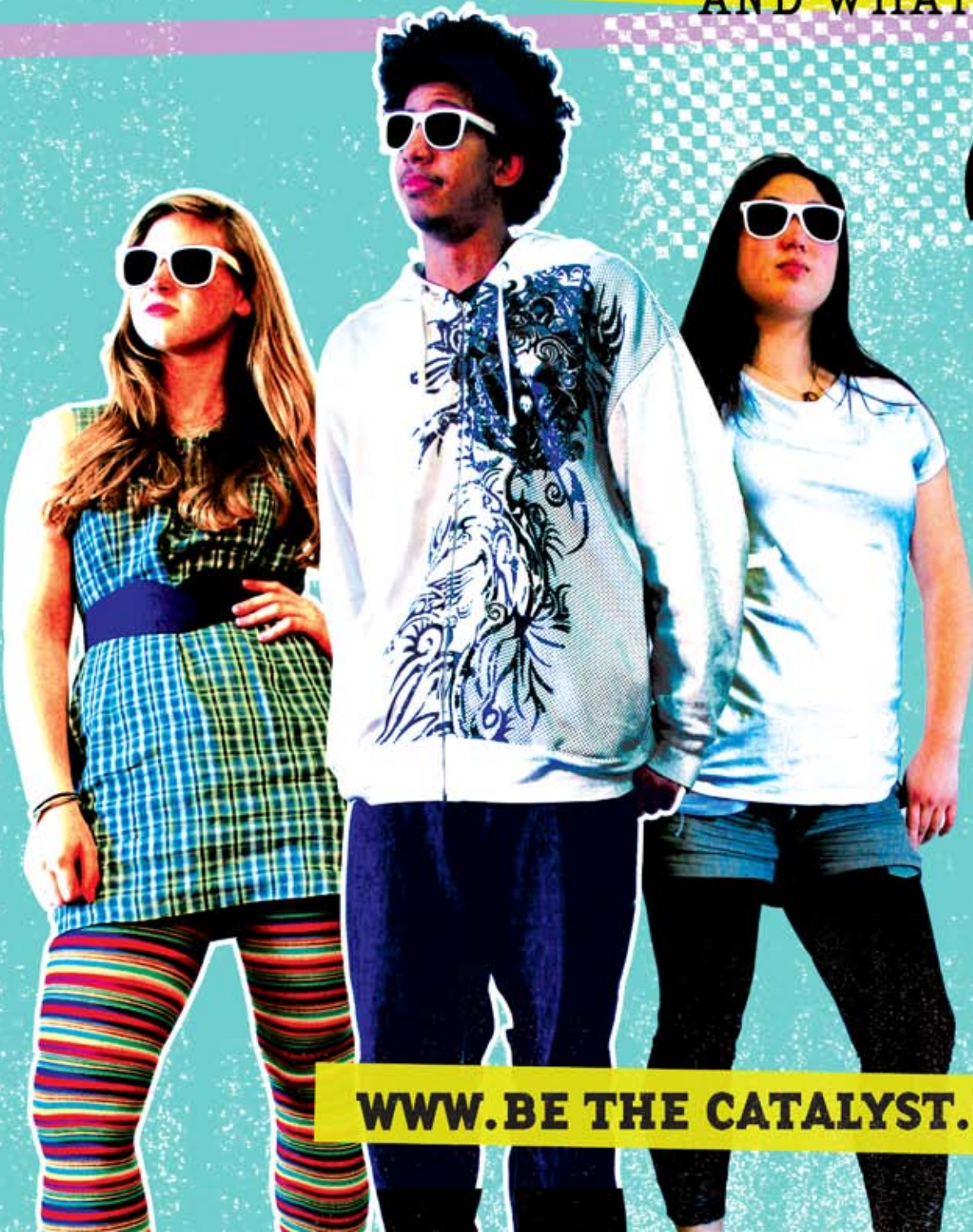


ACTI WATE: U

ACTIVE IN WHAT YOU EAT
AND WHAT YOU DO



WWW.BE THE CATALYST.ORG

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WHAT IS CATALYST?



OVERVIEW

Catalyst is about taking action. Our current focus is aimed at promoting healthy eating and physical activity. We are all about getting the message out through creative youth activism.

Catalyst is a statewide network for youth advocates across Minnesota. The movement is committed to taking action to support positive public health change across the state.

Our goal is to create change - change policies and change minds to help promote healthy eating and physical activity across the state.

One in four adults in Minnesota is obese, and one in three is overweight. We know that preventing all of this means encouraging physical activity and healthy eating early on in life.



Catalyst does all kinds of stuff, so there's something for everyone. Catalyst provides opportunities to train members to take action in their communities and together at the state level. Catalyst members can apply to serve on our Youth Advisory Board and to attend the annual Catalyst Summit. We also provide presentations and other materials to help activists organize community events and recruit new members to start local Catalyst chapters.

