



Staff Involvement to Support Physical Activity

How Can You Help?

School teachers and other school staff can be positive role models for students by being physically active in and out of school.¹⁻³ School employee wellness programs improve staff health and increase physical activity levels.^{1,3} When school staff commit to good health practices, they are positive role models for students, and may show increased support for student participation in physical activity.

Classroom teachers can integrate physical activity into classroom academic instruction and breaks, and support recess, intramurals, and other physical activity offerings.¹⁻³

What's Happening at School?

Knowing the answers to the following questions can help you support getting school staff involved in physical activity at your child's school. If you don't know the answers to these questions, check out the school handbook or school website, attend a school wellness meeting or Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meeting, or simply ask your child's teacher.

1. Does the district or school have an employee wellness program?
2. Does the district or school have policies about school employee wellness programs? If yes, what are they?
3. Are classroom teachers and other school staff modeling healthy behaviors, such as being physically active?
4. Are classroom teachers providing daily activity breaks or recess for students?
5. Is the school signed up for *Let's Move! Active Schools*, the national physical activity and physical education solution that equips school leaders and teachers with the resources and tools to implement effective recess policies and programming?





Ideas for Parents

You can be involved in your child's school by **attending** meetings, workshops, or training events offered by the school; **communicating** with school staff and other parents; **volunteering** for school events or in your child's classroom; **reinforcing** healthy messages and practices your child learns at school; **helping** make decisions about health in the school; and **being part** of community activities supported by the school. Here are some specific ideas for how you can support your child's school in getting school staff involved in physical activity.

- Join the school or district committee (e.g., wellness committee) that sets the policies for health and wellness, and work to include language about school employee wellness programs.^{1,4}
- Help find funding for a school employee program. Work with school staff to find grant opportunities at the district, state, and federal levels.
- Reach out to health organizations, such as the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, or the American Red Cross, to see if they have any free programs targeting health issues that they could provide to school employees and others associated with the school.
- Help organize a school-wide event that encourages school staff to practice healthy behaviors and be good role models for the students. For example, schools can support a “catch school staff being healthy week” (e.g., good food choices or activity). Students can give school staff a token for anything they see them do that is healthy, and the staff person with the most tokens wins a small prize.
- Encourage school administrators to feature health and wellness information at staff meetings or staff development days—maybe help find people to speak at these meetings.
- Sign up to champion your school's **Let's Move! Active Schools** team. If your school doesn't have a team, encourage administrators or physical education teachers to enroll and get involved.



Check out additional resources for parents related to the school nutrition environment and services, physical education and physical activity, and managing chronic health conditions at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/P4HS.htm>.

REFERENCES

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. School health guidelines to promote healthy eating and physical activity. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep.* 2011;60(RR05):1-76.
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4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Parent Engagement: Strategies for Involving Parents in School Health.* Atlanta: US Dept of Health and Human Services; 2012.

