

Making Schools the Model for Healthier Environments Toolkit

General School Nutrition Resources

The federal school nutrition programs are the keystones to the diets of millions of American children. Schools have the opportunity to support healthy nutrition habits early in life by creating environments that encourage the consumption of healthy foods and beverages. The following resources offer general information about the national school meal programs and strategies for improving the school nutrition environment.

- [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\) National School Lunch Program](#)
 - Provides history and facts about the program as well as reports on competitive foods in schools and a guide to implementing farm to school programs.
- [School Meals: Building Blocks for Healthy Children](#)
 - Report from the Institute of Medicine providing recommendations to revise standards and requirements so that school meals are more healthful.
- [Child Nutrition Initiative](#)
 - Results from a recent survey of 1,001 Americans showing strong support for expanding child nutrition programs that provide lunch and breakfast to children in public schools.
- [Alliance for a Healthier Generation Healthy School Initiative](#)
 - Offers tools to help schools become healthier learning environments and provides a searchable database with over 700 resources and funding sources.
- [Leadership for Healthy Communities](#)
 - This site offers a variety of tools and resources covering topics from wellness plans and physical education requirements to nutrition standards and the link between healthy bodies and academic achievement.
- [Active Living Research](#)
 - This organization offers a searchable database of tools and resources related to improving the school physical activity environment.
- [Improving Child Nutrition Policy: Insights from National USDA Study of School Food Environments](#)
 - Highlights and other key findings from the analysis, with evidence-based policy recommendations.
- [Nutrition Policy](#)
 - A compilation of fact sheets from the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity and Center for Science in the Public Interest to assist advocates in improving school nutrition policies.
- [Food Research and Action Center](#)
 - Information regarding the national school lunch program and resources for improving the school nutrition environment.

- [Healthy Youth! Adolescent and School Health Tools](#)
 - Tools to help schools assess and improve their nutrition, physical activity, and general health policies and programs.
- [Child Nutrition Programs: Economic Research on Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Issues, 2009](#)
 - Provides detailed background and economic research on Child Nutrition Authorization issues.
- [Center for Science in the Public Interest School Foods Toolkit](#)
 - A how-to guide for improving school foods and beverages including model materials, case studies, policies, and examples of what states and communities are doing to improve school foods.
- [National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity Nutrition Policy](#)
 - Provides background information on school meal programs and the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act. Includes links to alliance members' websites, model local school wellness policies, and fact sheets on the cost of obesity by state.
- [Empowering Youth with Nutrition & Physical Activity](#)
 - A manual for use in after school programs and classrooms with 11-18 year old youth, including resources to help youth develop nutrition- or physical activity-related community projects, tips, worksheets, handouts, discussion prompters, etc.
- [Smart Foods = Smarter Kids! Standards for School Nutrition](#)
 - An online toolkit from the West Virginia Department of Education offering information, recommendations, and promising practices to help parents, schools, and communities improve school nutrition environments.
- [Activ8Kids! New York State School Nutrition and Physical Activity Toolkit](#)
 - A resource to help schools improve their nutrition and physical activity environments, and assist local education agencies in developing local wellness policies to create a healthier school environment.
- [California Healthy Kids Resource Center](#)
 - Research, trainings, and planning tools for development and implementation of policies to improve the school nutrition and physical activity environments.
- [Kids Eat Well \(Illinois Nutrition Education & Training Program\)](#)
 - A list of tools, resources, and organizations with best practices for implementing policies pertaining to general school wellness and nutrition – including local school wellness policies, competitive food standards, etc.
- [Project PA 2010](#)
 - Provides information and resources from promising practices underway in Pennsylvania, including farm to school, school nutrition, and physical activity.
- [Missouri Coordinated School Health Coalition](#)
 - Multiple tools to serve public and private schools in making progress on the route to healthier nutrition and physical activity environments.

- **[99 Ways Toolkit](#)**

- This interactive booklet from CANFIT offers simple ideas for how to make after-school programs healthier. <http://canfit.org/pdf/CANFIT99Ways.pdf>

Farm to School Resources

Farm to School programs bring healthy food from local farms to school children nationwide. The program teaches students about healthy eating habits and provides a new direct market for local farmers. The following resources offer information and strategies for implementing and sustaining farm to school programs.