So, if you want to do something different than anyone else, tell us. We'll help you do it. **That means whether you like to talk, draw, paint, write, organize, lead, listen, or learn, Catalyst is for you.**

HEALTHY EATING FACTS



Eat enough calories but not too many. Maintain a balance between your calorie intake and calorie expenditure—that is, don't eat more food than your body uses. The average recommended daily allowance is 2,000 calories, but this depends on your age, sex, height, weight, and physical activity.

Eat a wide variety of foods. Healthy eating is an opportunity to expand your range of choices by trying foods—especially vegetables, whole grains, or fruits—that you don't normally eat.

Keep portions moderate, especially high-calorie foods. In recent years serving sizes have ballooned, particularly in restaurants. Choose a starter instead of an entrée, split a dish with a friend, and don't order supersized anything.

Drink more water. Our bodies are about 75% water. It is a vital part of a healthy diet. Water helps flush our systems, especially the kidneys and bladder, of waste products and toxins.

Limit sugary foods, salt, and refined-grain products. Sugar is added to a vast array of foods. In a year, just one daily 12-ounce can of soda (160 calories) can increase your weight by 16 pounds. See suggestions below for limiting salt and substituting whole grains for refined grains.

Don't be the food police. You can enjoy your favorite sweets and fried foods in moderation, as long as they are an occasional part of your overall healthy diet. Food is a great source of pleasure, and pleasure is good for the heart – even if those french fries aren't!

Overview

Obesity is quickly becoming an epidemic and one of the biggest health threats facing our nation. The primary behaviors causing the obesity epidemic physical inactivity and unhealthy diet. Here are some interesting facts about healthy eating and physical activity that really shed some light on the subject.

Get moving. A healthy diet improves your energy and feelings of well-being while reducing your risk of many diseases. Adding regular physical activity and exercise will make any healthy eating plan work even better.

One step at a time. Establishing new food habits is much easier if you focus on and take action on one food group or food fact at a time.



Take time to chew your food: Chew your food slowly, savoring every bite. We tend to rush through our meals, forgetting to actually taste the flavors and feel the textures of what is in our mouths. Reconnect with the joy of eating.

Listen to your body: Ask yourself if you are really hungry. You may really be thirsty, so try drinking a glass of water first. During a meal, stop eating before you feel full. It actually takes a few minutes for your brain to tell your body that it has had enough food, so eat slowly. Eating just enough to satisfy your hunger will help you remain alert, relaxed and feeling your best, rather than stuffing yourself into a “food coma”!

Eat early, eat often: Starting your day with a healthy breakfast can jumpstart your metabolism, and eating the majority of your daily caloric allotment early in the day gives your body time to work those calories off. Also, eating small, healthy meals throughout the day, rather than the standard three large meals, can help keep your metabolism going and ward off snack attacks.

Avoid:

Fruit juices that aren't 100% juice can contain up to 10 teaspoons of sugar per cup; avoid or dilute with water. Canned fruit often contains sugary syrup, and dried fruit, while an excellent source of fiber, can be high in calories.

Avoid fried veggies or ones smothered in dressings or sauces – you may still get the vitamins, but you'll be getting a lot of unhealthy fat and extra calories as well.

Chicken nuggets: Low cost nuggets are cheap because they contain as little as 16% pulped chicken, bulked out with water, chicken skin, proteins removed from bone, hide, or poultry feathers, mechanically retrieved meat; plus sugar, additives and salt. They also contain bulking agents used to soak up the water that's injected into chicken to increase the weight – and the profit. Minced meat can hide a multitude of revolting 'extras': carcinogenic antibiotics, recycled cat food, and poultry mixed with beef proteins have all been found in chicken destined for the production line.

Fries: Fat-packed and low in nutrients. May be coated with additives and salt.

Fruit yogurts, ready-made sauces, fruit drinks, and more...

Modified starches, along with colorings and flavorings, mimic the texture of fresh fruit and vegetables, so that manufacturers' can use less of the real thing. They also mask rancid flavors and smells.

Milkshakes: A simple-sounding ingredient, like 'artificial strawberry flavor' can in itself contain around 50 chemicals. And not one single strawberry...

The unhealthy facts about junk foods and fast foods make shocking reading. But at least they enable you to make informed decisions next time you go grocery shopping or want a quick meal out.

