

Improving Children's Health:

A Guide for Implementing Wellness Programs in Jewish Day Schools

Modeled after the Chicago Jewish Day School Wellness Initiative

A Joint Effort of:

Associated Talmud Torahs

Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago

Sinai Urban Health Institute



Associated Talmud Torahs
of Chicago
ועד החינוך דשיקגו



Jewish Federation
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Welcome!

We are excited to share what we have learned with you. This guidebook was written to help school administrators, teachers, parents, or even students make changes that will benefit all members of your school community. We hope the information, suggestions, and examples that we provide in this book will enable you to make your school more supportive of healthy lifestyles. Even if you do not have the resources or manpower to follow the full model we outline in this book, know that even small changes are important.

This project was motivated by a survey of Jewish individuals in Chicago that found that rates of childhood obesity in this community were even higher than for the general population. The findings made the Jewish community realize that their children were facing the same health problems as the rest of the country. However, while public schools are guided by requirements for school wellness councils and wellness policies, as well as district-level curriculum guidelines, private schools are often exempt from these policies. Obviously day schools have other unique challenges as well. The need for a dual curriculum limits the amount of time available for health lessons. Serving kosher meals precludes using the same food services as public schools and makes the meals more expensive. Many health education materials are not culturally-appropriate for Jewish students, particularly Orthodox ones. And, of course, many day schools (and families) struggle to make ends meet with limited monetary resources.

Fortunately, day schools also have dedicated staff, involved parents, and a real motivation to protect student health. It is these strengths that have allowed this initiative to succeed. We would like to thank the schools that participated in the first three years of this program – Akiba-Schetchter Jewish Day School, Arie Crown Hebrew Day School, Hillel Torah North Suburban Day School, Joan Dachs Bais Yaakov, and Yeshivas Tiferes Tzvi. The wellness initiative would not have been possible without these schools' administrators, teachers, and parents who took time out of their busy schedules to focus on the important goal of student health. We would also like to thank the Chicago foundations who have been extremely generous in their support of these efforts. In particular, we are very grateful to the Michael Reese Health Trust and the Polk Bros. Foundation, who not only provided the financial support for this initiative, but who have also given us much guidance and support.

We wish you the best of luck as you follow your own path toward school wellness!

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INTRODUCTION - The Challenge

★ Childhood Obesity in the Jewish Community

Everyone knows that our country is facing an obesity “epidemic.” However, a survey conducted in the most densely populated Jewish community in Chicago found evidence that this problem also affects Jewish children. Specifically, 28% of Jewish children in this community were found to be overweight and an additional 26% were obese. In fact, a Jewish child in this community was approximately *twice* as likely to be obese as the average American child. And not only were children affected; the majority of adults were also at an unhealthy weight.

★ Issues Related to Poor Nutrition and Lack of Exercise

Unfortunately, overweight children are also more likely to become overweight adults. In addition to lowered life expectancy, obesity is associated with an increased risk of heart disease, diabetes, stroke, cancer and a host of social and psychological problems.

Being unhealthy also leads to problems at school. Not only do unhealthy children miss more school days, but having a poor diet and not getting enough exercise also lead to more behavioral problems and poorer academic performance.

★ Importance of Health for Academic Achievement ★

Children who get enough exercise and have proper nutrition have:

- ↓ Fewer sick days
- ↓ Reduced tardiness
- ↑ Higher test scores
- ↑ Better class participation
- ↑ Increased concentration
- ↑ Higher self-esteem

★ The Value of School-Based Wellness Programs

Because children spend a large part of their days at school, schools are a good place to make changes. They are also a natural place to begin because they often provide meals and other snacks, and they are filled with trained educators who care about children.

★ The Chicago Jewish Day School Wellness Initiative

To address childhood obesity in the Jewish community, leadership from the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago joined with the Associated Talmud Torahs school system and a local research institute, the Sinai Urban Health Institute. Together, these organizations developed a model of school wellness for day schools, tested it in two elementary schools, and then expanded to other schools.



Want to know more?

For more information on the link between health and academic achievement, Action for Healthy Kids has an excellent report called “The Learning Connection.” It can be accessed from their website: www.actionforhealthykids.org.

CHAPTER ONE - Coordinated School Health Model

The most comprehensive model of school health was developed by the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). This model, called Coordinated School Health, is helpful because it highlights all the different areas that impact health and it connects health with learning. The model embodies the collective strategies and activities done by schools to promote physical, emotional and social health. Schools that design programs using this model work with students, families, and the community in a systematic and planned way. The involvement of families and community is key because it increases commitment and provides valuable input.

Some of the areas included in the model will not be relevant for many day schools, but schools should strive to make improvements in as many areas as possible. Information on the **ideal goals for each component** is presented here:



(CDC, 2009)

★ **Health Education:** Schools should have a planned, sequential curriculum that addresses the physical, mental, emotional and social dimensions of health in all grades. The curriculum should motivate and assist students to maintain and improve their health, prevent disease, and reduce unhealthy behaviors. The curriculum should include a variety of topics such as personal health, community health, mental health, injury prevention, nutrition, prevention of disease, and substance abuse. Teachers should be qualified and trained to provide health education.

It is recommended that schools offer a minimum of 40 hours of health education each academic year for students in Pre-K through grade 2, and 80 hours for grades 3 through 12.¹ Many health curricula are interdisciplinary and can be easily integrated into core subjects.

★ **Physical Education:** Schools should have a planned, sequential K-12 curriculum that provides cognitive content and learning experiences in a variety of activity areas, including basic movement skills, physical fitness, dance, games, sports, gymnastics, and aquatics. It should promote each student's optimum physical, mental, emotional, and social development, and should promote activities

¹ Joint Committee on National Health Standards. National Health Education Standards: Achieving Excellence. American Cancer Society; 2007.

and sports that all students enjoy and can pursue throughout their lives. Again, teachers should be qualified and trained to provide this type of education.

It is recommended that students in elementary school should receive 150 minutes of physical education each week, and students in middle and high school should receive 225 minutes weekly. In addition, children and adolescents should get at least 60 minutes of physical activity daily. Of course schools are not responsible for providing all of this, but children do spend the majority of their waking hours there, so it's very helpful if some portion of this activity occurs during the school day.

