

# Healthy Lifestyles Resource Guide



# **PTA Vision**

Every child's potential is a reality.

## **PTA Mission**

To make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

## **PTA Purposes**

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community and place of worship.
- To raise the standards of home life.
- To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.
- To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth.
- To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social and spiritual education.

## OVERVIEW

Research has shown that healthy students are more prepared to learn and realize greater success in the classroom. PTA is committed to creating a healthy environment for children by establishing a network of Healthy Lifestyles Chairs across the state, and then connecting those PTA leaders with community and state resources to support their efforts. Together, we can create *FitKids* and *FitFamilies* that are happy, healthy and ready to learn!

## GOALS

To provide the information and resources to establish Healthy Lifestyles Chairs at both the Local and Council PTA levels, and to ensure their effectiveness through support from Texas and National PTA.

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## INTRODUCTION

Establishing a healthy lifestyles committee on your board, recruiting a qualified chair, and providing access to training and resources is an important step towards addressing the critical nutrition and physical activity needs of Texas children and their families.

Over the past thirty years, our environment has changed dramatically. Children no longer walk or ride their bikes to school, play for hours outside after school or on weekends, or have recess or physical education classes on a daily basis.

The food environment has gone from one where families sat down to a homemade meal and children were told not to spoil their appetites by eating between meals, to one where constant snacking of low nutrient, high caloric foods and beverages are encouraged and have become the norm.

The result has been an epidemic of poorly nourished, sedentary individuals, families and communities that struggle with health conditions which are preventable. These conditions range from anorexia to obesity, but are all part of an eating disorder spectrum that must be addressed if we are going to ensure that this generation of children does not die prematurely of diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and other diet- and exercise-related diseases.

In order to address the issues of poor nutrition, sedentary lifestyles, lack of health education, knowledge, and practices, a school needs to have the following to successfully engage parents as partners:

- Framework to support communication between school administrators and parents
- Leadership from both administration and parents
- Committee for healthy lifestyles and chair with defined roles and responsibilities
- Focus Areas to define problem and engage key stakeholders
- Guiding documents to support your Plan of Work
- Strategies to implement activities
- Projects and partners
- Awards and grants
- Success stories
- Advocacy

- Internet and website resources
- Training and tools

### **Texas PTA provides the following to support schools and PTAs.**

- *Texas PTA Healthy Lifestyles Resource Guide* and training
- Healthy lifestyles communications: webpage, newsletter, announcements and alerts
- Healthy lifestyles workshops and access to program providers
- Healthy lifestyles webinars in collaboration with state organizations

Texas PTA would like to acknowledge the work of all those organizations and agencies that provided content for this guide. Contributor documents and links to their resources available online at [www.txpta.org/programs/healthy-lifestyles/](http://www.txpta.org/programs/healthy-lifestyles/).

# TEXAS PTA HEALTHY LIFESTYLES LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

Texas PTA is committed to building healthy schools, healthy families and healthy communities. We all have an important role to play in making sure parents, school staff, and community members have the knowledge and support they need. The PTA is an effective starting point for both education and action. Through local, district and statewide efforts, schools, families and communities can promote healthy lifestyles.

Having a Healthy Lifestyles Chair at both the Council and Local PTA level benefits all members of the school and community, because healthy children miss less school, have a more positive attitude and better classroom behavior, and do better in school. Healthy children are more likely to graduate high school and have fewer health problems as adults.

## Benefits of Establishing a Healthy Lifestyles Chair

- Relevance and awareness for healthy lifestyles
- Authority to work on health and wellness issues
- Accessibility to school board/administrators, principals, students, parents, community
- Contact person for health and wellness information, resources, requirements
- Recruitment opportunities for new members/new leaders with wellness focus
- Assistance in communication/implementation of wellness policy
- Collaboration with campus administration, food service, parents, and staff on health and wellness goals

## PTA HEALTHY LIFESTYLES CHAIR DUTIES

### Local and Council PTA Chairs

- Be familiar with all material from National and Texas PTA relating to your chair position.
- Meet with the previous committee chair and review their procedure book for ideas and guidance.
- Present a Plan of Work to the executive board for approval with budget needs.
- Attend all executive board meetings and chair the healthy lifestyles committee meetings.
- Maintain a procedure book to include information on activities, programs, contacts, communications,

statistics and budget information to provide to your successor.