Sources:

Junk Food Facts, 2005-2009 healthy-eating-made-easy, <http://www.healthy-eating-made-easy.com/junk-food-facts.html>

Big Picture Strategies For Healthy Eating, Maya W. Paul, Mary Toscano, Suzanne Barston, Robert Segal, contributed to this article. Last modified: January 2009. http://helpguide.org/life/healthy_eating_diet.ht

Greens: Dark leafy green vegetables are a vital part of a healthy diet since they are packed with nutrients such as calcium, magnesium, iron, potassium, zinc, and Vitamins A, C, E and K. Greens help to strengthen the blood and respiratory systems. They are currently the most lacking food in the American diet. Be adventurous in your choice of greens: kale, mustard greens, broccoli, and Chinese cabbage are just a few of the many options.

Sweet Vegetables: Naturally sweet vegetables are an excellent way to add healthy sweetness to your meals and reduce your cravings for other sweets. Some examples of sweet vegetables are corn, carrots, beets, sweet potatoes or yams, winter squash, and onions.

Fruit: Eating a wide variety of fruit is another very healthy part of any diet. They provide us with beneficial properties such as natural sugars, fiber, vitamins and antioxidants. Choose fresh or frozen, and focus on variety. Berries are cancer-fighting, apples provide fiber, oranges and mangos offer vitamin C, and so on.

GET ACTIVE! PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FACTS

OVERVIEW

There are so many reasons to get out and get active. Here are a few facts about physical activity and obesity, and why it's so important to get young people active!

Currently 25% of youth in the United States spend at least four hours per day watching television, and only 27% of high school students engage in moderate physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day, five or more days per week. The following information is evidence of the health consequences of children's having inactive lifestyles.

Type 2 diabetes has increased dramatically among youth.

75% of overweight youth will remain overweight as adults. Obesity and excess weight are linked to increased risk of cancer, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes in adults.

This lack of exercise is killing us, say researchers at the Center for Disease Control and the American College of Sports Medicine. According to a joint statement they issued this year, approximately 250,000 deaths a year in the United States can be attributed to physical inactivity.

Appropriate regular physical activity is a major component in preventing the growing global burden of chronic disease.

At least 60% of the global population fails to achieve the minimum recommendation of 30 minutes of moderate physical activity daily.

The risk of getting a cardiovascular disease increases by 1.5 times in people who do not follow minimum physical activity recommendations.

Inactivity greatly contributes to medical costs - by an estimated \$75 billion in the USA in 2000 alone.



GET ACTIVE! PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FACTS

TRY FOR 30

30 minutes daily of moderate activity is the minimum amount for staying healthy.

Working in into your day.

Add physical activity to your daily routine. For example, walk or ride your bike to work or shopping, organize school activities around physical activity, walk the dog, exercise while you watch TV, park farther away from your destination.

Identify available time slots. Monitor your daily activities for one week. Identify at least three 30-minute time slots you could use for physical activity. Then, identify two of them that work as family activity time.

Make time for physical activity. For example, walk, jog, or swim during your lunch hour, or take fitness breaks instead of coffee breaks. Try doing something active after dinner with your family, especially on weekends.

Make it a party.

Invite friends and family to exercise with you. Plan social activities involving exercise. Plan a party with physically active games and activities for your family and your friends.

Develop new friendships with physically active people. Join a group, such as the YMCA or a hiking club.

Sources:

New campaign aims to combat inactivity among children, Sept, 2002, AORN Journal, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0FSL/is_3_76/ai_91805683/

America's kids are more inactive than ever Walking can make a healthy difference, Emily Smith of the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center, <http://www.tfhr.gov/safety/pedbike/articles/inactive.htm>



WHAT OTHER SCHOOLS ARE DOING



OVERVIEW

Find out what other schools around the country are doing to make their schools healthy and more active.

Let's take some action! There are schools out there doing some inspiring, creative things and making some big leaps. What can we do in Minnesota high schools? The sky's the limit! Take a look at these examples. How can we come up with more ways to make some positive changes in our school? It can start with just you!



Macedonia Elementary School Blackville, South Carolina Edible School Garden

Through work in their edible garden, third graders at Macedonia Elementary School are improving their nutrition and increasing their physical activity while deepening their understanding of ecosystems, the life cycle of plants and learning other science, math and health education concepts. Staff and parents are discovering how powerful a community can be when you reach out to the right people.

"Our school is striving to be a school where children are taught to eat healthy foods. Our school lunches are planned with this thought in mind," said Vicki Youmans, science lab facilitator. The club was started for third graders because the project would incorporate many of the third grade science standards. An effort is being made to also use art, math, reading and writing standards. The district chef and lunchroom supervisor have agreed to come when the plants are ready to harvest and prepare foods with the vegetables and herbs for the students to do a taste test. Because they started their garden in the fall the first harvest will include collards, red and green cabbages, turnips, onions, herbs, lettuce and pansies. This experience supports the school's mission of creating a positive school environment where staff, parents, and community work together.





