

WSCC Component: Physical Education & Physical Activity

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Physical Education & Physical Activity

Gymnasium

Pedometer Station

Students in Mr. Rodriguez's physical education classes make the pedometer station their first stop when they enter the gymnasium. Students wear these step counters to help them track their active steps during class. The goal is to reach a minimum of 3,500 steps through their assigned activities.

Mr. Rodriguez knows the importance of properly fitting athletic shoes to avoid injuries, but he realized some of his students were not able to afford appropriate footwear. To help them purchase footwear, he set up a voucher program at the beginning of the school year with help from local merchants and the school athletic association. He provides these students with vouchers so they can purchase discounted athletic shoes at participating stores.

You can:

- Explore ways to involve the community and ensure all students have properly fitting athletic shoes and gear.
- Establish a voucher program with merchants or ask families to donate to benefit students whose families may not have the funds to buy athletic shoes and other sports equipment.

PE Standards Poster

Mr. Rodriguez follows the National Standards for K-12 Physical Education. He starts the Primary (Grades K-2) students off with the foundational skills, knowledge, and values they need. He teaches the Upper Elementary (Grades 3-5) students to apply those skills, knowledge, and values, and then reinforces them to his Middle (Grades 6-8) and High School (Grades 9-12) students to encourage his students to achieve physical activity throughout their lifetime. His goal is to develop physically literate, confident individuals who choose to be active every day.

Mr. Rodriguez posts daily challenges to achieve competency in a variety of motor skills. His challenges push the students to elevate their heart rates and build muscles through moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA). [Standard 1]

He knows his students are applying knowledge of movement and performance concepts as he watches them engage in cooperative learning when he assigns them to small group work. [Standard 2]

His students use class iPads to access information that enhances their learning as they adjust goals related to their personal physical fitness plans. [Standard 3]

Mr. Rodriguez is proud of the way his students exhibit behaviors that respect self and others, and he encourages cooperation and team-building. [Standard 4]

He knows he has met his goal of instilling the value of physical activity when he sees the enjoyment, self-expression, and social interaction exhibited by his students or listens to his students share about physical activities completed outside of the school day. [Standard 5]

You can:

- Develop a list of challenges with the purpose of engaging students in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns.
- Use digital technology to give students access to tools and information about healthy lifestyles.
- Check out the School Health Team's discussion about recommendations to improve Physical Education at Jefferson School.

Learn More

- [National PE Standards](#)
- [National Standards](#)
- [Youth Physical Activity Guidelines Toolkit](#)

Climbing Wall

Physical education class is a place where students can learn new activities in a safe instructional environment. These skills are transferable across many different activities over a lifetime. Mr. Rodriguez wants all students to find a physical activity they like, so he introduces a variety of nontraditional physical activities.

He promotes the climbing wall because it builds teamwork, leadership, and social skills. Climbing activities are equally popular among males and females, and students can participate in climbing activities outside of school. At the climbing wall, they fine-tune balance and flexibility skills and find

answers to the wall's physical and mental challenges. They gain strength and are better prepared for outdoor recreational activities.

Mr. Rodriguez teaches climbers to use harnesses so they climb safely. Climbers team up with partners, and Mr. Rodriguez explains the role of spotters and belayers for safe climbing. This activity also promotes communication skills and supporting others, real-world skills that transfer to many other activities.

The climbing wall has become so popular at Jefferson School that staff can be seen climbing along with students after school. The students and adults form partnerships as they spot each other, and teachers serve as role models. This led Mr. Rodriguez to recruit several parent volunteers to organize a weekend climbing trip for everyone who wanted to participate.

You can:

- Collaborate with local facilities to include outdoor recreation and expand physical education options beyond traditional team sports.
- After teaching the basic skills in physical education class, collaborate with climbing groups to help plan after-school or weekend excursions to local recreation areas.

SMART Board

Mr. Rodriguez makes good use of the SMART board in the gymnasium. He posts the daily challenge on the board so students can engage in physical activity immediately upon entering the gymnasium, and then increase to moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA).

Students who select heart rate monitors from the equipment cart wear them to show their perceived exertion related to actual performance, and project their heart rates on the SMART board in real time. This encourages friendly competition among the students.

Mr. Rodriguez projects detailed lesson work and sometimes divides the class into small groups for students to engage in cooperative learning activities. In their small groups, the students use the SMART board after their physical activity to document progress. The students take turns prioritizing their heart rate beats per minute to determine their target and maximum heart rates.

They also access websites such as the American Heart Association to obtain information during their lesson. The SMART board's touch recognition features allow the students to use the different colored

pens, as well as other objects or even their hands to write. This allows for accessibility for all Mr. Rodriguez's students and successfully integrates the technology skills students are learning at school.

You can:

- Use a SMART board to encourage instant activity, allow students to access tools and information that enhances their learning on the spot, and engage all students, regardless of their physical abilities.