### Duties Specific to Local PTA Chair

- Represent PTA healthy lifestyles on the site based decision-making committee to support coordinated school health programs.
- Cooperate with your campus coordinated school health program director to assist with dissemination of parent and community materials.
- Promote healthy fundraising, celebrations, and rewards.

### Duties Specific to Council PTA Chair

- Serve as a liaison between National and Texas PTA and the Local PTAs
- Represent PTA on the School Health Advisory Council to support coordinated school health programs.
- Keep informed on healthy lifestyles issues at the local, state and national level and disseminate this information to Local PTAs.
- Encourage all PTAs to form a healthy lifestyles committee.
- Maintain a contact list of Local PTA Healthy Lifestyles Chairs. If a PTA does not have a Healthy Lifestyles Chair, communicate the need to the president.
- Provide opportunities for the Local PTA chairs to network and share ideas.

## PTA HEALTHY LIFESTYLES CHAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Be a healthy role model.
- Meet with your president and administration/principal; discuss goals / roles of your committee.
- Network with other Local PTA Healthy Lifestyles Chairs to collectively promote the importance of the committee and share best practices.
- Meet with district/campus representatives to determine needs and interests related to healthy lifestyles (PE, science, school nurse, food service director, school counselor, librarian, club sponsors, etc.)
- Build your committee. Work with related committee chairs, such as Environmental, Parent Education,

# TEXAS PTA HEALTHY LIFESTYLES LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE (CONT.)

- Youth Protection, Legislative Action, Arts in Education and Fundraising to coordinate school wide efforts to support healthy children.
- Attend training offered by national, state, and council levels of PTA related to your chair position (webinars, conferences, etc.)
- Provide articles and information for the PTA newsletters.
- Promote and encourage participation in Healthy Lifestyles calendar events.
- During the legislative session, support federal and state healthy lifestyles-related legislation and share information and action alerts with PTA membership.
- Taste Tests
- Healthy School Stores
- Litter Pick-Up Patrols
- Mini-Classroom Activity Breaks
- Walking School Bus

## HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Take advantage of the following awards to recognize your efforts and for potential funding for your healthy lifestyles projects. For links to these awards, go to [www.txpta.org/programs/healthy-lifestyles](http://www.txpta.org/programs/healthy-lifestyles).

- Texas PTA Healthy Lifestyles Achievement Awards
- Awards in Excellence in Texas School Health
- National PTA Healthy Lifestyles Awards/Grants
- HealthierUS School Challenge
- Presidential Active Lifestyle Award
- H-E-B Fit Campus Award

## HEALTHY LIFESTYLES PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

The following list of projects is not comprehensive but reflects many of the school-based projects undertaken by PTAs across the state. Resources focusing on these projects and potential community partners can be found at: [www.txpta.org/programs/healthy-lifestyles](http://www.txpta.org/programs/healthy-lifestyles). You may want to replicate some of these projects or develop your own using local resources specific to your community. Be creative, have fun and enjoy making new friends.

- School Gardens
- Walking Clubs
- Cooking Classes
- Fun Runs
- Scavenger Hunts
- Birthday Celebrations
- Open Gym
- Family Fun and Fitness Night

# HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AREAS OF FOCUS

Research shows healthy habits learned in childhood support proper growth and development of children's bodies and brains and promote better health outcomes in adulthood. Because good mental and physical health are linked to learning ability and because good health is a critical predictor of future productivity, it is essential that Texas schools provide students with access to learning environments that support healthy lifestyles.

- Parents want to be certain they are doing the right things to ensure their children grow into healthy, happy, successful adults.
- Schools want to be certain they are doing the right things to ensure their students stay in school and graduate as educated, productive citizens.

**Fact:** Properly nourished children perform better in school—both academically and behaviorally.

**Fact:** Physical activity strengthens children's bodies, minds, and self-esteem.

**Fact:** A good night's sleep is essential for optimum development and performance.

**Fact:** Healthy habits are best formed during childhood.

## Student Health and Academic Achievement

The academic success of America's youth is strongly linked with their health. Health-related factors such as hunger, physical and emotional abuse, and chronic illness can lead to poor school performance. Health-risk behaviors such as substance use, violence, and physical inactivity are consistently linked to academic failure and often affect students' school attendance, grades, test scores, and ability to pay attention in class.