★ **Health Services:** Schools should provide services to assess, protect, and promote student health. These services are designed to ensure access or referral to primary health care services, prevent and control infectious diseases and other health problems, provide emergency care for illness or injury, promote and provide optimum sanitary conditions for the school, and provide educational and counseling opportunities for promoting and maintaining health. Qualified professionals such as physicians, nurses, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel should provide these services.

★ **Nutrition Services:** Students should have access to a variety of nutritious and appealing meals that accommodate the health and nutrition needs of all students. School nutrition programs should reflect the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans and other criteria. The school nutrition services should complement what students are learning in health education. Qualified child nutrition professionals should provide these services, or at least be consulted when developing menus.

★ **Counseling and Psychological Services:** Schools should offer services to improve students' mental, emotional, and social health. These services include individual and group assessments, interventions, and referrals. Professionals such as certified school counselors, psychologists, and social workers should be used. Although many day schools are unable to employ these types of professionals on their own, they may be able to partner with Jewish organizations and agencies that focus on this type of service (such as Jewish Children and Family Services) to ensure the students' needs are met.

★ **Healthy School Environment:** Schools should consider factors that influence the physical environment including the building and grounds, any chemicals that are detrimental to health, and physical conditions such as temperature, noise, and lighting. The psychological environment includes the physical, emotional, and social conditions that affect the well-being of students and staff.

★ **Health Promotion for Staff:** Schools should offer opportunities for school staff to improve their health status through activities such as health assessments, health education, and health-related fitness activities. **Studies have shown that health promotion activities result in improved productivity, decreased absenteeism, and reduced health insurance costs for schools.**

★ **Family/Community Involvement:** An integrated school, parent, and community approach should be used for enhancing the well-being of students. School wellness councils can build support

for school health program efforts. Schools should actively solicit parent involvement and engage community resources and services to respond more effectively to the health-related needs of students. **Remember** - not all categories will be relevant to all schools. Also, even if all categories are relevant to your school, you do not have to address them all at once. The strategy we recommend is to start with the easiest targets and take small steps as you build a team and support.

If you are convinced that student wellness is important to address and you understand the many factors that affect it, keep reading! The next chapter will guide you through the process.



Want to know more?

More information on the CDC model can be found on their website:

<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/CSHP/>.

CHAPTER TWO - The Process

Step 1: Assess buy-in and gain support

Getting Started

A good way to start is to gather a group of interested people to discuss your concerns and ideas. It can be helpful to start with an existing group, such as a parent organization or the school board. If you have access to the internet, it would be worthwhile to go to some of the websites recommended in this guidebook and get some background information. You may also want to talk to parents at other schools, where they may already be doing things in this area. Once you are more clear about your top concerns (and possibly have some ideas for making changes), you will need to start finding allies and building support.

School Administrators

Gaining the principal's support for any changes within the school environment, curriculum, or extra-curricular activities is obviously necessary. Although almost all are in favor of improving student health in theory, they have to view any changes or expenses in light of competing needs within the school. Thus, some convincing is often needed to move a principal from a passive support role to an active support role, or even a leadership role.

There are several compelling points that you should make:

- 1. Healthier students perform better academically.**
- 2. Healthier students are absent less frequently.**
- 3. Students who eat well and get enough exercise have fewer behavioral problems.**

Put in this light, a wellness program will help principals address many of the biggest problems they face.

Because running a day school is an incredibly demanding job, finding time to talk to your school's principal may be challenging. Here are some thoughts on getting the most out of your communications:

- Principals have many competing interests. Any communication with them must emphasize how the schools will benefit.
- Principals are extremely busy. Any communication with them must be short and to the point.
- You may only have five minutes with them, so bring a written outline of your points and questions to leave for future review.
- Clarify what happens next. Finish by re-stating anything either party has promised to do. If the ball is in their park, ask if you can call (or email) in a certain amount of time to follow up or check on the progress.

Teachers

Teachers are also extremely busy. Although they also have the students' best interests at heart, they may balk at having to learn a new curriculum, add new activities to their day, or attend additional meetings. The key lesson we learned is that every effort must be made to make new lessons as easy to implement as possible. Supplementary materials, especially hand-outs, worksheets, and overheads, make their job easier and are very appreciated.

Teacher input should also be sought from the beginning. Like with the principals, you must highlight the expected benefits of any changes proposed for the school or their curriculum. For example, teachers may notice that students are more disruptive after having too much sugar or not enough exercise. Focus on how changes such as healthy snack policies or new recess activities will reduce classroom problems.

Parents

Parents are not necessary partners if a school wants to make changes involving health curricula. Issues such as school policy changes or changes in the foods served at lunch can also be made unilaterally by the administration. **HOWEVER**, it is often helpful (and definitely results in less negative feedback) if parents are involved at both the planning and implementation stages for these and other issues. It is easiest to do this if discussions about possible changes are held in conjunction with the wellness council (see Step 2), which must have parent representation.

In our experience, we have found that parents like to be involved from the very beginning and that they need to be updated (and invited to participate) continually throughout the year. **Parents need to hear information multiple times in different formats and the tone of the message needs to be consistently positive, inclusive, and supportive of their role as the primary influences in their children's lives.** Particularly at the beginning, parents need to be assured that any changes, such as forming a wellness council, are not designed to tell them what to feed their children or that their children are overweight. Emphasis needs to be on working together to help all children be healthier through the provision of information, activities, and a healthy school environment.

Parents who are health professionals (currently working or not) are particularly good people to have on your side. Not only are they strong supporters of healthy changes, but they also have access to knowledge, resources, and materials that could facilitate progress within the school.

Students

Like parents, it is very helpful (though not absolutely necessary) to solicit student input on potential changes. Middle schools and high schools might want to create a student wellness council, or involve students on the general school wellness council to facilitate student input. Using simple surveys or having structured discussions in classes is an easy way to learn what types of changes students support. Involving students as part of health lessons is another easy way. For example, when talking about nutrition, teachers can ask students to help create lists of healthy snacks that could be used by the school (or teacher) for a potential new policy.

In summary, the most successful efforts will have support from administrators, teachers, parents, and students. Although the goal of having healthy children should be sufficient to gain support from everyone, the reality is that limited time and resources often make this a challenging process. Just keep the end goal in mind and remember that every small change is a step in the right direction!