Learn More

- [American Heart Association](#)

Special Events Poster

The gymnasium is a busy place, whether it is during school or after-school hours. Mr. Rodriguez maintains a schedule of open gym times for community events. He advertises use of the gymnasium in the school newsletter and website, local newspaper, and social media networks.

Because of the joint use agreement with Kolbe's Parks and Recreation Department, recreational sports leagues use the gymnasium for volleyball and basketball practices and games. Thursday nights are now reserved for Family Fun and Fitness Night when families can participate in a variety of free play and fitness activities. These experiences have increased interest in local fitness events and active entertainment.

You can:

- Generate community-wide interest in your facilities by staging a Family Fitness Night or other fun activities.
- Check with school administrators for policies and best practices so you can improve families' focus on movement and fitness.
- Check out the School Health Team's discussion about recommendations to improve Family Engagement and Community Involvement at Jefferson School.

Technology Cart

Mr. Rodriguez's technology cart is full of useful equipment. The cart serves as a charging station for school-issued tablets and smartphones used during physical education classes. Other devices, such as the fitness testing station and exergaming pads, are also stored here.

Mr. Rodriguez knows students love video games, so he makes exergaming activities available to them during lunchtime intramural breaks as a way to promote activity and make physical activity enjoyable.

Students use the tablets to record their physical performance, research skill drills that apply to their assigned lesson work, and access tools and information. They use personal exercise apps installed on the smartphones to monitor their fitness.

Mr. Rodriguez uses technology to take roll, access grade-entering management systems, record assessments, provide interactive lessons, and allow students to share what they have learned. He frequently uses Plickers, a powerful free mobile app that allows him to collect real-time formative data for quick student assessments.

You can:

- Encourage fitness by offering a wide range of physical activities, including those that require technology. Free or low-cost apps are available for many purposes along the instructional continuum.
- Solicit donations of equipment from local merchants so you can offer a well-rounded program.
- Seek advice from parents about which physical activities are popular with their children and follow up on their suggestions.

Learn More

- [Monitoring Student Fitness Levels](#) [PDF – 1.64 MB]

Grades K-2

Activity Box

Mr. Gupta noticed some students preferred to sit and talk during recess, rather than run, jump, swing, or use playground equipment. He sought to energize them to help increase their physical activity.

Mr. Gupta asked parents and community merchants for donations to establish an activity box and stocked it with equipment that promotes movement. The brightly colored play items—such as juggling scarves—captured the interest of his students, even the sedentary ones who did not want to miss out on the fun. Now, all students select balls, jump ropes, and other sports equipment from the box before going to recess, and everyone plays actively on the playground.

Some of the activity box items, such as the beanbag toss, are suitable for outdoor or indoor physical activity breaks. At least twice a day, Mr. Gupta gets his students out of their chairs for 10-minute stretching and movement exercises. He pulls items out of the activity box and lets students play games such as Twister, a fun exercise that improves balance, strength, and motor skills. Once they return to their seats, they are better able to pay attention to the lessons and concentrate on their work.

You can:

- Fill a box with items to promote physical activity both inside and outside the classroom.
- Ask local merchants and parents to donate play items and sports equipment.
- Build anticipation and excitement by planning games before recess starts.
- Ensure all students are part of the activities and fun.

Learn More

- [Take a Break! Teacher Toolbox: Physical Activity Breaks in the Secondary Classroom](#) [PDF – 3.49 MB]

Artwork

Students in Mr. Gupta's class completed a healthy habits drawing assignment. Their artwork shows ways to eat nutritious meals, maintain fitness, enjoy physical activity, manage chronic health conditions, and engage family members in healthy lifestyles.

Mr. Gupta asks each student to make a short presentation about the selected topic, and then he hangs the artwork on the bulletin board. Every month, he puts up new artwork they have created. During parent/teacher conferences, he calls attention to the artistic efforts of his students.

You can:

- Assign drawing projects to your students and let them pick a health topic of interest.
- Ask them to prepare a short presentation for classmates.
- Display their artwork around the classroom; and, after a month, send it home for display in the family home.

Grades 3-5

Bike Helmets

To help students become more physically active outside of school, Ms. Lewis and the School Health Team organized a Bike to School Program. They soon realized that not all students were following safety rules and wearing helmets, so they planned a bike safety clinic on a Saturday in the school parking lot for students and their parents. Members of the local police department conducted the clinic, and the director of the Kolbe Parks and Recreation Department talked about safety issues and provided maps of local parks and biking trails.

It did not take long for people to jump on their bikes and ride!

You can:

- Start a Bike to School Program as a way to give students the opportunity to be physically active in a safe environment.
- Implement similar programs, such as a Walk to School Program, an after-school dance class, or other physical activity club to promote physical activity outside of school hours.

Learn More

- [Walk & Bike to School](#)
- [Helmet Safety](#)

Congratulations Banner

Ms. Lewis introduces her students to different types of aerobic activity, such as walking, running, and bicycling. She knows her students are more likely to make physical activity a lifelong behavior if it is something they enjoy.