Sterling Elementary Sterling, Alaska Healthy Fundraiser

Fresh produce is a real treat in Alaska and now, thanks to the Sterling Elementary PTA, 6th grade teacher Teri Diamond, Nurse Betty Miller and their school wellness council (SWC), students are now able to explore a new fresh fruit and vegetable each month. Wellness has always been a priority for Principal Christine Ermold so she gave full support to the newly formed SWC to find more ways to get fresh produce for students.

The PTA provided a grant to the SWC of \$450 to purchase the fruits and vegetables. Parent volunteers work with a few students to wash, cut and prepare the produce for distribution. Teachers welcome the healthy snack break and opportunity to let students try a new fruit or vegetable. The students research information about the foods online and information is shared with families along with healthy recipes in the school newsletter.

In addition to the samples, the SWC also plans on sponsoring a monthly "salad day." Volunteers and students will provide the side salad at lunchtime. Diamond said, "We thought initially about charging, but we felt that many of the students we are trying to expose to these salads may not have money. Therefore we are going to offer the salads for free for now, and continue to look for donations. Each month we are going to feature a new and tasty salad, and hopefully this will follow through into the homes."



Barbara Blanchard Elementary Cape Girardeau, Missouri Walk to School Program

Leave your pumps, loafers and oxfords at home! Every Friday morning at Barbara Blanchard Elementary in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, students and staff put on their walking shoes and come together for a twenty minute walk, following a healthy breakfast provided by the school. The Blanchard Wellness Walk began three years ago when Principal Dr. Barbara Kohlfeld decided that they needed to do something to get the students more active. Physical education teacher, Debbie Phillips, took the idea and put it into action.

Each class walks together as a grade level. Students and staff members walk outside the school building on days when the weather is nice and indoors in the gymnasium during inclement weather.

The Wellness Walk provides time for socialization among students. Sometimes students walk and talk and sometimes they walk to music.





Roger E. Sides Elementary School Karnes City, Texas Student Led Bike Shop

Joe Bishop has organized students, teachers and parents into a group that repairs and rides bikes on Saturdays and gives them to kids whose families cannot afford them. At Roger E. Sides Elementary in Karnes City, this activity has brought the community of about 3,300 closer and attracted broad involvement and donations, Bishop said.

“We’re just trying to do something as far as keeping the kids occupied and off of couches,” he said, noting that about 100 people show up for each bike ride.

“It’s just been such a win-win for our school and community. It’s unbelievable.” Kellner said she is not the only single mom who is happy about the bike group.

She said her son benefits from exercise and quality time with others. He gets up early on Saturdays, has learned how to fix bikes and focuses more at school.

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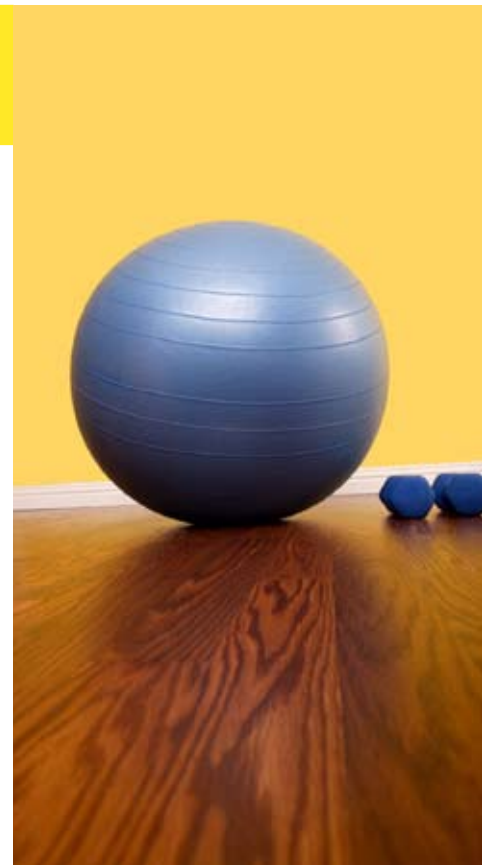
Orchard View Intermediate School Martinsburg, West Virginia Fitness Ball Chairs

Dottie Pownall’s classroom has been called the “ball room” ever since she purchased fitness balls for her 27 students to be used in place of traditional desk chairs. Pownall’s class at Orchard View Intermediate was conducting a class science fair project on ways to help students learn when they came across an article about a study conducted by the Mayo Clinic, which indicated that the use of fitness balls improves students’ concentration, creates less classroom noise and helps students become more fit.

Pownall said using the balls helps strengthen stomach muscles, improves posture and helps keep kids focused. She gives students a choice of using a regular desk chair or the fitness ball.

Melissa Crowley, key communicator at the school, said students choose whether or not to use them each day based on what they’re wearing or if they aren’t feeling well and don’t feel like bouncing. “They choose to sit on it,” Crowley said. “Having the option is really cool to them, they’re more focused, pay attention better and they’re happier.”