Materials available in the Appendix:

- Health and Academics brochure



Want to Know More?

- Read: *Reaching School Board Members: A Guide for Creating a Clear, Concise, and Compelling Nutrition Policy Campaign*,
www.californiaprojectlean.org/Assets/1019/files/RSBM%20English.pdf
- See the *Parent's Guide to School Wellness Policies*, available at
<http://www.kidseatwell.org/Parent%27s%20Guide.pdf>
- Good one page summary: *Better Nutrition and More Physical Activity Can Boost Achievement and Schools' Bottom Line*
(Download from: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/schoolfood/2-BetterNutrition.pdf>)

Step 2: Establish a School Wellness Council

In 2004, a federal law was passed requiring all schools who participate in any federally-funded meal program to have a school wellness council and a wellness policy. In addition, some states require school wellness policies and check for them during state inspections. The required wellness council and policy can be established by a school district for all of its schools. Many day schools are not obliged to follow these mandates; however, based on the many benefits of having healthier students (as discussed in the introduction), it is worthwhile for day schools to stay current with these advances happening in public schools (and many other private schools).

What is a school wellness council?

A school wellness council is a group of parents, students, teachers, administrators, health professionals, and others who represent different segments of the community. This group works together to give advice and support to the school on all parts of its school health program.

Why is it important to have a wellness council?

School wellness councils are an effective way to improve student and staff health, which in turn improve attendance and academic performance. Because children spend a large portion of their days at school, the school environment strongly influences students' health behaviors. A wellness council plays an important role in identifying the school's health needs and concerns, and subsequently addressing them through policies and activities. Because the council consists of diverse members, it is able to provide a wide range of perspectives and expertise.

What are the specific roles of a school wellness council?

Wellness councils can help advance school programming related to health and, therefore, improve the health of children and adolescents, in the following ways:

1. **Program planning**, such as participating in curriculum review, identifying emerging health issues, and encouraging innovation in health education.
2. **Advocacy**, such as ensuring that sufficient resources are given to support school health and health education programs, helping to build understanding between school and community, and linking the school to other community resources.
3. **Fiscal planning**, such as helping to raise funds for programs and preparing grant applications.
4. **Education**, such as initiating policies related to nutrition and physical education; and organizing school-wide health promotion events.
5. **Evaluation and accountability**, such as ensuring that the school's health and physical education programs are achieving their goals, obtaining input from parents and school staff, and identifying health needs.

What are some of the **benefits** of school wellness councils?

- They are an effective way to improve student health and create healthy schools;
- They support school health programs;
- They provide a forum for sharing information;
- They offer schools a range of advice and perspectives;
- They provide a way for community members to work together to make the most of community resources;
- They foster personal satisfaction and help members understand their roles in strengthening their community; and
- They foster cooperation by building trust and consensus among schools, parents, students, and the community.

How can someone **start** a school wellness council?

There is no right or wrong way to form a wellness council. However, it is important to have administrative support for this effort. You may want to meet with other key personnel, such as the secular studies principal, school nurse, or health teacher as well. The idea is to find one or two individuals who have the desire and time to focus on school health. Once you have some support, identify other people and groups that would likely be interested in joining. If your school has a parent-teacher organization, it may be useful to collaborate with them in recruiting potential wellness council members.

Invite everyone to the first meeting, where you can present information on the benefits of a council, highlight what such a group could do for your school, and share ideas about how to proceed. Make sure to take advantage of all of the helpful materials listed at the end of this section.

Summary of recommended steps:

1. Get the support of the school principal
2. Find other allies, such as health teachers, gym teachers, or any health professionals within the school
3. Discuss forming a council with staff members and parents identified by administration OR extend an invitation to all school staff and the parent body
4. Identify other possible members, such as community members and students, who should be invited as well
5. Hold an introductory meeting to present information about wellness councils, as well as possible short-term goals of the group (see Steps 3 and 4 for recommended first activities)

Any other suggestions?

- Try to align the wellness council with an existing organization, such as the parent organization.
- If your school has a large number of interested individuals, think about having “sub-committees” to focus on different topics (e.g. school food, health curriculum, events, etc.).
- Find a volunteer to take minutes at every meeting. These can be made available to parents or staff who were unable to attend. They are also valuable for documenting any plans or decisions that were made.
- Think carefully about who should chair the council. Often, the administration will have the final say if more than one person volunteers to be the leader. An over-aggressive chairperson may do more harm than good.
- Look on-line or talk to other schools to find existing resources. Within the area of school health, there are many free websites and non-profit groups designed just to help people like you. It is rarely necessary to do things like make your own health education materials.



Materials available in the Appendix:

- Wellness Council Overview hand-out
- Sample flyer for first wellness council meeting
- Best resources for parents and teachers



Want to Know More?

Information presented here was adapted from the following sources:

- *Developing Effective Coalitions: An Eight-Step Guide*, by Cohen, Baer, & Satterwhite
- Austin School Health Advisory Council website: www.austinisd.org/schools/shac
- See also: “Improving School Health: A Guide to School Health Councils,” published by Action for Healthy Kids (www.actionforhealthykids.org)
- *Promoting Healthy Youth, Schools and Communities: A Guide to Community-School Health Councils*, American Cancer Society, www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/resources/AGuideToCommunitySchoolHealthCouncils.pdf
- *Effective School Health Advisory Councils: Moving from Policy to Action*, Public Schools of North Carolina (www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/resources/NC_SHAC_FINAL.pdf)

Step 3: Complete the School Health Index

What is the School Health Index?

The School Health Index (SHI) is a self-assessment and planning tool designed to help schools improve their health-related policies and programs. It consists of a series of detailed questions for schools to answer to identify their strengths and weaknesses. It then guides the school through a process to identify priorities and develop an action plan.

The SHI includes eight sections that generally correspond to the Coordinated School Health model discussed in Chapter 1. The health topics that are focused on within these sections are safety, physical activity, nutrition, tobacco use, and asthma. Some day schools might choose not to include questions dealing with tobacco prevention, and there are provisions for adjusting the scores accordingly.

The SHI is a...	and not a...
Self-assessment and planning tool	Research or evaluation tool
Community-organizing and educational process	Tool for auditing or punishing school staff
Focused, reasonable, and user-friendly experience	Long, bureaucratic, painful process
Process that identifies no-cost or low-cost changes	Process that requires expensive changes
Process that provides justification for funding requests	Process that identifies unfunded mandates

Why use it?