In turn, academic success is an excellent indicator for the overall well-being of youth and a primary predictor and determinant of adult health outcomes. Leading national education organizations recognize the close relationship between health and education, as well as the need to embed health into the educational environment for all students.

### **Texas Education Agency (TEA) Press Release 2009**

*Physically fit students more likely to do well in school, less likely to be disciplinary problems: A first-of-its-kind study of more than 2.4 million Texas students found that students who are physically fit*

are more likely to do well on the state's standardized tests and have good school attendance. Fit students are also less likely to have disciplinary referrals.

## THE WHOLE CHILD

Research, practice, and common sense confirm that a whole child approach to education will develop and prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of today and tomorrow.

Each child, in each school, in each of our communities deserves to be healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged, creating a whole child approach to learning, teaching and community engagement.

## STAFF WELLNESS

Employees' mental health and physical health are essential to the success of a school system. The promotion of staff members' own health helps them become positive role models for students and increases their commitment to promoting student health and safety. Staff members who are fit and healthy may be expected to have fewer absences and have more energy.

## HEALTH EDUCATION-COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH

Health is not just the absence of disease – it is complete physical, mental, and social well-being. A school health program that effectively addresses students' health, and, thus, improves their ability to learn consists of many different components. Each component makes a unique contribution while also complementing the others, ultimately creating a whole that is more than just the sum of its parts. Coordinated School Health traditionally includes eight components: Health Education, Healthy and Safe School Environment, Counseling and Mental Health Services, Parent and Community Involvement, Staff Wellness Promotion, Health Services, Physical Education, and Nutrition Services.

The above components encompass a school's instruction, services, and physical and social environments.

Leadership, partnerships and coordination serve as the "glue" that holds the different pieces together to form a coherent whole. Because individuals, institutions, needs and resources differ from community to community, no two approaches are expected to look exactly alike. Each

# HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AREAS OF FOCUS (CONT.)

new setting will bring together a unique group of people and agencies to determine the specific needs facing young people in their schools and build on the many resources that are already in place to support positive youth development.

Schools by themselves cannot—and should not be expected to—solve the nation’s most serious health and social problems. Families, health care workers, the media, religious organizations, community organizations that serve youth, and young people themselves also must be systematically involved. However, schools could provide a critical facility in which many agencies might work together to maintain the well-being of young people.

## Coordinated School Health Model

Coordinated school health (CSH) is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a strategy for improving students’ health and learning in our nation’s schools.



## NUTRITION

Healthy eating habits formed during childhood lead to a healthy life. Proper nutrition is critical. Parents can teach their children good eating habits by being positive role models in their own choices and by explaining to their children the importance of a balanced diet and how to choose healthy options from each food group.

## SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM

The nutrition environment in your child’s school is very complicated and governed by many factors. A primary influence on how the food programs operate is the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), which sets the rules, regulations, and reimbursement rates for the meal programs. In Texas, there are stricter rules governing the school meals program as outlined in the Texas Department of Agriculture *Texas Public School Nutrition Policy*.

## HEALTHY FUNDRAISING

Candy, baked goods, soda and other foods with little nutritional value are commonly used for fundraising at school. Schools may make easy money selling these foods, but students pay the price. An environment that constantly provides children with sweets promotes unhealthy habits that can have lifelong impact. As we face a national epidemic of overweight children, many schools are turning to healthy fundraising alternatives.

## HEALTHY CELEBRATIONS

Typically, foods for school celebrations include cupcakes, candy, cookies and soda. So what’s the harm? There is nothing wrong with an occasional treat, but unhealthy choices have become the norm rather than the exception. Parties, treats used as classroom rewards, food fundraisers, vending machines, snacks and school stores constantly expose children to high-fat, high-sugar, low-nutrient choices.

## HEALTHY REWARDS

Food is commonly used to reward students for good behavior and academic performance. It’s an easy, inexpensive and powerful tool to bring about immediate short-term behavior change. Yet, using food as reward has many negative consequences that go far beyond the short-term benefits of good behavior or performance.