Ms. Lewis and parent volunteers organized an evening fun run for students at the high school track. The goal was to introduce regular running, jogging, or walking as a fun physical activity. The planners recommended the 2K run for those new to running and jogging. Older and more experienced students could choose to run the 5K.

At each ½ kilometer, a parent volunteer handed out glow stick bracelets that had been donated by a local merchant. As the evening grew darker, the students were proud of their glowing bracelets and

continued running to receive more bracelets. Ms. Lewis hung a banner in her room to congratulate her students on completing the fun run. They are already jogging on their own to prepare for the next evening fun run.

You can:

- Organize a fun run with the help of parent volunteers and the School Health Team.

Learn More

- [Youth Compendium of Physical Activities](#)

Laptop

Ms. Lewis has noticed that her students seem more ready to learn after they take physical activity breaks. She tries to reinforce the importance of physical activity and other healthy behaviors by educating her students about the benefits of good nutrition and of being physically active. She has introduced them to educational websites and fun games with a health message.

This week, her class is spending time exploring the games and tools available on CDC's Healthy Schools website. The BAM! Body and Mind interactive website is a class favorite!

You can:

- Learn about the basics for establishing healthy behaviors by going to CDC's Healthy Schools website and directing your students to games and other interesting activities.

Learn More

- [BAM! Body and Mind](#)
- [BAM! Body and Mind Game Room](#)

Clock

Research shows that sitting for long periods can be unhealthy. These studies caught the attention of Ms. Lewis.

To ensure her students avoid marathon sitting sessions, Ms. Lewis schedules physical activity breaks in the classroom. She leads her class in active stretching, dancing to music, and other physical activities such as Tai Chi. Sometimes she shows the students moves she learned in her dance class.

Recess before and after lunch is another way that students can be active. Physical activity breaks take place in the classroom, whereas recess is a dedicated time when students are encouraged to be physically active outdoors.

You can:

- Add physical activity breaks to your lesson plan.

Learn More

- [How much physical activity do children need?](#)

Grades 6-8

Community Poster

Mr. Wu posts notices of community events and encourages his students to participate. Service projects give students an opportunity to contribute time and effort to good causes, build leadership skills, and help make them feel good about themselves. Also, they learn new practical skills and benefit from a range of social experiences.

Mr. Wu promotes projects where his students can be physically active, such as picking up litter in public parks or serving as coaching assistants at Boys and Girls Clubs. Mr. Wu knows actions speak louder than words, so Mr. Wu coordinated a class project to do home repairs for Habitat for Humanity. He and his students hauled lumber, painted walls, swept floors, and planted shrubs. He involved parents to gain more support for this large project.

You can:

- Connect students to civic organizations that match their interests. Health agencies sponsor fun runs and bike races, and food pantries collect canned goods.
- Serve as a role model by volunteering to do community projects and share your experiences with your students.
- Encourage students to volunteer for a school club's project as a way to promote team building and commitment to improving the community.
- Check out the School Health Team's discussion about recommendations to improve Family Engagement and Community Involvement at Jefferson School.

Clothes Locker

One of the lessons of health education class is maintaining personal hygiene so there is no offensive body odor. All students must change out of their sweaty garments after physical education class to take soiled clothes home for washing.

Occasionally students forgot to bring clean gym clothes back to school, so Mr. Wu established a lending program. Now, Mr. Wu keeps clean gym clothes of various sizes in a locker so students can borrow the clothes and participate in physical education classes. The borrowers are responsible for washing the clothes and returning them to the locker.

You can:

- Keep clean gym clothes in various sizes in your classroom so everyone can participate in physical education class, even if students leave clothes at home.
- Support a comprehensive school physical activity program with physical education as the foundation at your school by helping students to achieve at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

Athletic Shoes

The aerobics classes that Principal Paul arranged for staff at Jefferson School were very popular. Mr. Wu wanted to take staff fitness to the next level so he joined the School Health Team. His first task was to use the *School Health Index* (SHI) to assess the health policies and practices at Jefferson School related to Employee Wellness and Health Promotion (Module 9). He and other members of the team identified strengths and weaknesses in Jefferson School's employee wellness initiatives based on the results of the module score cards, and then they developed an action plan to recommend improvements.

Mr. Wu started leading the Employee Wellness Committee of the School Health Team. The committee arranged for the staff to attend a wellness webinar developed by Kolbe's health department. Then, they gathered information about smoking cessation from the American Cancer Society, the American Lung Association, and the school's health insurance provider. This information was made available to staff.

The Employee Wellness Committee introduced a weight loss program to support those having a hard time breaking unhealthy eating habits. After receiving approval from Principal Paul, Mr. Wu worked with the committee to implement a rewards program. Fridays were turned into Super Salad Days. Staff members host a salad potluck luncheon and celebrate achievements in reaching wellness goals. Through

contacts in the PTA, Mr. Wu located a Zumba® instructor who volunteered to lead a 10-week session in the gym.