Story reprinted with permission from writer Jillian E. Kesner and the Journal News. Photo taken by Ron Agnir. Healthy Schools in Action, <http://www.healthiergeneration.org/schools.aspx?id=3362>



JUST PLAY!



OVERVIEW

Not everyone wants to play competitive sports at school. But that doesn't mean they should miss out on play. Think about organizing after school games where anyone can get involved.

How to get a game started

- Spread the word. Get your friends interested
- Talk to the school about using balls and facilities
- Meet at the park if there is one close by
- Take a vote--get input on what people want to play and mix it up

Possible games to play

Kickball, Capture the Flag, Broomball, Tag, Boot hockey, Cross country skiing, Dance, Soccer, Softball, Running

Get the Community involved

Encourage teachers to include physical activities for students of all abilities in learning exercises, like nature walks and outdoor scavenger hunts.

Add a couple of 10-minute movement breaks during the day.

Plan school-wide activity fundraisers such as walk-a-thons around the school property.

Get the community involved with family fitness events like family nights at the local Y or community center and fun days at a local park.

ROGUE



Get a game of capture the flag, touch football, or anything you want going. Try to see if you can schedule an event once a month. Try to be inventive in the winter months. There are a million possibilities!

Rogue events is our approach at rogue fun. The idea behind it is using texting and social networks to spread the word to meet at a predetermined spot and then have a huge pick up game.

You can host one on our own or work with Catalyst to organize a community ROUGE event. We will sponsor the event and offer more info about Catalyst, physical activity, and how students can get involved.

HOW TO CHANGE YOUR SCHOOL



OVERVIEW

Joining your school's Wellness Council is the first step to making a lasting change in your school. Your voice can make a huge impact.

How to Start

For those who really want to get involved, joining your wellness council in your school district is the way to connect directly to the people who make the decisions.

In 2006, the federal government mandated the establishment of school wellness policies in response to the growing problem of obesity among U.S. children. School administrators across the country spearheaded the creation and adoption of wellness policies, with broad implications in the school, including the cafeteria, classroom, and playground. They need to hear student voices.

What does a Wellness Policy do?

- Creates goals for nutrition education
- Creates goals for physical activity
- Creates guidelines for all foods available on the school campus during the school day to promote student health and reduce obesity
- Assures that guidelines for school meals are not less restrictive than is required by the federal school meals programs
- Establishes a plan for measuring implementation of the policy that designates at least one person to be sure the school is meeting the policy
- Involves parents, students, and representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, and the public in the development of the school wellness policy.

How can you change your Wellness Policy?

Look at the current policies at your school and assess what needs to change to create a healthier environment



In the cafeteria:

- Does your cafeteria offer wholesome, nutritious meals and fresh fruits and vegetables in an attractive way?
- Are there choices available in the form of salad bars, baked potato bars, pasta bars, deli bars, fresh fruit bars, or yogurt parfait stations allowing students more freedom in what they select?
- Do students have adequate time to buy and eat their breakfasts and lunches?

HOW TO CHANGE YOUR SCHOOL



In the classroom

- Do students receive regular health and nutrition classes?
- Are nutrition education efforts in the classroom tied to the foods being served in the cafeteria?
- Do teachers celebrate with healthy foods as well as sweets for class parties and holidays?
- Are any physical activities incorporated into the classroom to increase concentration and mental alertness—such as stretching, jumping jacks, juggling, yoga, tai chi, or karate?
- Are the nurse, food service staff, or health educator available to help with nutrition education in the classroom?
- Does your school have up-to-date nutrition and health videos, curricula, and references available?

At break time...

- Do students have the opportunity to participate in active games or have ways to be physically active during recess such as walking, jogging, running, jumping, skipping, dancing, or stretching?
- Are there walking trails around the school that classes can use for an exercise break?

In the gym...

- Do all students have regularly scheduled gym classes?
- Do gym classes offer a wide variety of activities for different skill levels?
- Are there posters or artwork in the gym celebrating students of all shapes and sizes being physically active?

Before-school and after-school programs...

- Do special programs exist to encourage students to walk or ride bikes to and from school?
- Does the school have a variety of sports teams, such as basketball, soccer, or field hockey, for students to join?
- Is there well-maintained equipment available for students to use before and after school, such as basketballs, soccer balls, or jump ropes?
- Are there free exercise classes, such as Pilates, acrobatics, or weightlifting available for students to participate in?
- Is there transportation available, such as a late bus, for students who wish to participate in after-school programs?
- Are school facilities available for after-school programs and on weekends for recreational use by the community?



In the hallways...

