

Briefing Paper

Inventory of Major School Nutrition and Physical Activity Programs and Initiatives

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About this Inventory...

The *Inventory of Major School Nutrition and Physical Activity Programs and Initiatives* offers a sample of private and public-sector programs and initiatives in progress in late 2003, with an emphasis on those with or within K-12 schools. It describes grants, collaborations, and informative Web sites specific to Washington State and provides a brief introduction to helpful national resources. The inventory begins with an overview of the 2003 *Washington State Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan*, which is the guiding plan for our state's public health efforts on these issues. Each entry in the inventory also includes guidance on how to access further information.

The inventory was prepared in support of *Food and Fitness in Our Schools: Policies, Challenges, and Strategies for Improvement*, a Safe Table Forum offered in November 2003 by the Health Policy Analysis Program (HPAP) and the Center for Public Health Nutrition (CPHN), both located in the University of Washington School of Public Health and Community Medicine. Financial support was provided to HPAP by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Washington Health Foundation. CPHN funding was provided by the Vitamin Anti-Trust Settlement through the Washington State Attorney General's Office.

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Washington State Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan

The *Washington State Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan*, published in summer 2003, is a new framework for improving and enhancing nutrition and physical activity for all Washingtonians. The State Department of Health led a year-long effort to create this strategic plan, collaborating with nutrition and physical activity professionals across the state including, for example, local public health representatives, health insurers, educators, transportation and agricultural sciences professionals, and consumer advocates.

Plan Goals

The overarching goals of the Plan are to:

- Increase the proportion of adults and children who have diets that reflect the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Increase the proportion of adults and children who get at least 30 minutes of moderate activity on five or more days a week

Plan Objectives

The Plan offers objectives designed to ensure that these goals are met:

Nutrition Objectives

1. Increase access to health promoting foods
2. Reduce hunger and food insecurity
3. Increase the proportion of mothers who breastfeed their infants and toddlers

Physical Activity Objectives

1. Increase the number of people who have access to free or low-cost recreational opportunities for physical activity
2. Increase the number of physical activity opportunities available to children
3. Increase the number of active community environments

The plan offers priority recommendations and examples of activities for each objective.

Policy Implications

The *Washington State Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan* focuses on environmental and policy approaches for helping Washingtonians eat healthful foods and be physically active. Plan recommendations reflect not just public health policy, but also education, transportation, and land use policy. The plan proposes that the Department of Health collaborate with other state and local agencies and organizations—for example, the Department of Transportation and the Association of Washington Cities—to implement plan recommendations. The plan’s monitoring and evaluation component also proposes that the Department of Health collect data on environmental and policy efforts related to nutrition and physical activity—and on the outcomes of these activities—and share these data with state and local governments, public health agencies, the media, and other interested citizens.

For more information: [www.doh.wa.gov/Publicat/NPA State Plan.pdf](http://www.doh.wa.gov/Publicat/NPA%20State%20Plan.pdf), or phone 360-236-3755

Grants and Collaborations in Washington State

NIH Schools Grant

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Schools Grant is a three-year study in the Seattle Public Schools that will implement and evaluate the effects of a specific school policy on obesity-related health outcomes. The interventions will focus on changes in the school lunch, access to appealing sources of drinking water, and staff health promotion. Researchers are investigating whether removing commercial pressures from the school environment will have an effect on student attitudes, behaviors, and body weights. Two schools will participate; one will implement the new Seattle School Board policy with the start of the 2003-2004 school year; the other will delay implementation of the policy by a year. A Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy Task Force convened at each school will guide implementation of the policy, help monitor its progress, and help plan for its sustainability. Task force members include teachers, parents, staff, and students from each school. Researchers will use student surveys and focus groups with 9th and 10th graders at each school to collect data about student behaviors and Body Mass Index (BMI) before and after the policy has been implemented.

Policy Implications: Study results will help Seattle Public Schools evaluate whether and how policy decisions affect the health of students. Both high schools already have policies and activities that encourage healthful eating and physical activity, but they also have policies or environments that result in barriers to health-promoting behaviors.