You can:

- Serve on health-related committees at your school, such as a school health team or employee wellness committee.
- Use the *School Health Index* (SHI) to assess employee wellness and health promotion policies and practices at your school.
- Establish wellness initiatives at your school with the help of community health organizations.
- Contact health leaders in your community and ask them to present programs.
- Survey staff members to find out which physical activities and health topics are of the most interest.
- Organize small groups to meet after school for fitness and other health sessions.

Learn More

- [School Health Index](#)
- [Staff Involvement](#)

Student Agenda

Mr. Wu kept looking for better ways to communicate with students and parents. He decided to disseminate the student agenda via e-mail and post it on the class Web page to provide more opportunities to engage parents in their children's school activities. This planner helps students and parents organize activities and tasks. Mr. Wu incorporated graphics, quizzes, and puzzles to make it more enticing to read. He added reminders about health practices, such as getting plenty of exercise, staying hydrated, and eating a healthy diet.

The student agenda also promotes school events, such as the talent show and a track meet. It lists the contact information of event organizers so parents and students can sign up to volunteer and participate. Mr. Wu includes school rules on the student agenda, and he reminds everyone about services available in the Nurse's Office, the Counselor's Office, and the Health Center.

You can:

- Promote student and family engagement by producing an online or paper-based weekly or monthly student agenda. It can have a wellness theme and promote good nutrition and physical activity. Also, it can inform parents about school events, services, and policies.
- Check out the School Health Team's discussion about recommendations to improve Health Education at Jefferson School.

Learn More

- [Parent Engagement: Strategies for Involving Parents in School Health](#) [PDF – 1.74

Playground

Supervisor Guidance

Ms. Antonelli supervises playground activity to ensure safety and the proper use of equipment. Signs with picture messages show age limits and simple rules at the separate play areas. She and other recess supervisors keep young, smaller students away from the play areas meant for older, bigger students. Ms. Antonelli and her staff and volunteers keep all students in sight at all times.

Many factors determine the appropriate ratio of supervisors to students, including age of students, mental and physical abilities of students, and configuration of the playground. The Supervisor Guidance outlines job responsibilities. In addition to having this Guidance, Ms. Antonelli and other recess supervisors have completed training on effective recess supervision techniques, injury prevention strategies, and developmentally appropriate play.

Ms. Antonelli uses a checklist to inspect play equipment and playground structures regularly for possible damage and calls the school maintenance supervisor for repairs. Together with maintenance workers, Ms. Antonelli and others keep the playground free of litter and hazards.

Ms. Antonelli sets out equipment in activity zones so that students have some planned activities to choose from if they cannot decide what they would like to play. The activity zones are set up around the painted grid markings, such as four square or geometric shapes, on the playground hard surface area.

Recess supervisors actively move around the play area to observe, monitor, coach, and reinforce positive behaviors. They also engage in the activities with children to encourage their participation and follow a schoolwide recess schedule that ensures a safe number of students on the playground at all

times. The recess supervisors help students apply sunscreen, with parental permission. Students must wear weather-appropriate clothes and clothes without drawstrings on the playground. Students have easy access to water fountains so they can stay hydrated during playtime.

You can:

- Create a safe environment by posting playground safety rules and following supervisor guidance.
- Share playground safety rules with parents and ask them to volunteer for games and other play activities.
- Make sure all supervising staff and volunteers receive training on safety and supervision techniques.
- Repair any equipment with broken, loose, projecting, or missing parts.

Learn More

- [Playgrounds](#)
- [Recess](#)

Adaptive Swing

Ms. Antonelli noticed a pair of adaptive swings in an equipment catalog for use by students with physical disabilities. She knew several Jefferson School students would benefit from these swings with harnesses and high backs. Ms. Antonelli applied for and received a grant to purchase the adaptive swings and other accessible playground equipment. Then, she organized a community campaign to raise funds to install ramps for easy access to the play area.

After much fund-raising and planning, the playground is now an area where students of different abilities have valuable interaction with one another. The swings allow students with physical disabilities to play with their able-bodied peers. Students who use wheelchairs can play with sand by using hand-operated digger tools; they can strengthen their arms in an arcade of pull-up bars. A sensory panel provides engagement for visually challenged children. Ms. Antonelli discovered ways to modify games so students with limited movement could participate, including turning a long jump rope for jumping children or throwing and catching objects.

You can:

- Organize a campaign to install adaptive equipment to ensure all children can have fun together.
- Raise funds to purchase equipment and cover installation costs.
- Install wheelchair-friendly ramps and flooring, and incorporate features, such as raised sand tables and adaptive swings, both suitable for children in wheelchairs or with restricted mobility.

Bike Rack

Some students did not want to participate in the bike-to-school program because they were concerned about leaving their bikes unattended during the school day. Ms. Antonelli requested to move the bike rack within the fenced playground area and asked local merchants to donate locks so every bike rider had one to use.

