

## Wisconsin

### Building Healthier Schools to Cultivate Healthier Students

#### Public Health Problem

The nation's major chronic disease killers—heart disease and stroke, cancer, and diabetes—are often caused by risk behaviors such as physical inactivity, unhealthy eating, and tobacco use. Related risk behaviors are high among Wisconsin's high school students. Results of the 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicated that

- 49% have ever smoked and 20% were current smokers (smoked cigarettes on at least 1 day during the past 30 days).
- 11% were obese.
- 62% did not meet the currently recommended levels of physical activity.
- 18% ate fruits and vegetables five times or more a day.

#### Program Example

Wisconsin's Coordinated School Health Program, supported in part through CDC's Division of Adolescent and School Health, has developed major initiatives to reduce tobacco use and increase physical activity and healthy eating among students, their families, and school staff.

Efforts include

- The School Tobacco Prevention Program—increasing the use of CDC's tobacco-use prevention guidelines in Wisconsin schools, implementing evidence-based educational programs, making cessation services more available to youth, and addressing tobacco control issues among disproportionately affected youth populations.
- The "Movin' and Munchin' Schools" program—helping Wisconsin's young people, families, and school staff develop lifetime skills and habits of physical activity and healthy nutritional choices.
- The Governor's School Health Award—initiated by Wisconsin's governor and the state superintendent of public instruction, to recognize schools with policies, programs, and the organizational capacity, and parental and community involvement to support and promote healthy lifestyles; and staff wellness.

#### Implications and Impact

Major accomplishments underscore the contributions of Wisconsin's exemplary coordinated school health efforts, which include:

- The smoking rate among high school students decreased from 38% in 1999 to 20% in 2007—a decline of 46%.
- During the 2003–2008 "Movin' and Munchin' Schools" campaign, 101,641 students, 39,143 parents, and 9,265 staff reported increases in physical activity and fruit and vegetable consumption.
- Wisconsin received grant funding, with the University of Wisconsin Medical School, to focus on increasing the use of evidence-based fitness testing in 250 middle schools to improve physical education programs.
- The number of schools recognized by the Wisconsin Governor's School Health award program increased from 14 in 2006 to 27 in 2008—including one school, Richmond Elementary in Appleton, which also was selected by *Health* magazine as one of the 10 healthiest schools in the nation. To determine these healthiest schools, *Health* magazine consulted Wisconsin's School Health awards criteria and rating process.