For more information: Nazleen Patel-Ejarque — nazpatel@u.washington.edu, 206-205-3921

STEPS to a HealthierUS

STEPS to a HealthierUS is an initiative from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that offers grants to states, cities, and rural communities to help reduce the burden of diabetes, asthma, and obesity through preventing and detecting disease, promoting physical activity and healthful eating habits, and enhancing tobacco prevention and control efforts. In September 2003, Washington was the only state in the nation to receive grants at both the state and local level. The State Department of Health received a grant for a cooperative agreement with four communities: Clark and Thurston Counties, the Chelan/Douglas Health District in partnership with Okanogan County, and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation. Through its combined city-county health department—Public Health-Seattle & King County—Seattle was one of seven large cities nationwide to receive a grant.

Policy Implications: The *STEPS* program will work with the state's Superintendent of Public Instruction and with schools in the selected communities to promote healthy choices and activities. School health education programs will focus on physical activity, healthy eating, tobacco prevention and control, and creating healthier school environments overall. In Seattle, for example, first-

year activities will include using the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) *School Health Index* within three school districts and reviewing and strengthening health policies and programs within these districts. The grant also will support implementation of recent state legislation requiring that individual health plans be on file for students with diabetes or any other life-threatening disease, such as asthma.

For more information: DOH: Robbi Kay Norman — robbi.norman@doh.wa.gov, 360-236-3719; Public Health-Seattle & King County: James Krieger— james.krieger@metrokc.gov; National: www.healthierus.gov/steps/

Washington School Board Challenge

The Washington School Board Challenge is an awards program that recognizes and rewards school board members, educators, school administrators, and community leaders who strive to provide physical and nutrition education, healthier meals, and physical activity opportunities for all students. The Challenge was created by a coalition of organizations from the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors and is issued by the Washington State Parent Teacher Association and the Washington State Public Health Association (WSPHA), with support from the Washington State School Directors' Association. Financial support is provided by Stonyfield Farm, the nation's largest producer of organic yogurt.

Policy Implications: The Challenge identifies exemplary policies with the goal of sharing information about effective strategies with school districts statewide.

For more information: www.wspha.org

State Board of Health Public Forums

The Children's Committee of the Washington State Board of Health is collaborating with the State Department of Health, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Washington State School Directors' Association, Washington State Parent Teacher Association, Center for Public Health Nutrition, and other groups to convene a series of community support meetings. These public meetings will offer community leaders and policy makers an opportunity to learn more about healthy school nutrition and physical activity environments, obtain information on tools and resources for assessment and action, share best practices and model school policies and programs, and build partnerships and collaborations for community change. The first meeting was held in Yakima in October 2003 and up to five more will be scheduled through June 2004.

Policy Implications: Local communities will share and receive information on model school nutrition and physical activity policies that can be used for planning and implementing change at the local/district level.

For more information: Tara Wolff, State Board of Health — tara.wolff@doh.wa.gov

Action for Healthy Kids/ Washington State Model School Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy

Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK) is a nationwide collaboration dedicated to improving the health and educational performance of children through better nutrition and physical activity in schools. AFHK State Teams are local coalitions working to initiate and sustain action at the state, school district, and school building level. Each AFHK State Team created its own action plan and identified specific goals that are priorities for its state. The *Washington State Action for Healthy Kids Team* is working to achieve three goals :

- Provide age-appropriate and culturally sensitive instruction in health education and physical education that helps students develop the knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors to adopt, maintain, and enjoy healthy eating habits and a physically active life style.
- Adopt policies ensuring that all foods and beverages available on school campuses and at school events contribute toward eating patterns that are consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Provide an adequate amount of time for students to eat school meals, and schedule lunch periods at reasonable hours around midday.

Policy Implications: The Washington State AFHK Team works with other state agencies and groups to identify school nutrition policies that have provisions for food and beverage standards and standards for timing and location of school meals that can be adopted and implemented at the local/district level. At the request of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Washington State Team is developing a model school nutrition and physical activity policy, expected in early 2004, that will provide guidance to local school districts as they work to establish and implement school policies that are supportive of healthful eating and healthy, active kids.