According to the Center of Disease Control (CDC), the schools can “increase the students’ capacity to learn, reduce absenteeism, and improve the students’ physical fitness and mental alertness” through these activities. Although many school wellness councils can identify areas that need improvement, the SHI helps to emphasize the wide range of factors that are related to health. The action plan is a great way to figure out which improvements you will want to make first, and many of them can be done with existing staff and with few or no new resources.

How do we use it?

Ideally, the SHI should be filled out by the school wellness council, or a subcommittee of this council. At the very least, a group that includes an administrator, teacher, and parent needs to answer the questions together. Some sections, such as the section on physical education, will need information from the person in charge of those classes.

How long does it take?

The official instructions say it takes approximately 5 hours, which obviously scares off many schools. However, we found that a small group can complete the whole set of questions in about 2 hours.

How do schools get it?

The SHI can be filled out on-line at <https://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/shi/default.aspx> . The website is helpful because it guides you through the questions relevant to your school. It also allows you to store your answers on-line, and compare them from year to year. If you would rather do it with pen and paper, your school can order a printed copy of the questions, along with an instruction book, from that same website.

What do schools do with the finished product?

It is most useful to guide a school and/or wellness council as they begin deciding where to start making changes. Most schools will have medium or high scores in some categories and low scores in others. This provides an obvious starting place to focus your efforts.

In our experience, the SHI was possibly the best way we had to show our schools, the parents, and the funders that the schools were really making significant changes. Because changes in student health, test scores, or other evaluation methods might not appear right away, it is important to have some way to quantify the more intermediate changes. Although the CDC says evaluation is not one of the purposes of the SHI, we found it helpful anyway. Note though, the scores can be used to look for progress within one school, but should not be used for comparing different schools.



Want to Know More?

Visit the CDC's School Health Index website: <https://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/shi/default.aspx>.

Step 4: Write a School Wellness Policy

A school wellness policy is an important policy for all schools or school districts to have because it identifies the school's overall goals related to health education and other aspects of the school environment related to health. Ideally, it also discusses the rationale behind the policy, specific goals within each area, the responsible parties, and a method for assessing compliance with the policy.

We would also like to note that many Jewish school systems have less formal relationships with their member schools; thus, day schools might be more likely to need individual school policies. Regardless, the information given here could be used by a school system or an individual school.

What must be included in a wellness policy?

According to the federal law that mandates these policies (for schools receiving federal funds for meal programs), school districts must set goals for nutrition education, physical activity, campus food provision, and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness. Plans for evaluating implementation of the policy must also be included.

While not necessary, it is useful to start the policy with a statement about why health is important and why it should be addressed by schools. Including a religious perspective might be particularly relevant for day schools.

How can a school get started?

Many websites offer a step-by-step guide for writing a wellness policy from scratch. In addition, schools should look at examples from other schools, both public and private. Finally, once a draft has been written, at least one website (noted below) can help schools identify any weaknesses in their policy. Some schools choose to solicit ideas and suggestions from the whole school community as the policy is being drafted, others find it more practical to write a draft (most commonly as a function of the wellness council) and then share this draft with staff and parents. On the other hand, it is also possible for the school principal (or designated individual(s)) to establish a policy without any feedback from others.

Once a policy is written, what should happen next?

Schools may find it more practical to phase in a new wellness policy rather than to implement a comprehensive set of new policies all at once. Challenges such as limited class time, curriculum requirements, and funding and space constraints may dictate which aspects of the "ideal" policy can be included in the original policy and implemented immediately. Like other school policies, a wellness policy can evolve to fit the needs of the school.

The new policy should be shared with all staff, along with a discussion of what it means for the school, and for the staff members. The policy should then (or concurrently) be shared with parents and students. At this stage, the policy is an ideal catalyst for conversations about school wellness, and for recruiting individuals to the wellness council (if desired). Finally, the policy should be posted wherever other policies are, such as in the school handbook and on the school website.

School Wellness Policy Resources Online

As noted above, certain websites are extremely helpful when attempting to write a school wellness policy. Although there are innumerable places to go for help, below are five of the best sites to visit. If individuals do not have access to (or choose not to use) the internet, many of the organizations listed below will mail hard copies to the school, and many have staff that are available to answer your questions by phone (for free).

1. Action for Healthy Kids - www.actionforhealthykids.org/wellnesstool/index.php
Download a policy template, learn the elements of a wellness policy and search for sample policies by state and district
2. Healthy Schools Campaign – www.studentbodychallenge.org
Download the Model Wellness Policy by NANA, learn how to assess your wellness policy and view the CDC’s guidelines for school wellness policies
3. USDA – www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Healthy/wellness_policyrequirements.html
Learn about the requirements for local wellness policies and view sample policy language
4. Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program –
www.kidseatwell.org/LWPwebresources.doc
View four pages of website resources related to school wellness policies
5. Model School Wellness Policies - <http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/>
View model policies and see extensive list of other resources related to wellness policies



Materials in the Appendix:

- Day School Wellness Policy Examples
 - Joan Dachs Bais Yaakov-Yeshivas Tiferes Tzvi, Chicago, IL
 - Arie Crown Hebrew Day School, Chicago, IL
 - Hillel Torah North Suburban Day School, Skokie, IL
- How to Write a Wellness Policy table



Want to know more?

See the *Parent’s Guide to School Wellness Policies*, available at <http://www.kidseatwell.org/Parent%27s%20Guide.pdf>

Preventing Childhood Obesity: A School Health Policy Guide. 2009. National Association of State Boards of Education. Can be downloaded from: <http://www.rwjf.org/files/research/20090506nasbeguide.pdf>

Step 5: Implement a Health Curriculum

Forming a wellness council, writing a wellness policy, and even making changes to the food service or other aspects of the school environment are all important; however, sufficient health education must be provided alongside these changes before any improvements in student behaviors can be expected. To begin, children must be taught, from a young age, what is healthy and what is not. Then, they must understand the consequences of both healthy and unhealthy behaviors. Only then will they be able to apply this knowledge as they make choices both inside and outside of school. In contrast to the previous steps that can be initiated and implemented by parents or teachers in consultation with school administrators, this step is generally solely in the domain of the principals.