- Do the water fountains work and are they accessible?
- Are the vending machines in the hallways and teachers lounge stocked with healthy choices?
- Are hallways, cafeteria, gym, and classrooms free of advertisements and posters promoting candy, soda, and fast food?

In other areas throughout the school...

- Are healthy and tasty food choices served at conferences and parent and staff meetings?
- Do concession stands at school sports events serve healthy foods?

- Does the PTO or PTA raise funds by selling something other than candy or baked goods?
- If there are bake sales, is there an effort made to promote the use of whole grains, fruits, and lower fat/sugar recipes? If so, can the recipes for the foods be distributed as well?
- If it is essential that students are weighed and measured, can they be screened with utmost sensitivity, and not in front of one another, and with the understanding that “every body is different and different is a good thing!”
- Does the school sponsor multi-cultural days or health fairs so that foods from different cultures and healthy activities can be celebrated?

If there are changes that need to be made, raise your voice!

- Talk with people in your school such as the PTA, the principal, teachers, and parents. Get them excited about the potential to make healthy changes in your district. Consider leading in the development of a sample policy and submitting it to the superintendent in advance of the policy committee being formed so as to lay the groundwork for advancing your school’s agenda.
- Partner with other interested organizations. Consider joining a local group, like us, Catalyst, who can help you connect with the right people and offer you tools and resources along the way. Likewise, find out if your school or district has a school health coordinating or advisory council. Talk with the health teachers, school nurses, food service administrators, pediatricians, and other key youth health promoters about partnering on the policy development. Groups such as the American Heart Association, American Cancer Society, and American Diabetes Association can also be great partners in the process.
- Prepare. Learn what the current policies governing healthy eating and physical activity are in your district. Check out the resources and arm yourself with the tools you’ll need to have a meaningful voice in the policy development process. Work with your partners to determine what you would like to see a policy look like, what would be realistic, and how to justify that policy plan.

People to Consider involving:

Committee Members

- Parents
- Teachers (K-12 including specialists in PE, Health, and Science)

- Students
- School Administrator
- Food Service administrator and cafeteria personnel
- Registered Dietitian
- School nurse

Changes to Consider:

Physical Activity

- Regularity/duration of physical education
- Standards for physical education instructors
- Regularity/duration of recess and unstructured activity at different grade levels.
- Safe routes to schools
- Activity promoting programs such as awards for walking, bike racks, etc.

Nutrition Education

- Nutrition in health education curriculum
- Nutrition in physical education curriculum
- Nutrition education Incorporated into science, math, reading, or other core class
- Standards for health educator at different grade levels

Other Areas to Consider

- After school programs.
- Goal for school-promoted physical activity such as 5K or 10K family walks, after school activities, etc.
- Staff/faculty wellness programs
- Policies for addressing the wellness issues of students with special needs such as diabetes, allergies, weight concerns, etc.
- Food environment issues such as duration of meal times, recess before lunch opportunities, placement of healthier options on lunch lines, etc.

Here are some resources for additional information on the local wellness policies:

USDA Team Nutrition website: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Healthy/wellnesspolicy.html>. This site includes sections on requirements for the local policies, a “how-to guide” on writing a policy, examples of local wellness policies, FAQs, and implementation tools and resources.

National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA) model policies website: <http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org> (note: NASPE provided much of the physical activity section of these model policies.)

USE THE PRESS



Overview

There are several ways to use the press to get the news out. That's what they're for. You can give interviews, write press release, and share your opinions.

The press might be interested in what your trying to do at your school. Especially if you've organized an event that they can cover. Get them involved. It's a way to get your voice heard and reach a lot of people. By letting the public know about the importance of these issues, you can make an impact and educate your community about what your doing and why they should get involved. Think about writing an editorial and have it published in your school, or even in your local newspaper.

Here's a how-to guide to write a press release:

Step 1.

Decide why you are writing a press release and determine your goals and your focus.

Step 2.

Keep it short and to the point. Usually, press releases are no more than one page.

Step 3.

Print the words "FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE" in the top left-hand margin in all caps. Follow this line with relevant contact information: name, title, address, phone number, email address

Step 4.

Create a headline and center it in bold type just above the first line of the body of the press release. Headlines typically highlight the most important, significant, or shocking fact in the release.

Step 5.

Create a dateline - the first line of the body of your press release - that includes the city where the release is generated and the date

Step 6.

Create a dateline - the first line of the body of your press release - that includes the city where the release is generated and the date

Step 7.

Include some tantalizing peripheral details or facts to spark curiosity in following paragraphs. A good press release not only informs, but also teases.

Step 8.

Wrap up the last paragraph with a "for additional information" line, a place to find more details. An annual report or a Web site can be great sources of information.

Step 9.

You can email a press release, but sending a hard copy always makes a solid impression.

GET INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Overview

Many students their passion into a way they can give back to the community. Whether it be at school, at home, or in your community, get involved!