## PHYSICAL FITNESS

Research shows that when children are fit and receive the proper amount of exercise, they perform better in school and are able to learn at a higher level. Unfortunately, the trend is not toward physical fitness. Parents must ensure their children are active when not in school, and work

# HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AREAS OF FOCUS (CONT.)

with schools to establish physical education as a priority. Children must be given opportunities to learn about maintaining their health and fitness and to be physically active throughout the day.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION /ACTIVITY

Texas school districts offer a planned, sequential K-12 curriculum that provides cognitive content and learning experiences in a variety of activity areas such as basic movement skills; physical fitness; rhythms and dance; games; team, dual, and individual sports; tumbling and gymnastics; and aquatics. Quality physical education should, through a variety of planned physical activities, promote each student's optimum physical, mental, emotional, and social development, as well as activities and sports that all students enjoy and can pursue throughout their lives. Qualified, trained teachers teach physical activity.

## RECESS

Play, both structured and unstructured, has been shown in an extensive body of research to have positive benefits for physical, social, emotional and cognitive domains of child development. Benefits of physical activity and play have also been demonstrated in the areas of academic achievement, problem-solving skills, social skills, student engagement and physical health.

## CHILDHOOD OBESITY

Childhood obesity is one of the most serious health problems facing our country today. Obesity has potentially devastating consequences for our youth and for our society as a whole. Studies show that as a result of diseases that are related to being overweight, children today may not live as long as their parents. Obesity is associated with diseases such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, depression, breast cancer and arthritis. In the past 20 years, annual obesity-associated hospital costs for children have tripled.

## FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: PTA NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR FAMILY SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

### Standard 1: Welcoming all families into the school community

Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

### Standard 2: Communicating effectively

Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

### Standard 3: Supporting student success

Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development, both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

### Standard 4: Speaking up for every child

Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

### Standard 5: Sharing power

Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

### Standard 6: Collaborating with community

Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services and civic participation.

## ADVOCACY

Through its legislative program, PTA focuses attention on the health, safety and well-being of all children. PTA, at the local level, can bring influence to bear on elected officials and school administrators to ensure compliance through the monitoring and implementation of school health laws and policies.

Texas PTA works with the following organizations to support healthy lifestyles priorities.

### Texas Action for Healthy Kids

Action for Healthy Kids is the nation's leading

# HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AREAS OF FOCUS (CONT.)

nonprofit and largest volunteer network fighting childhood obesity and undernourishment by partnering with schools to improve nutrition and physical activity to help our kids learn to eat right, be active every day, and be ready to learn.

## **Partnership for a Healthy Texas**

Texas PTA is a member of the Partnership for a Healthy Texas coalition, whose mission is to develop and promote policies and programs that prevent obesity in Texas.

## **Texas School Health Advisory Committee**

The Texas School Health Advisory Committee (TSHAC) provides active leadership in the identification and dissemination of school health best practices and resources for school policy makers.

## **Texas Education Service Centers**

Many of the Education Service Centers (ESC) throughout Texas are staffed with a Regional School Health Specialist who provides and promotes wellness information, materials and other resources to teachers, administrators, other school personnel, parents and community members within the school community through in-service training, workshops, and other technical assistance.

# EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR HEALTHY LIFESTYLES CHAIRS

Refer to Healthy Lifestyles Quick-Start Guide. For resources to help with implementation go to [www.txpta.org/programs/healthy-lifestyles/](http://www.txpta.org/programs/healthy-lifestyles/).

## Local PTA Healthy Lifestyles Chair

### Beginning strategies:

- Review the National PTA Back to School Kit and online resources.
- Raise awareness and get school-wide buy in for healthy lifestyles by showing the *Food and Fitness Matter: Raising Healthy Active Kids* DVD, which is available in Spanish and English.
- Join Action for Healthy Kids-Texas Team for free resources and ideas.
- Study the Texas Department of Agriculture Square Meals resources.
- Examine the Safe Routes to School community resources.
- Collaborate with all stakeholders to communicate district wellness policy, healthy lifestyles messages, activities and opportunities through newsletter articles, website and member programs.
- Apply for a Texas PTA Healthy Lifestyles Award.