Now the bicycles are in a secure area. Ms. Antonelli wanted to enforce safety, so she put up a sign with safety rules to remind bike riders to wear bike helmets, ride on the right side with the traffic, and stop at all stop signs.

You can:

- Install a bike rack at your school as a way to support a bike-to-school program.
- Ask parent support groups and local merchants to donate equipment.

Learn More

- [Bicycle Safety](#)
- [Physical Activity Before and After School](#)

Equipment Cart

Ms. Antonelli saw students sitting and using electronic devices to entertain themselves during recess. She wanted to add more physical activity opportunities to their free time. She filled a cart with a variety of balls and sports equipment and persuaded students to grab items for individual and group play.

Now, students are eager to start games or other physical activity. Young students like bubble toys and tricycles. Older students often select soccer balls because matches are easily organized and do not require extra equipment. The equipment box also includes Frisbees®, jump ropes, hula hoops, bowling pins and balls, WIFFLE® balls and bats, basketballs, footballs, and badminton rackets and shuttlecocks.

You can:

- Fill an equipment cart with all types of sports equipment to make physical activity enticing to students.
- Store equipment in containers that are easily portable, such as rolling carts or large boxes or tubs with handles. The containers will help keep the equipment clean and organized.
- Rotate equipment once a month and replenish with new equipment by asking for donations from parents and local merchants.

Learn More

- [Recess Planning in Schools: A Guide to Putting Strategies for Recess into Practice](#) [PDF – 2 MB]
- [Recess Planning Template](#) [DOCX – 98 KB]

Walking Trail

Jefferson School installed a walking track along the perimeter of the playground as another option for physical activity. Students and staff who participate in the school's walking challenge or wear pedometers want to accumulate a lot of steps every day. Others choose the walking track as a way to energize and socialize. Walking makes the lungs and heart stronger, thus building endurance. The walking path helps spread children across the entire play area and makes use of all the space on the playground.

Ms. Antonelli encourages students with physical and developmental disabilities to be part of the physical and social activities as much as they are able. Some students who use wheelchairs can strengthen their arm muscles by moving around the walking trail. This mobility gives them a sense of independence, and they can socialize while joining their jogging or walking friends.

You can:

- Encourage walking by building a walking trail or marking a walking route within the fenced playground.

Learn More

- [Staff Involvement](#)

Rules List

Ms. Antonelli greets students with a wave and a smile when they enter the playground area. For many, the playground is their favorite place!

In addition to a big welcome sign, Ms. Antonelli positioned a sign with rules about safety and appropriate behavior. The sign includes picture messages for students who are too young to read. She explains to students how these rules prevent injuries and why courteous behavior is important. She and other recess supervisors enforce rules of conduct with consistency and they respond to bullying and other harmful behaviors with fair, appropriate consequences.

Ms. Antonelli created a rules list to inform parent volunteers and school staff about the rules. She developed strategies to positively reinforce or reward students who follow rules. Student recess leaders rotate each month to help Ms. Antonelli identify students who are engaging in safe play and including others in their games.

Also, Ms. Antonelli gave guidance about handling misbehaviors such as name calling, teasing, hitting, bullying, or other forms of strife. She suggested ways to keep playground disagreements from escalating into conflicts.

You can:

- Create a rules list to create awareness about safety and appropriate behavior.
- Encourage supervisors to set a goal of having four positive interactions for every corrective interaction.
- Assign student leaders to promote student involvement.
- Find ways for students to play in harmony so they can work cooperatively when they return to the classroom.

Learn More

- [National Program for Playground Safety](#)
- [Conflict Resolution at School & on the Playground](#)
- [Violence Prevention: Bullying Research](#)

Buddy Bench

Ms. Antonelli realized some students had difficulty socializing with others. Perhaps they felt shy or awkward, or they had language barriers. At her request, the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) installed a Buddy Bench, a seating area where students could take rest breaks, regroup, and talk or play with others. In a short time, this gathering spot fostered new friendships among students. When playgroups needed extra people to round out teams, they looked to the Buddy Bench to find someone ready to play.

Ms. Antonelli promotes a positive, respectful social climate on the playground. She finds ways to engage everyone in positive peer groups. Students who use wheelchairs like the supportive interaction at the Buddy Bench. They are part of the activity going on around them. Ms. Antonelli and her staff, volunteers, and student recess leaders adapt or devise games so all students can participate to the best of their abilities.

You can:

- Install a Buddy Bench or other gathering place to help students socialize and connect with each other.
- Be creative and invent games and activities so students with different abilities and disabilities can interact with others.
- Encourage all students to set personal goals and focus on their abilities, not their limitations or disabilities.
- Check out the School Health Team's discussion about recommendations to improve Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services at Jefferson School.

Nurse's Office

First Aid Kit

There is always activity in the Nurse's Office. Today, a student came in with a big scrape on his leg because he slid into home plate during a baseball game on the playground. Nurse Okonjo disinfected the wound and applied antibiotic cream and bandages. She encourages all students to play sports, stay active, and follow safety rules on the playground, in the gym, and elsewhere.