Requirements

Requirements for health curriculum depend on several things, including state and district standards. In general, the Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards recommends a minimum of 40 hours of health education each academic year for students in Pre-K through grade 2, and 80 hours for grades 3 through 12.

If Your School Already Offers Health Education

If your school has an existing health education curriculum, there are still a few things you can do to make sure the quality and quantity of health lessons are adequate. One first step is to complete the School Health Index section on health education. The questions in this component will help illustrate any weaknesses that might exist. You can also check your states' requirements to make sure your school is in compliance with them.

Criteria for Choosing a Health Curriculum

If your school does not regularly teach health education, or if your school scored poorly on this section of the School Health Index, there are many health curriculum guides and textbooks to choose from.

1. *Type of Curricula:* Will the lessons be implemented as part of science class, or is it necessary to use interdisciplinary lessons? Because of the limitations invoked by the need for dual curricula at day schools, using health lessons that can be integrated into existing classes, such as math or social studies might be necessary.
2. *Access to Technology:* Does the school have computers and access to the internet? Many of the new curricula rely on this type of technology for both teaching and classroom management.
3. *Evidence of Effectiveness:* Researchers have tested several health curricula to see if they really improve the attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors of students. Obviously, those curricula that have been shown to be effective are good choices for any school. Other, non-scientific, opinions are also good to gather. Asking administrators or teachers from other schools about their materials will provide you with more information about which curricula you might want (or not want).

4. *Ease of Use*: Perhaps one of the most important factors when it comes to actual implementation is the ease with which the materials can be used. Teachers are already overburdened and will be hesitant to add new lesson plans to their existing set. Thus, making this addition as easy as possible is critical. Teachers really appreciate curricula that provide sufficient background information, hand-outs, overheads, and worksheets. In addition, some curricula come with materials and presentations to be used to when orienting or training the staff for the new lessons.

Popular Evidence-Based Health Curricula

After reviewing the many options available, we recommend two sets of curricula that are based on scientific theories and evidence, and were attractive to school staff. The first set of books is an interdisciplinary nutrition and physical activity curriculum that encompasses all aspects of the learning environment: the classroom, the cafeteria, the gymnasium, the school hallways, the home, and even the community centers. The book for grades 6-8 is called **Planet Health**, while the book for grades 4-6 is called **Eat Well and Keep Moving**. Both are available at www.humankinetics.com.

The second curriculum is called **CATCH**. It is a Coordinated School Health Program designed to promote physical activity, healthy food choices, and prevent tobacco use for grades K-5. The CATCH Program focuses on coordinating four components: the Eat Smart school nutrition program, K-5 classroom curriculum, a physical education program, and a family program. *To order*: www.FlagHouse.com or 1-800-793-7900.

Physical Health Education Curricula

There are also many options for purchasing curriculum guides for physical education classes. Although many experienced teachers may not feel like they need such guides, they are extremely helpful for ensuring that nationally-recognized (or state-mandated) standards are met. They also provide teachers with hundreds of ideas for classroom activities. The focus on physical education classes has evolved from simply learning popular sports and playing games like dodge ball. There is consensus among researchers and professionals that gym class should promote activities and sports that all students enjoy and can pursue throughout their lives, and that all students are active as much of the class period as possible.

Two great options are the **CATCH** program, which corresponds to the health education component described above, and **SPARK**. SPARK, which stands for Sports, Play, and Active Recreations for Kids, is available for Early Childhood through High School. It focuses on developing healthy lifestyles, motor skills, and movement knowledge along with social and personal skills. *To order*: www.sparkpe.org/ or 1-800-SPARK-PE.

Supplemental Materials

Supplemental materials are available from numerous sources, including the Food and Drug Administration, www.pyramid.gov, and various health organizations (such as the American Heart Association) or industry groups (such as the Dairy Council or Dole foods). Generally speaking, materials from government agencies or well-known health organizations are the most trust-worthy.

There are also several options for integrating physical activity throughout the day. For example, **Take 10!** is a classroom-based physical activity program for grades K-5 that incorporates 10-

minutes of physical activity into core-curriculum lessons. *To order:* www.take10.net. There is another set of activities also designed to be used through-out the day. This program is called **Just-a-Minute (JAM) School Program** and it delivers a weekly one-minute exercise routine called the JAMmin' Minute and a monthly health newsletter called Health-E-tips. JAM is a free program for schools. Teachers and students love this! Finally, there is another free resource called **Brain Breaks**. These 3-5 minute activities are designed for early primary through late elementary students. The short lessons address content areas such as science, social studies, mathematics and language arts by targeting the cognitive, psychomotor skills, fitness and psychosocial learning domains. To obtain, email emc.cmich.edu or call (800) 214-8961.

Teacher Training/Orientation

If interdisciplinary curricula are chosen, the teachers will often have little or no experience in teaching health. Although the textbooks are designed to handle this, the teachers will probably feel more comfortable if they are given some type of health education, in addition to training or orientation for the specific books. It is strongly recommended that schools spend the extra time to go through the orientation materials provided with the curricula, or seek out external experts who could provide extra training. Often, organizations within your particular state provide these services to schools for free.

Getting Feedback

As with any big change or addition to the curriculum, it is important to get feedback from teachers. Through their feedback, principals can determine if the materials are being taught, if the students appear to be engaged, if more staff training is needed, or if additional resources are needed. An example form is provided in the Appendix (Appendix 9).

Evaluating Curriculum

The Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (HECAT) is an assessment tool for examining school health education curricula. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) made this tool to help school districts conduct a clear, complete, and consistent analysis of health education curricula based on the National Health Education Standards and CDC's Characteristics of Effective Health Education Curricula. The HECAT results can help schools select or develop appropriate and effective health education curricula and improve the delivery of health education. The HECAT is customizable to meet local community needs and conform to the curriculum requirements of the state or school district. A similar tool is available for Physical Education Curriculum. (*From CDC website: <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/HECAT/FAQ.htm>*)



Materials available in the Appendix:

- Sample Teacher Feedback Survey



Want to know more?