### Intermediate strategies:

- Become a USDA Team Nutrition School.
- Implement one idea from Safe Routes to School community resources.
- Promote the Let's Move Campaign.
- Encourage healthy fundraising, celebrations, and classroom reward ideas, and healthy school stores.
- Host or co-host a healthy lifestyles booth, activity or event. Partner with at least one other entity in the school and community (students, food service, PE, classroom teacher, coordinated school health director, community organization, local business, etc.).
- Apply for a Texas PTA Healthy Lifestyles Award.

### Advanced strategies:

- Organize a Walk Across Texas Challenge PTA team.
- Take the HealthierUS School Challenge.
- Engage middle and high school students with Students' Taking Charge program.

## Council PTA Healthy Lifestyles Chair

### Beginning strategies:

- Identify existing PTA Healthy Lifestyles chairs and committee and collect contact information.
- Join Action for Healthy Kids-Texas Team for free resources and information.
- Review and share the Safe Routes to School community resources.
- Attend district School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) meetings. Request appointment to SHAC.
- Collaborate with all stakeholders to communicate district wellness policy, healthy lifestyles messages, activities and opportunities through newsletter articles, website and member programs.

### Intermediate strategies:

- Promote USDA Team Nutrition School program to Local PTA Healthy Lifestyles Chairs.
- Promote Safe Routes to School resources and ideas to Local PTA Healthy Lifestyles Chairs.
- Promote the Let's Move Campaign to Local PTA Healthy Lifestyles Chairs.
- Promote the Texas PTA Healthy Lifestyles Award to Local PTA Healthy Lifestyles Chairs.
- Promote healthy fundraising, celebrations, classroom rewards and healthy school stores.
- Host or co-host a Healthy Lifestyles booth, activity, or program at a district wide event. Partner with at least one other entity in your school and community to promote healthy lifestyles.
- Serve on the SHAC.

### Advanced strategies:

- Organize district-wide PTA Walk Across Texas Challenge.
- Promote the HealthierUS School Challenge to Local PTA Healthy Lifestyles Chairs.
- Promote Students' Taking Charge program to middle and high school PTA Healthy Lifestyles Chairs.
- Serve in a leadership capacity on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC).

# Guiding Documents: Positions, Resolutions and Policy

Always check for updates online at [www.txpta.org/programs/healthy-lifestyles/](http://www.txpta.org/programs/healthy-lifestyles/).

## **National PTA Position Statement - Nutrition for Children and Families**

The National PTA recognizes good nutrition as a key component in creating healthy and productive individuals. Ongoing study in the field of nutrition provides the public with constantly changing information on what constitutes a healthy diet, which can be confusing. In order to ensure that children and families have current and accurate information concerning nutrition and health the National PTA supports:

- the inclusion of age-appropriate nutrition education within the framework of Comprehensive School Health curriculum at all grade levels;
- efforts by state/local PTAs urging boards of education to review curricula and provide appropriate pre-service and in-service teacher training as needed to ensure nutrition education reflects the most accurate and current information in the field;
- food service programs that promote the well-being of students by serving good nutritious meals year round; contribute to nutrition education; and reflect the diversity of the community. Local PTAs should be involved in monitoring and evaluating school meal programs to ensure high quality nutrition for children and youth in accordance with the guidelines recommended by the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, and the US Department of Agriculture;
- efforts to provide information to parents on the potential benefits and hazards of using mineral supplements without appropriate medical supervision;
- programs to educate parents on the need for health screening and monitoring as a means to provide families with health information to use in making informed nutrition, diet, and health decisions; and
- programs that provide parents and families with information and skills they need to make healthy choices in the area of diet, nutrition, and exercise to develop good habits that will last a lifetime.

The National PTA and its constituents will continue to work at the local, state, and national levels to enhance the nutritional health of our nation's children and families.

The National PTA supports federal legislation to assist states in providing necessary support for families in the areas such as health, nutrition and welfare services.