But Nurse Okonjo does much more than take care of scrapes and bruises. She realizes some students do not have access to adequate medical care and may need support managing their chronic health conditions, such as diabetes. Nurse Okonjo steps in to help. She contacts parents and medical professionals to collaborate on ways to improve students' health. She teaches first aid classes to teachers, nurse aides, and other school staff so everyone is able to help in an emergency.

You can:

- Make referrals to medical professionals.
- Educate parents about actions to take at home to benefit their children's health and safety.

Learn More

- [Managing Chronic Health Conditions in Schools: The Role of the School Nurse](#) [PDF – 1.18 MB]
- [Care Coordination](#)

Teeth Model

Nurse Okonjo likes to flash a bright smile when she demonstrates how to brush teeth correctly. She talks about the importance of oral health and conducts dental screenings, just as she does vision and hearing screenings.

Nurse Okonjo urges students to visit a dentist twice a year for checkups and suggests getting dental sealants as a way to prevent tooth decay. Dental sealants are a plastic resin painted onto tooth enamel. The sealants bond to teeth and harden. They protect enamel from plaque and the acids found in foods and beverages.

Nurse Okonjo recommends wearing mouth guards during physical activity, such as football, basketball, and field hockey. She encourages students to avoid soft drinks and sugary snacks.

You can:

- Help students maintain healthy teeth by recommending a ban on soft drinks and sugary snacks from vending machines and food stands.
- Help students protect their teeth by encouraging them to wear mouth guards during strenuous physical activity.

Learn More

- [Oral Health in Schools](#)

Nebulizer

Today, Nurse Okonjo helped a sixth-grade boy who had an asthma attack. He forgot his backpack this morning, and unfortunately, he needed the inhaler kept in the backpack. Following orders from his health care provider, Nurse Okonjo gave him a breathing treatment with a nebulizer. This device allowed her to administer medication in the form of a mist inhaled into the lungs. Before the student returned to the classroom, she reminded him of ways to avoid the triggers that cause an attack. Common triggers are tobacco smoke, dust, mold, and outdoor pollution.

Nurse Okonjo knows the importance of connecting with students individually to help them establish healthy lifestyles. She also engages their families and others to work together and build a community focused on fitness and health. Also, Nurse Okonjo has inhalers in stock in case of emergencies.

You can:

- Establish a goal to provide a safe and healthy environment at your school, too.
- Engage families and the community to work together and build a community focused on fitness and health.

Learn More

- [Asthma in Schools](#)

Community Poster

Nurse Okonjo wanted to spread the word about healthy lifestyles, so she worked with the Health Center staff to organize a health fair at the school recently. It was for everyone: students, teachers, parents, grandparents, neighbors, and friends.

She sent invitations to Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA, and a lot of other groups to ensure community members knew of the event. She lined up programs about asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and other chronic diseases. She invited doctors, dentists, public health leaders, and nutritionists to give talks and demonstrations on these topics. They answered questions and handed out materials for people to take home.

Leaders from Kolbe’s Parks and Recreation Department promoted the use of exercise paths and fitness equipment at recreation centers. They suggested ways to spend family time at community parks, sports fields, and swimming pools. The health fair was a big success, so they plan to hold it again next year.

You can:

- Organize an event in your community with the help of volunteers to create a better environment for health and physical activity.

Learn More

- [Parents for Healthy Schools](#)

Locked Cabinet

Nurse Okonjo has a record of all students with chronic health conditions, including epilepsy. If a seizure occurs at the school, she can act immediately. She has special training and remains calm and confident in these situations, which may be frightening to classmates.

To help everyone at Jefferson School understand the disorder, Nurse Okonjo hosted a discussion about epilepsy and asked the parents of students with epilepsy to share what they do in their homes to treat and manage their child's condition. She invited a neurologist to visit the school and explain what triggers seizures and what medicines are used to treat epilepsy and side effects. The session was very helpful to students, school staff, and parents.

On a more individual level, Nurse Okonjo provides guidance to each student with epilepsy about managing the disorder and making good lifestyle choices, such as getting enough sleep and lowering stress. She encourages students with epilepsy to participate in sports because exercise and physical fitness may lessen risks of seizures.

You can:

- Learn more about epilepsy and work to ensure the school nurses in your community have proper training.
- Involve parents in discussion sessions to share about their experiences in managing their children’s chronic health conditions at home.

Learn More

[Epilepsy in Schools](#)

Counselor's Office

Storage Shelf

Puppets, board games, and other toys are items that can help students feel more at ease in the Counselor's Office. Sometimes Ms. Kowalski plays board games with students as a way to encourage them to open up and talk through their problems. She also uses board games in small groups that address social and emotional issues, student skills, or career exploration. Toys and games can help build a communication connection between counselors and students who may be shy or reluctant to reveal their feelings.