For more information: *National: www.actionforhealthykids.org; State: Nancy Van't Hul—nancy.vanthul@verizon.net*

Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools

The Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools is a citizens' movement to eliminate commercialism in schools. The campaign began in Seattle in 1997 as a response to classroom television programming that included advertisements, and to the Seattle School District's initial exclusive soda contract. Since then, the campaign has grown into a statewide group that addresses a variety of commercial influences in the school environment by building statewide awareness and education on the issue of commercialism in schools, with a focus on the theme of food and nutrition.

Policy Implications: The Citizens' Campaign uses a variety of tools to influence school nutrition policy, including conducting school "walk throughs," supporting letter-writing, and leafleting.

For more information: *www.scn.org/cccs/ or contact Ted Lockery—cccs@scn.org*

Key Web Resources Specifically for Washington

Washington State Department of Transportation

The *Biking and Walking* page on the Washington State Department of Transportation Web site provides resources for children, parents, college students, and staff on how to safely commute to school on foot or bike.

For more information: www.wsdot.wa.gov/Bike/Bike_Walk_to_School.htm

Center for Public Health Nutrition

The University of Washington Center for Public Health Nutrition (CPHN) Web site provides a portal to resources and tools including links to national and state data and trends, food and nutrition policy and legislation, innovative programs and events, and key reports and recommendations. The Center's goal is to prevent and reduce obesity and related chronic disease through public health nutrition practice. CPHN provides technical assistance and consultation on program evaluation, develops outreach and educational materials, funds grants to local agencies, and provides consultation on nutrition policy development.

For more information: www.cphn.org

Healthy Schools in Washington

The *Healthy Schools in Washington* Web site identifies resources and tools for students, parents, school officials, and community members in Washington State to work together to make it easy for children to choose health-promoting foods, to be physically active, and to be ready to learn at school. The site is organized into tools and resources for key stakeholders as well as example programs, model policies, background data, reports, and other materials supporting healthy school environments. The site was developed by the Center for Public Health Nutrition at the request of the State Board of Health. Other contributors include OSPI, the Children's Alliance, and DOH.

For more information: www.healthyschoolswa.org

Washington Coalition for the Promotion of Physical Activity

The *Washington Coalition for the Promotion of Physical Activity* Web site provides resources and information about Safe and Active Routes to School.

For more information: www.beactive.org

Washington State Legislature

The Washington State Legislature Web site offers information on current and past bills before the Legislature, including their sponsors and status. The site provides links to information on each legislator and legislative committees. The site also provides searchable access to existing Washington State laws and rules.

For more information: www.leg.wa.gov

Selected Resources at the National Level

American Council for Fitness and Nutrition

The American Council for Fitness and Nutrition is a group of food, beverage, and consumer products companies, not-for-profit organizations, and trade associations working together to improve the health of all Americans. The Council supports physical activity in schools; nutrition education for children, teachers, and parents; and applied research on how to achieve appropriate behavior changes.

For more information: www.acfn.org

CDC Division of Adolescent and School Health

The CDC Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH) seeks to prevent the most serious health risk behaviors among children, adolescents, and young adults. The DASH Web site provides resources and assessment tools, including publications (for example, the *School Health Index*); data and statistics; and information on health topics—including nutrition and physical activity—that address adolescent risk behaviors.

For more information: www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash

Coalition for a Healthy and Active America

The Coalition for a Healthy and Active America (CHAA) is a not-for-profit national grassroots coalition of concerned private and public organizations and national leaders formed to educate parents, children, schools, and communities about the critical roles physical activity and nutrition education play in reversing childhood obesity trends. CHAA is committed to working with schools to rededicate time for physical fitness; giving parents the freedom to help their children make their own nutritional choices; building school-business model relationships that benefit families by supporting healthy and active life styles; and finding solutions to childhood obesity that are both responsible and realistic.