## **National PTA Resolution - Nutritional Eating Requirement to Combat Childhood Obesity**

- Whereas, The need to promote healthy eating among young people has intensified in recent years due to the growing national epidemic of obesity; and
- Whereas, Obesity contributes to cardiovascular disease, stroke, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and type 2 diabetes; and
- Whereas, Type 2 diabetes has risen by 33 percent in children between the ages of 6 and 11; and
- Whereas, School districts are not required to participate in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National School Lunch Program, many schools offer lunch choices that are high in fat, sodium, and/or sugar; and
- Whereas, Foods sold to students in vending machines, school stores, and in the school cafeteria should be attractive and expand the variety of healthy choices available with a limit on calories from total fat, saturated fat, and little or no processing or additives; therefore be it

- Resolved, That the National PTA and its constituent organizations promote the importance of healthy eating among children and youth to combat the growing national epidemic of childhood obesity; and be it further
- Resolved, That the National PTA and its constituent organizations support the inclusion of parents, community and health specialists along with educators and administrators when determining whether or not vending machines should be allowed on the school grounds and, if so, also be involved in deciding the types of products allowed within those machines and the use of proceeds garnered.
- Resolved, That the National PTA and its constituent organizations support the requirement that food and beverage items sold to students in vending machines, school stores, and in the school cafeteria contain at least the minimum nutritional value as determined by the USDA.

### **National PTA Resolution - The Importance of Physical Education in the Schools**

- Whereas, The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity (2001) says physical inactivity is a serious, nationwide epidemic; and
- Whereas, Physical education classes in American schools, during the past 30 years, have declined in importance and availability. During the same period, technology, behavior, and nutritional habits have changed to allow a less active, more sedentary lifestyle. A direct result from these changes is that the frequency of obesity (as defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) in American elementary and secondary school-age children has increased from 14 percent to more than 25 percent; and
- Whereas, Physical activity at all ages reduces risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes. The 60 million school-age children and youth have the potential to acquire the knowledge, skills, and values that can lead to a life of physically active and healthy living; and
- Whereas, The U.S. Surgeon General, Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Association for Sport and Physical Education recommend a minimum of 30 minutes of physical education, by accredited professional instructors, every school day for every elementary and secondary school student; and
- Whereas, Both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives have acknowledged these trends and propose to reverse them; therefore be it
- Resolved, That physical education programs and curricula should follow the minimum national standards as set forth by the President's Physical Education Program, and should be developmentally appropriate, sequential, and cooperative in nature; and be it further
- Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent organizations urge Congress to continue to provide funding for physical education programs; and be it further
- Resolved, That National PTA urges PTAs to support daily physical education programs as an integral part of children's education.

## **National PTA Resolution - School Health Councils; (Coordinated School Health Program)**

- Whereas, A healthy child is a teachable child, and sickness, hunger, vision impairment, physical and sexual abuse, tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use, social and emotional problems, unhealthy dietary habits, and a lack of physical activity may inhibit student's ability to learn; and
- Whereas, The school is often best positioned to serve as the community's center for meeting the needs of the whole child, even though the well-being of children is primarily the responsibility of the home; and
- Whereas, School health councils provide a setting in which school personnel, parents and community members can examine how well students learn, practice life skills, and make healthy decisions; and
- Whereas, School health councils address and coordinate the activities of a coordinated school health program (CSHP), which consists of the following eight components; school environment, comprehensive school health education, health services, school meals and nutrition, physical education, counseling and psychological and mental health services, staff health promotion, and family and community involvement in schools; and
- Whereas, The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 requires all schools that receive federal funding for their school lunch programs to involve a committee (which may be a school health council) of parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, and the public in developing and implementing local wellness policies; therefore be it
- Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent organizations encourage schools to develop school health councils in order to foster the connection between good health and learning; and
- Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent organizations support health education efforts throughout the entire school, including in cafeteria offerings and physical education programs; and be it further
- Resolved, The National PTA and its constituent organizations collaborate with health-related organizations to assist in the development and activities of school health councils.