Older students grab stress balls, while younger students use toys and costumes for role playing or moving around the Counselor's Office. The physical activity—even if it is simply keeping hands busy—can help minimize anxiety.

You can:

- Reduce students' stress by making your Counselor's Office a welcoming environment.
- Ask community organizations to donate toys and board games that stimulate interaction or serve as conversation starters.
- Make sure the school counseling department has funding to purchase developmentally appropriate games and toys.

Learn More

- [School Connectedness](#)

Principal's Office

Attendance Chart

Principal Paul knows the value of data. He compared last year's school attendance records data with this year's data and felt certain the focus on healthy eating, physical activity, and providing access to health services to help manage chronic health conditions was making a big impact at Jefferson School. He noticed a downward trend in absenteeism and tardiness, which appeared to begin just after he and the staff took decisive action to support and promote health and wellness across the school.

He and Nurse Okonjo created a chart showing a composite of attendance records over the past five years and shared the overall data with staff, parents, and the school board via e-mail. As a way to engage parents and school board members, Principal Paul solicited input about ways to keep attendance levels high. Because health and well-being factors play a major role in absenteeism, the Superintendent of Education was confident Jefferson School's ventures played a meaningful role. She considered Jefferson School a success story and recommended Principal Paul present the data at the upcoming leadership conference of the National Association of Elementary School Principals.

You can:

- Find ways to evaluate health and wellness programs at your school.
- Comb through data and identify trends.
- Promote your successes so parents and community members understand how positive lifestyle changes can make a big difference in well-being.

Learn More

- [National Association of Elementary School Principals](#)
- [The Relationship Between School Attendance and Health](#)

Standing Desk

Principal Paul realized he was spending too much time sitting when he was in his office. At the start of the school year, he installed a height-adjustable desk in his office and approved the purchase of height-adjustable desks for staff and teachers. Now, he and others alternate between sitting and standing at their desks. Standing at the desk causes the heart to beat faster than sitting does, so they are burning extra calories. Also, changing positions has many health benefits. It improves blood circulation and alertness, and it decreases shoulder and back pain. Principal Paul paces purposefully in his office while talking on his telephone as a way to get a few more minutes of exercise.

Principal Paul keeps reusable water bottles and nutritious snacks at his desk and maintains his weight at a healthy range. He asked the cafeteria staff to place fruit and water bottles in the conference room, staff lounge, and other work areas for staff. He knows he is a role model and is setting a good example for everyone at the school—students and staff alike. When he went to the doctor recently for a physical exam, tests showed he has improved his cholesterol levels.

You can:

- Avoid sedentary work habits by using a desk with standing options.
- Find innovative ways to move about the office, classroom, or work areas.
- Make sure everyone has access to water and healthy snacks.

Clock

When the clock shows 8 a.m., Principal Paul starts the day with announcements. He runs a smooth operation by keeping classes and breaks on an efficient schedule. Before school, many students participate in the School Meal Breakfast Program. Students are encouraged to go to the cafeteria for breakfast or a snack before classes start or participate in Grab and Go options. Principal Paul ensures students have at least 20 minutes to eat breakfast. He schedules at least one hour of physical activity every day for students and makes sure there is time for physical activity outside of PE class.

You can:

- Structure your school day around an efficient schedule.
- Keep in mind recommended guidelines for physical activity, meals, and social breaks between classes.

Learn More

- [School Breakfast Program](#)

Gym Bag & Shoes

Principal Paul joins students and other staff in the after-school running club. The exercise keeps him fit and relieves stress. He likes the friendly interaction and competition as runners prepare for the upcoming 5K event. If the students beat him in the race, he has agreed to wear bright yellow shorts to work the next day!

Principal Paul knew that some staff members did not take time to exercise. He encouraged them to join the running club too, but some did not like to run. He conducted a staff survey to determine interests and realized aerobics and yoga were popular. Principal Paul coordinated with the local fitness club, which provided fitness instructors for a free 10-week session of classes in the school gymnasium. He knows people will stick with the exercise programs they like best.

You can:

- Promote employee wellness by offering different opportunities for exercise.
- Contact a local fitness club and negotiate for discounted memberships.
- Encourage staff members to support each other and engage in friendly competition.
- Check out the School Health Team's discussion about recommendations to improve Physical Education at Jefferson School.

Conference Room

Conference Room Conversation 4: Physical Education

Mrs. Ahmed: Good morning, everyone. The School Health Team completed the *School Health Index* (SHI) module on Physical Education and Other Physical Activity Programs. The team identified strengths and weaknesses in Jefferson School's physical education program and schoolwide physical activity opportunities based on the results of the module score card, and then they developed an action plan to recommend healthier practices. Mr. Rodriguez and Ms. O'Ryan, a health educator at the local public health department, would you share with the group your team's findings and recommendations to promote physical education and physical activity?

Ms. O'Ryan: Thanks, Mrs. Ahmed. We'll start by mentioning the Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA) enacted in 2015. ESSA promotes a more well-rounded education and includes physical education and health education. It also makes some changes to the requirements for school health grants as it relates to physical education. The law requires schools to spend a portion of their funds on physical education and health education. Also, for those schools that receive substantial funding, the school must complete an assessment.