For more information: www.chaausa.org

National Association of State Boards of Education

Through its publication *Fit, Healthy and Ready to Learn: A School Health Policy Guide*, the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) offers guidance and resources for states, districts, and schools that want to develop policies to prevent obesity and long-term chronic diseases. The policies can be adapted or revised to fit the needs of individual states, districts, and schools. NASBE's priority health topics and policies include sample policies to encourage physical activity and healthful eating.

For more information: www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/fithealthy.mgi

NHTSA Safe and Active Routes

Safe and Active Routes is a Web site of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) that offers a tool kit to support efforts to start a Safe Routes to School program in local communities.

For more information: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/bike/saferouteshtml

CDC Kids-Walk-To-School

Kids-Walk-To-School is a community-based program of the CDC Nutrition and Physical Activity Program that aims to increase opportunities for daily physical activity by encouraging children to walk to and from school in groups accompanied by adults.

For more information: www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk

USDA Team Nutrition

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) *Team Nutrition* initiative is an integrated, behavior-based, comprehensive plan for promoting the nutritional health of the nation's school children. *Team Nutrition* offers nutrition education resources for school food service professionals and a tool kit that targets the entire school nutrition environment, and provides information for assessment and community action.

For more information: www.fns.usda.gov/tn. For information on the Healthy School Meals Resources System, see <http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov>

CDC Nutrition and Physical Activity State Legislative Information Database

The Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity at CDC has launched a state legislation searchable database that allows users to search for state bills related to nutrition and physical activity from 2001 to present. The site offers search fields, keyword entry, or full database searches. CDC created the site in response to requests from state partners.

For more information: <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/DNPAleg/>

American School Food Service Association State Policy Index

The American School Food Service Association (ASFSa) has launched the State Policy Index, a state legislation database for school meal and child nutrition legislation. The ASFSa database is keyword searchable.

For more information: www.asfsa.org/childnutrition/govtaffairs/statutes

Glossary of Frequently Used Nutrition and Physical Activity Terms

Body Mass Index (BMI): BMI is a common measure expressing the relationship (or ratio) of weight to height.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans: These Guidelines are published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). They provide authoritative advice for people ages two and older about how good dietary habits can promote health and reduce risk for major chronic diseases.

Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI): A term used to refer to at least three types of dietary reference values for nutrient groups: Estimated Average Requirement (EAR), Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA), and Tolerable Upper Intake Level (UL).

Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNV): A food that provides less than five percent of the RDA for each of eight specified nutrients: protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, niacin, riboflavin, thiamine, calcium, and iron.

Foods Sold in Competition with USDA School Meal Programs (a.k.a. Competitive Foods): Foods sold in school food service areas during designated breakfast or lunch periods in competition with the USDA-provided school meal programs.

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS): A federal department under the Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services agency of the USDA that administers nutrition assistance programs such as the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. The Child Nutrition Program is a division under FNS.

Free and Reduced-Price Meals: Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) are eligible for free meals (breakfast and lunch). Those with incomes between 130 percent and 185 percent of the FPL are eligible for reduced-price meals (breakfast and lunch).

National School Lunch Program (NSLP): A federally assisted meal program operating in public and not-for-profit private schools and residential child care institutions. The program provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. The program was established under the National School Lunch Act, signed by President Truman in 1946.

Obesity: Adults with a BMI of 25 to 29.9 are considered *overweight*; adults with a BMI of 30 or more are considered *obese*. For children, BMI is used differently. BMI-for-age is plotted on gender-specific growth charts. A BMI-for-age less than the 5th percentile is classified as *underweight*; BMI-for-age between the 85th percentile and 95th percentile is classified as *at risk for overweight*; and BMI-for-age ≥ 95 th percentile is classified as *overweight*.

Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI): The primary Washington State agency charged with overseeing K-12 education in the state. OSPI works with the state's 296 school districts to administer basic education programs and implement education reform on behalf of more than one million public school students.

Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA): The Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) is the dietary intake level that is sufficient to meet the nutrient requirements of nearly all individuals in a defined group.

School Breakfast Program (SBP): A federally assisted meal program operating in public and not-for-profit private schools and residential child care institutions that provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free breakfasts to children each school day.