## **PTA Resolution on Parent Involvement in Site-Based Shared Decision-Making**

- Whereas, One of the Objects of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers is "To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth"; and
- Whereas, Article III(d) of the National PTA Bylaws states "The PTA organizations shall seek to participate in the decision making process establishing school policy"; and
- Whereas, It is the role of the National PTA to encourage parental involvement, an essential part of the PTA mission, by promoting an environment in which parents are valued as primary influences in their children's lives and essential partners in their children's education and development; and

Whereas, Some states have created legislation and some school boards and school districts have created policies and have negotiated contractual agreements with bargaining units that impede an equitable level of parental participation in site-based models of shared decision making; therefore be it

Resolved, That the National PTA and its constituent organizations advocate for legislation, policies, and bargaining agreements that protect the right of parental involvement in site-based shared decision making; and be it further

Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent organizations advocate for models of site-based decision making which provide for equitable participation among parents, students, community members, principals, teachers, and other staff and which promote an environment in which parents are valued as essential partners in their children's education and development.

### **Texas PTA Resolution - Reduction for Childhood Obesity**

Resolved that Texas PTA is dedicated to the reduction and prevention of childhood obesity in Texas; Texas PTA will continue to insist on regular physical activity in schools and support efforts to improve the nutritional value of foods and beverages served in schools throughout the state.

### **National PTA Position Statement - Child Nutrition and Wellness**

PTA supports federal efforts to improve child nutrition and wellness. Priorities include promoting universal meals programs, updating regulations governing school meals programs to reflect current science and trends, advocating for parent involvement in school wellness councils, and encouraging parents to play a more active role in the messaging sent to their children about nutrition and healthy food choices. PTA opposes child nutrition block grants and other proposals that would threaten the availability of funds for programs that feed hungry children. Existing child nutrition programs promote overall nutrition and wellness, prepare children for learning, and improve children's school attendance and behavior.

### **Texas PTA Position on Mandatory Recess in Our Elementary Schools**

Texas PTA supports mandatory recess in our elementary schools.

# SCHOOL HEALTH LAW AND POLICY

## **Texas Public School Nutrition Policy: FMNV, Candy, Competitive Foods**

To promote a healthier environment in Texas schools and help ensure a healthier future for Texas children: Unless otherwise noted, all Texas public schools participating in the federal child nutrition programs must comply with the nutrition policies set forth in this subchapter. These policies are intended to supplement federal policies defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Services. As a result of local nutrition and wellness policies, school districts may have stricter nutrition guidelines.

### **Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNVS) and all forms of candy K-12**

Items are not allowed to be provided to students any time anywhere until after the end of the last scheduled class

### **Competitive Foods**

- Elementary: Not allowed anywhere on school premises until after the end of the last scheduled class
- Middle/Jr. High: Not allowed anywhere on school premises from 30 minutes before to 30 minutes after meal periods
- High School: Not allowed during meal periods in areas where reimbursable meals are served and consumed

## **Local District Wellness Policy**

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 requires that each school district participating in the School Meals Program shall establish a local wellness policy. At a minimum, the school wellness policy established for each school must:

- involve parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, and the public
- include goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that are designed to promote student wellness
- include nutrition guidelines for all foods available on each school campus during the school day with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity
- establish a plan for measuring implementation, including the designation of a person at the local

education agency or school charged with this responsibility

## **Texas Education Agency Health Education**

Health Education is a component of the Coordinated School Health Model, which consists of a planned, sequential, K-12 curriculum that addresses the physical, mental, emotional and social dimensions of health. The curriculum is designed to motivate and assist students to maintain and improve their health, prevent disease, and reduce health-related risk behaviors. It allows students to develop and demonstrate increasingly sophisticated health-related knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices. The comprehensive health education curriculum includes a variety of topics such as personal health, family health, community health, consumer health, environmental health, mental and emotional health, injury prevention and safety, nutrition, prevention and control of disease, and substance use and abuse. Qualified, trained teachers provide health education.

### **Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Health Education**

In health education, students acquire the health information and skills necessary to become healthy adults and learn about behaviors in which they should and should not participate. To achieve that goal, students will understand the following: students should first seek guidance in the area of health from their parents; personal behaviors can increase or reduce health risks throughout the lifespan; health is influenced by a variety of factors; students can recognize and utilize health information and products; and personal/interpersonal skills are needed to promote individual, family, and community health.

## **Texas Education Agency (TEA) School Health Requirements**

### **Texas Education Agency: Physical Activity Requirements**

Students below sixth grade are required to participate in moderate or vigorous daily physical activity for at least 30 minutes day or 135 minutes a week as part of the district's physical education curriculum or through structured activity during recess.