Volunteer! Here are some great examples of high school students doing great things in their community!

Benjamin M. Nederland, CO

Benjamin wanted to share his love for cycling with his peers so he helped lead a mountain biking class at his high school. He mentored students, teaching them how to fix various bike problems and develop a learning environment where everyone felt comfortable asking for help. He demonstrated both mechanic and riding techniques in order to help students become proficient riders/racers. Benjamin has also recently worked with school faculty to implement a Nordic ski club team at his college.



Christopher R. Beaver Falls, PA

Chris developed and organized three first-ever community soccer clinics for children in Beaver County. He worked with the Blackhawk Area Soccer Association to create the clinic content, and organized a volunteer coaching team. As Clinic Director, Chris supervised both participants and coaches. The clinics were designed for experienced and new players, and consisted of various drills and instruction. In addition, Chris built and painted 10 8-foot field benches for the soccer field.

**Abigail H.
Shoreview, MN**

Abigail has created, organized, promoted and co-led four summer sports camps for 3-to 9-year-old children. The camps aim to get the kids active and confident in playing sports. Kicking Kids Soccer Camp, Sports and Arts Camp, Mini Mustangs Sports Camp and Olympic Gold Sports Camp all taught campers the fundamentals of various sports, good sportsmanship, and the benefits of staying active. Because of the success of her first camp, Abigail created additional camps to meet the increased demand.



**Andrea E.
Omaha, NE**

Andrea initiated the “Hello Human Health Club” in her high school. The club teaches students the importance of balancing nutrition, exercise, and emotional well-being through health-related documentaries, speakers, demonstrations, nutrition games, exercising, cooking demonstrations, field trips and iMovie, a wellness video produced by Andrea. The club is currently working with school lunch officials to promote healthier foods and post the nutrition facts in the cafeteria.



Check out Youth Farm

Youth Farm & Market Project is about youth gardening, cooking, nutrition, and entrepreneurship. It’s about youth connecting to their food and the environment. YFMP youth currently farm 9 garden sites over 2 acres of urban land in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

It’s about a new way of bringing quality healthy food to urban neighborhoods and exploring culinary traditions from around the world cooking and distributing over 11,000 pounds of fresh, local produce. It’s about community involvement engaging over 400 volunteers in over 4,000 hours of service to their community.

Finally, Youth Farm & Market Project is about quality year round youth programs and employment. YFMP works with almost 500 youth ages 9-13 (a 60% increase from the prior year), and employs 25 teens as both interns during the school year and youth staff during the summer program.

For more info visit:
www.youthfarm.net



SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL FARMERS MARKETS:

WHY HAVE A FARMER'S MARKET? BECAUSE FARMERS' MARKETS BENEFIT:

PRODUCERS



- They cut out the middleman allowing increased financial returns through direct selling, price control, and a regular cash flow.
- They provide the producer with direct customer feedback on produce and prices.
- Transport and packaging requirements are less thus reducing the producers' costs.
- They provide a secure and regular market outlet. This is especially valuable for; new producers, producers in organic conversion, and small scale producers who are unable to produce the quantity required by supermarkets.
- With the increase in market numbers it is possible for individual producers to attend a substantial number of different markets. A number of farmers have indicated that this form of marketing has prevented their businesses from bankruptcy.

CONSUMERS

- They provide direct contact and feedback between customers and producers, so you can be sure how your vegetables are grown and meat produced.
- They help to improve diet and nutrition by providing access to fresh food.
- They play an important role in educating the consumer as to the production and origin of their food.
- They can be a source of information and inspiration on how to cook and prepare fresh ingredients.

THE ENVIRONMENT

- They help reduce food miles, thus vehicle pollution, noise, and fossil fuel use.
- They help to reduce packaging.
- They encourage more environmental production practices, such as organic or pesticide free.
- They encourage farm diversification and hence biodiversity.
- They help bring life into towns and cities aiding regeneration.

THE COMMUNITY & LOCAL ECONOMY

- They encourage social interaction particularly between rural and urban communities.
- They stimulate local economic development by increasing employment, encouraging consumers to support local business, and thus keeping the money within the local community.
- They attract business to retailers in the vicinity.



TABLING

Overview

Setting up a booth, in your school cafeteria or commons, with information about your projects, clubs, videos, etc, is a great way to reach your peers. Catalyst can help you do this!

You can have Catalyst come to your school and set up an info table during lunch... OR you can even do it yourself. Here are some things you can offer at your table.

1. Info on how to change school food.
2. Buttons, stickers, and flyers from Catalyst and info about how they can get involved.
3. Info about the next Catalyst Rouge event.
4. Copies of the enclosed facts about healthy eating and physical activity.
5. Gather info from students about their feelings on school food. Use the data to approach your Health Teacher and Principal.
6. Be creative. Get people excited.