- *Questions to Ask When Choosing A Health Education Curriculum.* Available at: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Best_Practice_Questions_to_Ask_102176_7.pdf
- *Characteristics of an Effective Health Education Curriculum.* Centers for Disease Control and Health Promotion. Available from: <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/SHER/characteristics/>

Step 6: Select and Implement Other Policies and Programs

There are innumerable changes that schools can make to provide a healthier environment for the students and staff. Changes to school policies and programs are important because they can impact the whole school community, make the changes sustainable, and complement the health education being offered to students. Schools should not only consider which policies or programs would be easiest (or cheapest) to implement, but also which ones could make the biggest impact and which ones are needed to fulfill the goals set out in your school wellness policy. Completing the School Health Index will help to identify which specific areas need the most work.

Some examples of policies and programs that schools might want to consider are given below. There are obviously many more changes that could be made to improve the school environment. School resources, state laws, and support for the changes will all influence what can be done.

★ School Policy Examples

No food used as rewards

Schools can prohibit teachers from offering candy or other food items as rewards during class, as well as from organizing pizza parties as a reward for the whole class. At the very least, foods served during celebrations should be healthy.

Why do it? Foods used as rewards in the classroom usually have little or no nutritional value. Even though candy and other food items can be a cheap and easy way to get kids to do what you want, there are several reasons that schools should consider banning this practice altogether:

- It contradicts the lessons taught during health education
- It encourages overconsumption of foods high in added sugar and fat
- It teaches kids to eat when they're not hungry as a reward to themselves

There are many free and low-cost alternatives that teachers can use instead. Some of these, such as extra recess time, also help increase the amount of physical activity that the children receive.



Materials in the Appendix:

- Alternatives to Food as Rewards hand-out
- Example of a School Celebration Policy

No linking of physical activity and punishment

Students should not be punished by having their recess or physical education classes taken away. In addition, physical activity should not be used as a punishment.

Why do it? Taking away recess or gym class reduces the already limited opportunities students have for physical activity. Using physical activity as a punishment is not a good way to increase these opportunities because it teaches children to view physical activity negatively.

Recess before lunch

New research (and anecdotal reports) now support moving recess to the time period before lunch instead of after lunch. This is a no-cost change that could have big benefits for your school.

Why do it? Reports from Montana schools and other sources have found that this policy helps:

- Improve student behavior on the playground, in the cafeteria, and classroom.
- Students waste less food and drink more milk.
- Improve the cafeteria atmosphere.
- Children to be more settled and ready to learn upon returning to the classroom.



Want to know more? The Montana Team Nutrition Program has an entire website dedicated to helping schools institute this policy: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfood/recessBL.html>

Healthy snacks guidelines

There are many options for policies regarding foods brought in for snacks or parties. Defining what is “healthy” can be challenging. Fortunately, there are many lists available that offer guidelines (from general to brand-specific); however, some schools find it easier to just limit snacks to fruits and vegetables. Note that this change can be phased in. For example, a school could start with fruits and vegetables only on one day of the week until parents get used to it.

It is important to be aware of the financial limitations of some families that might restrict their ability to buy fresh produce. Schools might want to address this by giving out information on how to buy produce on a budget (for example, buying only foods that are in season, buying in bulk and making “snack-size” baggies at home, or focusing on lower-cost foods).

Why do it? Offering healthy snack choices in the classroom is an important part of creating a healthy school environment. Children need snacks in between meals to provide them with nutrients, which support growth and learning. In addition, many teachers get upset at the amount of “junk food” sent in with children for snacks. They are concerned that snacks high in sugar or caffeine negatively affect the learning environment, as well as make children less hungry for healthier foods served at meal times.



Materials in the Appendix:

- Healthy Snack Guidelines
- Seasonal Guide to Produce
- 20 Healthy Snacks
- Example of School Handbook Statement on Food

No unhealthy foods to be sold for fundraisers

Why do it? Selling candy or other unhealthy foods sends mixed messages to students and their families. In order to be consistent with the lessons taught during health education, it is important for schools to find other options for making money.



Materials in the Appendix:

- Healthy Fundraisers for Schools hand-out



Want to know more? See an entire website dedicated to this concept: *Healthy Fundraising*.
http://www.healthy-fundraising.org/healthy_fundraising_suggestions.htm

No soda on school grounds

Girls now drink more soda than milk. In the Chicago pilot study, one-third of boys drank at least one soda a day. Schools can choose to do several things to address this problem: get rid of all soda vending machines, replaces unhealthy beverages with healthy ones (e.g. skim milk, water, or 100% juices), or at least limit sales of unhealthy beverages to after school hours. Good policies also restrict the provision of soft drinks at class parties and other school events. In our experience, if children are not allowed to access sodas, it is important for modeling (and consistency) that the staff follow the same rules (e.g. the staff lounge does not have a soda machine). One of the simplest ways to consistently address all of these issues is to have a soda-free campus.

Why do it? There is evidence that high-sugar beverages, such as sodas and sports drinks, are linked to obesity. Drinking sodas also limits the amount of healthy beverages, like milk and water, that students drink.

★ School Activities

Within each area of a school's wellness program (see Chapter 1 for more on Coordinated School Health Model), there are countless activities that could be implemented. Some examples are given below. This list is certainly not exhaustive and the activities suggested here are not necessarily the "best" ones for any particular school. More ideas can be found on-line, in the resources listed below, by completing the School Health Index, or by talking to parents or staff from other schools.

Health Education

- Hold a health fair
- Provide a health tip of the week in school newsletter
- Make a "Health Corner"- a section of the library dedicated to health-related books
- Create a school garden
- Put up nutrition posters in cafeteria

Nutrition Services

- Find a parent or other community member to help review existing menu choices and search for healthier options that are similarly priced
- Collaborate with teachers to design posters information about healthy foods served

Physical Education/Activity

- Offer after-school or Sunday activities or leagues
- Encourage teachers to do 1 or 5-minute activity breaks during class
- Encourage students to be active during recess

School Environment

- Improve the nutritional content of foods served in cafeteria
- Remove soda vending machines
- Use “green” cleaning products

Staff Wellness

- Find parent or staff volunteer, or use a video, to offer exercise classes for staff
- Encourage staff to form walking groups for lunch time or before or after school
- Have a bulletin board in the staff lounge where people can post health tips or healthy recipes
- Make changes to foods served at staff meetings

Family Involvement

- Hold a 5K or other health walk for school families
- Invite guest speakers, such as local physicians or dietitians
- Invite local health organizations to present materials during open house or parent conference nights
- Add physical activities and improve the nutritional value of foods served at existing family events
- Send out monthly health education tips or newsletter



Materials available in the Appendix:

- Sample snack policy
- Alternatives to using food as a reward (2 hand-outs)
- Example of monthly health newsletter for parents and/or staff
- Accomplishments of Chicago day schools
- Mental health book recommendations for staff, parents, and students



Want to know more?