Beginning with the 2008-09 school year, students

# SCHOOL HEALTH LAW AND POLICY (CONT.)

in grades six through eight will be required to participate in daily physical activity for at least 30 minutes for at least four semesters during those grade levels.

## **TEA Physical Education Curriculum**

Curriculum must be sequential, developmentally appropriate, and designed, implemented, and evaluated to enable students to develop the motor, self-management, and other skills, knowledge, attitudes, and confidence necessary to participate in physical activity throughout life.

## **TEA Fitness Gram Assessment**

- Establishes a baseline of a healthy fitness zone
- Measures aerobic capacity, muscular strength, endurance, flexibility and body composition
- Provides recommended activity program options to help students reach healthy fitness zone in identified areas

## **Texas Education Agency School Health Survey**

- Required of each school district
- Gather information on the implementation of school health-related policies and programs
- Develop reports
- Respond to legislative inquiries
- Create relevant trainings and technical assistance systems to support districts in implementing school health programs

## **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)**

Every independent school district is required by law to have a SHAC of which the majority of members must be parents who are not employed by the school district.

### **Provides advice to district on coordinated school health programming and impact on student health and learning**

- Meet four times per year, minimally
- Local school board appoints a minimum of five members
- Appoint parent as chair or co-chair
- Recommend indicators for evaluating effectiveness of Coordinated School Health Programs
- Report directly to school board at least once

annually with detailed account of SHAC activities and recommendations

## **Recess**

The local school health advisory council must consider and make policy recommendations concerning the importance of daily recess for elementary school students, taking into account research on unstructured and undirected play, academic and social development, and the health benefits of daily recess. Any policy recommendation by the council to the district must reflect local community values.

## **Coordinated School Health Program K-8**

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) shall make available to each school district one or more coordinated school health programs or allow for the development of school district programs designed to prevent obesity, cardiovascular disease, and Type 2 diabetes in elementary, middle, and junior high school students. Each program must provide for coordinating: health education, physical education and activity, nutrition services and parental involvement.

## **Campus Improvement Plan K**

Goals and Evaluation for Coordinated School Health Program

- Develop goals and objectives based on fitness assessment data, academic performance, attendance rates, academic disadvantages, the use of any method to ensure students are reaching moderate or vigorous physical activity, and any other indicator recommended by SHAC
- Include in all Campus Improvement Plans for elementary, middle and junior high schools

## **Texas Education Agency Coordinated School Health Goals**

100% of all elementary, middle and junior high schools have adopted, been trained in, and are implementing an approved CSH program or are developing an original district program.

## **School District and Campus Documents**

Support district and campus efforts to promote student

# SCHOOL HEALTH LAW AND POLICY (CONT.)

health and academic achievement. The following documents are common to most school districts and can be found online at your school and district webpage or by contacting school administrators:

- Mission Statement
- Strategic Plan /Campus Improvement Plan
- Community Relations Policy/Parent Involvement Plan
- School Health Advisory Council
- Wellness Policy
- TEA School Health Survey results
- FITNESSGRAM data on students

# HEALTHY LIFESTYLES PARTNERS AND RESOURCES

The following list represents organizations and agencies that have resources (people, programs, policies, etc.) to support the Texas PTA Healthy Lifestyles Initiative. This list is not comprehensive. Be sure to contact your local community organizations and groups who have an interest in supporting healthy kids, successful students and successful schools. To find information about the following go to [www.txpta.org/programs/healthy-lifestyles/](http://www.txpta.org/programs/healthy-lifestyles/).

- Texas Action for Healthy Kids
- Texas AgriLife Extension Service
- Texas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance
- Texas Beef Council Family Mealtime
- Texas Dairy Max
- Texas Department of Agriculture Square Meals
- Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services
- Texas Department of State Health Services
- Texas School Health Advisory Committee
- Texas Education Service Centers
- Texas Education Agency
- Texas Parks and Wildlife
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Healthy Youth
- Partnership for a Healthier America
- Safe Routes to School
- USDA Team Nutrition
- US Let's Move Campaign
- YMCA
- Active Life Movement
- Bike Texas
- Green Ribbon Schools
- Marathon Kids

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