HOW TO START A SCHOOL GARDEN

Overview

School gardens can provide an environment in which students can learn to work with teachers, parents and neighborhood resident volunteers while growing plants and learning the relationship between people, plants and wildlife.



Step 1--Form a Garden Committee

As a teacher, you may not have the time that is needed to coordinate the garden program. Someone else has to be responsible for the garden work, finding funds to support the garden, scheduling educational activities, finding and training volunteers, researching and disseminating information. Forming a garden committee from a pool of dedicated people with those skills will enhance the success of your program. Look for volunteers among the school staff, parents, and local residents. Or, if you know of a gardener, ask that person to volunteer, or to recommend another gardener.

Step 2--Define the purpose and objectives of your garden

Every school garden must fulfill some need or objective. This is why each garden is unique. All teachers utilize the garden as a learning aid. For some teachers it may reinforce natural science classroom studies. For others it may reinforce social studies. Some teachers may utilize

the garden across all curriculums. Whatever your needs are, by addressing these issues, you will have a better understanding of the work involved in this stage.

Step 3--Layout your students gardening activities

By determining your objectives at this early stage, you will have the opportunity to look at your lesson plans to see when and what types of garden lessons are needed. If you need help finding educational exercises and activities, there are many resources available for teachers (see below). You will need to determine which groups of students will be doing what and when, and determine how bed space will be allocated. The experiences and input from your garden committee will be helpful at this stage. This is your opportunity to schedule specific activities at specific times or assign certain tasks to your volunteers.

Step 4--Define a year-round garden plan

You have identified what your garden will be like while school is in session. But now, you need to think about your garden during summer break. The main question is, "Who is going to keep this garden maintained until school starts?" "How do you want the garden to look on the first day of school?" A year-round garden use plan will account for any school break.

Step 5--Choose a permanent garden site and design your garden

Your garden site should be in an area that receives plenty of sunlight, has good drainage, and in close proximity to water, electricity and accessible to students, volunteers, and teachers. The site should have enough room for your garden, tool storage, and students. Maintaining a large garden will use up all of your time and energy so select a relatively small area.

Step 6--Build your Garden according to plan

This is the big moment when teachers, volunteers, students and their parents pool their resources and build this permanent addition to the school.



MAKE A VIDEO!

OVERVIEW

You can make a video . If a picture speaks a thousand words, imagine how powerful a video could be.

- People are very visual. When we see a problem and hear stories attached to it, we pay attention much more that we would if we read it as a statistic.
- We want to know the barriers that are facing young people which keep them from having access to healthy food and exercise.
- Tell us your story. You can make this for yourself or your school, or you can even send us your footage and we'd be happy to add it as a part of our website.



SOME GUIDELINES

THE SHOT:

Step 1. Make sure you are seen and heard. It's not a sophisticated camera, so the audio may be harder to catch especially if there is background noise, etc. If the light is too dim, the shot probably won't read well and so your stuff could be unusable. We're sure you know most of this, but it's harder to focus on those little details when you are also acting as writer, actor, and director of your video. Just make sure to play it back so you know what you got.



BARRIER EXAMPLES:

- You can't bike or walk to school because it's not safe--there busy streets and no bike lanes or paths.
 - You eat foods at school like pizza, fried food, and soda because it's cheaper or the alternatives are bad.
 - You're not active because you're not skilled at a sport, and there are no non-competitive sports available.
 - You're not active because you have asthma.
 - You eat candy and chips because it's all that's available in the machines when you need a snack at school.
 - You don't have access to safe parks.
 - You walk to school and back because it's the only time you have to be active.
 - You think ahead and bring healthy snacks because you know you don't like the school's healthy options.
 - You talk to your parents about cooking healthy food.
 - You started an after school game day for non-competitive games.
 - You started biking, yoga, dancing, or something active that you enjoy.
- There are many, many more that we hope you will come up with!



THE CONTENT:

Step 1. Introduce yourself. Let us know your name, grade, school, town you live in, a little about you.

Step 2. Tell us your story.

- What do you do?
- What don't you do?
- What do you notice in your school and community?
- What would you change if you could?
- What are your frustrations with eating and physical activity in and out of school?
- What positive changes have you seen in school health and nutrition/activity?
- What negative changes have you seen in school health and nutrition/activity?
- What do you do to make changes?
- What can others do to make changes?



JUST TALK. SHOW US THE PLACES YOU GO, THE THINGS YOU DO, AND THE THINGS YOU EAT, DON'T EAT, WISH YOU COULD EAT, WISH YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO EAT. YOU GET THE POINT. LET US FOLLOW YOU AROUND AND SEE WHAT YOU'RE UP AGAINST.