Mr. Rodriguez: As you know, we used the *School Health Index* (SHI) as our assessment tool. Based on the results, we decided that our first action would be to develop a new standards-based curriculum for Jefferson School. A good curriculum is necessary to define how I instruct and assess students. It should be age-appropriate, sequential, and consistent with national or state standards for physical education. We are using SHAPE America's *National Standards and Grade-Level Outcomes for K–12 Physical Education* as the basis for our new physical education curriculum.

Mr. Anderson: Revising the PE curriculum sounds like a great way to start. Students should have the knowledge and skills to understand the importance of physical activity and to participate safely and regularly.

Ms. O'Ryan: Absolutely! A well-designed physical education program provides the opportunity for students to learn key concepts and practice critical skills needed to establish and maintain physically active lifestyles throughout childhood, adolescence, and into adulthood.

Mrs. Ahmed: How will you know if the new curriculum is meeting these objectives?

Mr. Rodriguez: We will use the CDC's Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool, also referred to as the PECAT. The PECAT helps a school or school district conduct a complete analysis of a physical education curriculum. I have talked to other physical education teachers who have used the PECAT to assess their curriculum for consistency with the national standards. In addition, they gauged if their curriculum is age-appropriate and sequential.

Mr. Anderson: Are you planning any other actions based on the results of the assessment?

Ms. O'Ryan: Yes, we are developing an action plan for future improvements to the physical education program. We know funds are available to school districts through the ESSA, coordinated through our state Department of Education. Our action plan will include a list of priorities for improving the physical education program at Jefferson School and ensuring it is part of every student's education. Jefferson School will apply for funds to implement our action plan's priorities. By completing the *School Health Index* assessment, we have met one requirement for applying for funding.

Mr. Anderson: Did this year's score card show other areas for improvement?

Mr. Rodriguez: Yes, we found that Jefferson School does not address two important policies for physical education. The school does not have a policy for prohibiting exemptions, waivers, and substitutions for physical education, and it does not have a policy with a time requirement for physical education. *SHAPE America's Essential Components of Physical Education* addresses these policies, so we plan to use this document as a resource.

Nurse Okonjo: Those policies are very important! They ensure all students participate in physical education. Do you anticipate any problems with revising the current policies?

Ms. O'Ryan: We can find support and justification for improving physical education policies through the Physical Education and Physical Activity component of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole

Child (WSCC) model. We can also use SHAPE America's *Guide for Physical Education Policy* to help us write the appropriate language for a meaningful and focused school wellness policy.

Mr. Anderson: Those actions would strengthen physical education at Jefferson School. What else will you do?

Mr. Rodriguez: We are putting into place accountability measures to ensure that these policies are enforced.

Nurse Okonjo: That's good to hear. We want all students to participate in daily physical education. It leads to a healthier life.

Mr. Rodriguez: Exactly. Our efforts to strengthen the physical education program addressed two of the four essential components of physical education, which also align with the WSCC model.

Principal Paul: Physical education promotes physical activity and health, but it also gives students enjoyment, challenges, and social interaction. We have a very good action plan for the coming year, and we will build on the success from last year and to keep moving the program forward.

If you want to learn more about the *School Health Index*, visit the [Healthy Schools website](#). For training, visit the [Professional Development & Training page](#).

Learn More

- [Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool \(PECAT\)](#)
- [Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education](#) [PDF – 5.94 MB]
- [The Essential Components of Physical Education](#) [PDF – 404 KB]
- [Guide for Physical Education Policy](#) [PDF – 402 KB]

Community Map

Parks and Recreation Department

The Kolbe Parks and Recreation Department plays an important role in creating an environment in which residents have the access and encouragement needed to live active lifestyles. The Parks and Recreation Department director is careful to ensure the facilities and programs offered serve the wide range of ages, schedules, health status/fitness levels, and interests of Kolbe residents.

The Parks and Recreation Department provides free and low-cost physical activity opportunities including recreational sports leagues, dance classes, and community races. There are activities offered across the city in convenient locations for participants. The department ensures that all physical activity opportunities include appropriate safety measures. For example, bike race participants are required to wear helmets; swim lesson instructors discuss water safety; and sports league coaches receive training on first aid.

Beyond just increased physical activity in the community, the Parks and Recreation Department plays an important role in helping to reduce stress and promote togetherness for many families. When school is not in session, many working parents depend on the camps and after-school care programs run by the department. The low-cost, family fun events sponsored by the department (such as family game nights, cultural events, and dances) help families connect and create positive memories together.

The Jefferson School Health Team promotes upcoming parks and recreation opportunities to staff, students, and parents. The school district and the Parks and Recreation Department have a shared use agreement regarding facilities such as playing fields and gyms.

Learn More

- [Model Joint Use Agreement Resources](#)