- **[National Farm to School Network](#)**

- This comprehensive site offers an array of resources including research, case studies, evaluation tools, as well as links to other organizations that provide similar support. The National Farm to School Network also provides free training, technical support and hands-on education on a variety of topics including planting school gardens, cooking demonstrations, and farm tours.

- **[Community Food Security Coalition](#)**

- Resources about farm to school programs and technical assistance on starting a program; includes case studies, publications, and information about funding.

- **[The Lunch Box](#)**

- Offers a variety of tools – including case studies, advice for implementation and evaluation, information on funding, etc. – to assist schools in converting from processed school meals to a more healthy whole food regimen.

Competitive Foods and Beverages Resources

Competitive foods include any foods and beverages sold on school campuses outside the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) school meal programs, and often consist of low nutritional quality foods and beverages. The following resources offer information and strategies to help schools implement guidelines for reducing or eliminating access to competitive foods on school campuses – giving nutritional school meals a better chance of succeeding.

- **[National Policy and Legal Analysis Network to Prevent Childhood Obesity](#)**

- Model agreements to help school districts create healthy vending programs that fit within any established wellness policy by making sure products sold meet the wellness policy's nutritional standards.

- **[California School Food and Beverage Standards Resources](#)**

- California Project LEAN provides a summary of 2005 California Legislation regulating competitive foods in California schools and eliminating the sale of sodas; including food and beverage standards. Excellent resources including school wellness policy, joint use, and lesson plans; [obesity prevention](#); [school wellness](#); [tools and resources](#).

- **[Improving School Food Standards: The Positive Impact on Revenue](#)**

- This fact sheet from the Yale Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity highlights key research indicating positive economic outcomes for schools after the introduction of improved nutrition standards.

- **[The Impact of Competitive Food and Beverage Standards](#)**

- This report from Samuels and Associates provides the most current data on competitive foods and beverages in California schools.

Local School Wellness Policies and Physical Activity in Schools Resources

Every school district must develop and implement a local school wellness policy for nutrition education, physical activity, campus food provision, and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness. The following resources provide information and strategies to help schools and communities implement comprehensive wellness plans.

- [**Bridging the Gap**](#)
 - Report on Local Wellness Policies: Assessing School District Strategies for Improving Children’s Health: School Years 2006-07 and 2007-08.

- [**Healthy Eating Research**](#)
 - Research brief summarizing key results from early research on the implementation of local school wellness policies.

- **Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity**
 - [Tools for developing and evaluating local school wellness policies.](#)
 - [A guide to help identify the different sources of food and the relevant nutrition standards.](#)

- [**Health Youth! Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Childhood Obesity Local Wellness Policy Tools & Resources**](#)
 - Resource list of local wellness policy tools and resources focusing on nutrition, physical activity, and childhood obesity; good background on requirements of Child Nutrition Authorization.

- [**School Nutrition Association Local School Wellness Policies Resources**](#)
 - A comprehensive list of resources covering multiple aspects of the development and implementation of local school wellness policies.

- [**Model School Wellness Policies**](#)
 - A compilation of various resources for local school wellness policies on nutrition and physical activity addressing nutrition, physical activity promotion, marketing, monitoring and policy review. Includes links to supporting organizations.

- [**Food Research and Action Center**](#)
 - Information and guides for developing and implementing local school wellness policies.

- [**Healthy Eating Active Communities \(California Convergence\) School Wellness Policies Resources**](#)
 - Resource page with wellness policies for promoting both healthy food and physical activity in schools.

- [**NFL Network- Keep Gym in School**](#)
 - Campaign to increase access to in-school physical activity and to teach students the necessary skills to establish and sustain healthy lifestyles. Targets middle schools; resources include school adoptions and minicamps, fitness program, lesson plans, and a national grant program.

Case Studies

The following case studies examine two successful initiatives, one led by an elementary school principal in Georgia, and the other by two young entrepreneurs in California.

- [Healthy Kids, Smart Kids](#) (RWJF Center, Spring 2010)
 - This case study focuses on the development of the Georgia program "Healthy Kids, Smart Kids," a successful initiative created to improve nutrition and increase physical activity in schools, led by elementary school principal Dr. Yvonne Sanders-Butler.
- [Revolution Foods](#) (RWJF Center, Spring 2010)
 - This case study examines how two colleagues were motivated to change the nutrition environment in schools and bring higher standards to school meals while keeping down costs.