Preventing Childhood Obesity: A School Health Policy Guide. 2009. National Association of State Boards of Education. Download at:
www.rwjf.org/files/research/20090506nasbeguide.pdf

Making It Happen! School Nutrition Success Stories. Available to download or order free copy from Team nutrition: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/makingithappen.html> (includes many sample policies and activities from schools around the country)

Dollars and Sense: The Financial Impact of Selling Healthier School Foods. Available at:
<http://www.actionforhealthykids.org>

CHAPTER THREE - Evaluating Your Progress

Need for Evaluation

For parents and staff who are not familiar with program evaluation, it may not seem like the best use of a school's time and resources. However, there are actually several good reasons why schools should make the extra effort to evaluate the changes they are implementing. Most simply, evaluation helps schools to pinpoint what is working and what is not. More specifically, evaluation can be used to do the following:

1. To gain baseline information and numbers to justify the need for program (to parents, staff, or boards)
2. To gain baseline information and numbers to secure funding
3. To guide the development and implementation of wellness program initiatives
4. To measure potential changes (in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of students, parents, and staff, for example)

What evaluation tools are available?

Schools may pick and choose what type(s) of evaluation will be most helpful for them. There are school-level tools, such as the School Health Index (discussed in Chapter 2), as well as individual-level tools. Several options are discussed below.

School-Level Tools

• **Wellness Policy Monitoring Tool**

One great organization, *Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK)*, has created an easy-to-use tool to help schools continually assess and improve implementation of their wellness policy. This tool is fully customizable for each school and allows schools to post current wellness policy initiatives, note progress, plan next steps, and determine resources needed. The results page gives a score and provides links to helpful resources based on areas needing improvement. Go to the AFHK website to learn more or to begin using the tool: www.actionforhealthykids.org/wellnesstool/Presentations/pres-out652.php/.

• **School Health Index** (see Chapter 2, Step 3)

This tool helps schools identify their strengths and weaknesses related to providing a healthy school environment and quality health education. It also assists schools with identifying priorities and developing an action plan.

Individual-Level Tools

• **Student Surveys**

There are several existing surveys that can be used to gather information about students' health-related knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. Some examples of good ones are:

1. Youth Behavioral Risk Survey (YBRS) (<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>)
2. Hearts-N-Parks Survey (<http://www.nrpa.org/content/default.aspx?documentId=2951>)
3. Chicago Jewish Day School Wellness Initiative adaptation of the YBRS survey (Appendix 21)

● **Body Mass Index**

Body mass index (BMI) is a measure of height-for-weight that is used to categorize individuals as underweight, normal, overweight, or obese. Much attention has recently been paid to the collection of BMI data from students. Some states mandate that all schools collect this information and send it home to parents, along with information about weight problems. There are obviously many issues surrounding this type of evaluation, as outlined below.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Helps schools to monitor trends in obesity among students ● Raises awareness among parents, many of whom do not realize their children are overweight or obese ● Provides an objective way to measure school-level changes related to health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focuses attention on a negative (losing weight) instead of positive (health/wellness) ● Many students do not like it ● Many parents will also be against it ● Screening and data management is time-consuming ● Schools usually need to send out consent forms prior to screening

As an alternative to collecting BMI data through measurements, schools can also use height and weight information from existing health examination forms (when available). This provides the same information, without the hassles of screening, so schools can track the percentage of students who are overweight or obese. If this is not possible and the school still wants or needs BMI data, it is highly recommended that they use a school nurse or volunteer parent health professional to do the height and weight screenings. There are guidelines available to direct this process (Appendix 22). In addition, there is a new Excel spreadsheet available from the CDC to facilitate screening within schools (Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/childrens_bmi/tool_for_schools.html)

Note that recent studies have found that measuring and reporting BMI does **not** lead to more weight-related teasing or bullying. There is also a lack of evidence connecting the collection of BMI measurements to an increase in eating disorders among students.

● **Fitness Measurements**

If not mandated, most schools will not choose to do BMI measurements on their own. Fortunately, there are less controversial measures that can help schools evaluate their students' health. Most of these are most appropriately conducted as part of the Physical Education program. One of the most widely used measures of fitness within schools is the President's Physical Fitness Challenge. For this, all students are measured in five areas: curl-ups or partial curl-ups, shuttle run, endurance run/walk, pull-ups or right angle push-ups, and V-sit or sit and reach. Many resources are available to help schools complete these measures.

Strategies for Implementing

For each of these evaluation tools, schools will need to consider a few questions:

1. Is it necessary to get parent consent?
2. Who will be in charge of data collection?
3. Who will manage the data? (How will it be stored? How will confidentiality be maintained?)
4. How often will evaluations be conducted?
5. With whom will the results be shared?

For schools with little evaluation experience, it would be extremely valuable to look for possible partners. There may be parents willing to help. In addition, schools could contact local colleges or universities to look for possible assistance. For example, students in schools of public health or nursing are often required to work with schools or other organizations to gain evaluation experience.



Materials available in the Appendix:

- Chicago Jewish Day School Wellness Initiative Student Survey (grades 5-8)
- BMI screening guidelines for schools



Want to know more?

- President's Challenge website: <http://www.presidentschallenge.org/>. You can also call them with questions, at 1-800-258-8146.

CHAPTER FOUR - Hints, Tips, and Considerations

We hope this guidebook has been helpful, but we realize that many topics did not get the attention they deserve and that you may still have many questions. In this last chapter, we will try to briefly address some of the remaining practical issues such as where to start, how to pay for things, and how to keep things going. The chapter ends with a general list of tips that we hope will be useful to anyone working on school wellness programs.

Where to Start

If you have read through this guidebook, completed the School Health Index, talked to other interested parents and staff, or even visited some of the websites mentioned here, you may be slightly overwhelmed by the huge array of steps that your school could take next. If so, here is one list that gives suggestions on where to start (or what to aim for):

"First Things First"

- Breakfast for every child
- Daily physical activity/physical education
- Recess before lunch
- Time to enjoy a healthy lunch
- Positive non-food rewards
- Smart snack opportunities

(This is from a presentation by an Action for Healthy Kids Team Leader from Montana—Dayle Hayes—who believes that these can serve as the foundation for school wellness.)

Finding Money

Many of the changes outlined in this guidebook can be made with no added expenses for the school. However, there are obviously a lot of other projects and activities that schools might want to implement if money was available. Few day schools will be able to fund wellness-related changes through their operating expenses; thus, it is important for these schools to be able to find additional sources of funding. Childhood obesity is a HUGE issue right now and **many organizations and funders are interested in helping schools improve children's health**. That means that grants are out there for health-related programming and, for the most part, the funders realize that schools generally do not employ grant writers so they make the applications relatively painless.

There are several resources available to help schools find these opportunities. To begin, many school health organizations have free weekly or monthly e-newsletters that include funding opportunities. Often, these organizations also have a page on their website that lists all current funding opportunities.

Groups in Illinois that provide information about grants:

- CLOCC (the Consortium to Lower Obesity among Chicago Children): www.clocc.org
- Stakeholders Collaboration to Improve Student Health: www.stakeholderschicago.org

National groups:

- Shaping America's Youth: www.shapingamericasyouth.org
- Healthy Schools Campaign: www.healthyschoolscampaign.org

Another option is to **look for an individual (or more) to sponsor a wellness activity or expense**. One of the Chicago schools consistently put notices in the parent newsletter looking for someone to sponsor the fruit of the week program, playground equipment (at various prices), and other program needs.

Yet another option is to **make programming dependent on a family's ability to pay**. For example, schools may offer after-school sports leagues or classes, but charge students to participate. This is obviously not ideal since it leaves out already disadvantaged families, but some schools may decide it is better than nothing.

Dealing with Concerns about Eating Disorders

Talking about wellness, especially about nutrition and physical activity, may cause concerns about individuals who are at the other end of the spectrum. In other words, some students will be struggling with eating disorders (or even malnutrition) as opposed to obesity. Mental and emotional health are important components of any school wellness initiative, so issues such as eating disorders, poor body image, low self esteem, and depression should all be addressed. Unfortunately, not all day schools have access to social workers or mental health professionals that can help them prevent, diagnose, and treat students with such problems. However, it is possible that schools can work with local Jewish service agencies to offer these services. Schools can also address mental health issues in other ways, such as looking for volunteers to offer education for parents, adding information about these issues to the health education program, or simply providing referrals to appropriate services.

Within the Chicago schools, a Mental Health Consultant was available to provide a series of lessons about these issues for the older girls. However, other activities were also implemented, such as having a social worker from the community offer a session for mothers about dealing with adolescent girls' body image issues. One school also purchased several books concerning these sensitive issues, and made all books available to parents to check out. One recommended book is *Healthy Body Image: Teaching Kids to Eat and Love Their Bodies Too!* By Kathy J. Kater. More resources to help schools deal with students with eating disorders can be found through your local Jewish Family and Children's Agencies.

Building Sustainability

To create long-term change, it is important that the improvements that are made do not only impact the current students or the current school year. One way to do this is to focus on making changes within the fabric of the school – specifically, within existing practices and social norms of the school community. In other words, it might be more effective to start a new practice of always providing water whenever beverages are served at any school function, as opposed to having a one-time health fair. As another example, if reaching a certain goal results in a big

celebration for students every year, starting a tradition that this is a physical activity-based celebration instead of a pizza party might have wide-ranging influence on the attitudes of both current and future students (such as making a connection between positive emotions and physical activity, instead of between these emotions and food). In addition, as noted in the previous chapter, making policy changes is another effective way of ensuring that the changes will remain from year to year.

Working with the Broader Community

One goal of the Chicago project is to eventually broaden the initiative to include synagogues, restaurants, and other organizations within the community. Working with health care professionals within the community could also be important. Although our initiative has not made much progress in this area, we strongly believe that these connections are essential to reaching the entire community and ensuring that the health knowledge and healthy behaviors advocated by school wellness programs are actually adopted by all families.

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

In the three years that the Chicago Jewish Day School Wellness Initiative has been running, the project team and the individual schools have overcome several obstacles and learned many valuable lessons. Although many of these may be specific to the participating schools, we believe that some could be helpful to all day schools. To begin, it might be helpful to summarize what we believe to be our greatest challenges.

Challenges

1. Rough start

The program got off on the wrong foot due to a perception that program was focused on getting the students to lose weight and that the wellness council was going to act like the “food police” and tell parents what to feed their children. Although we never said (or implied) anything to that end, we apparently did not do enough work to explain exactly what the program goals were and how they would be accomplished.

2. Difficulty of getting parents to get involved

Parents of day school students have many family and community responsibilities that limit their ability to get involved with “extra” duties like serving on a wellness council or attending non-required school events and activities. We underestimated the difficulty of reaching parents through these means and did not spend enough time working on alternative methods (such as through the school newsletter) until the second year.

3. Competing needs that limited what administrators could (or would) do

Although we understood that day school principals were generally overworked (and underpaid), we naively hoped that the importance of student health would enable them to overcome the logistical challenges of implementing health-related changes.

4. Finding culturally-appropriate materials and activities

One long-term goal of the initiative was to find or create health education materials specifically designed for Jewish children. Although the project team has been able to adapt many existing resources for general health education, a set of Torah-based health education materials has not been developed. Finding someone with the necessary education in both areas was more difficult than we imagined.

Top 10 Tips for Other Schools

1. Use or adapt existing school wellness models and health education materials
2. Spend the time and effort to build support at the beginning
3. Provide education before making changes
4. Strive to involve all parents, especially the “moderate” ones
5. Consider starting with the “easiest” targets
6. Offer choices (“a buffet”) instead of mandates
7. Focus on the positive (i.e. *Promoting wellness, not reducing obesity*)
8. Talk to others who have done this type of work in other schools
9. Expect a slow start and incremental changes
10. Share your successes regularly within the school community and beyond

Conclusions

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”
~Margaret Meade

Coordinated school health programs have many benefits. Students become healthier and reduce their risks for chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. Students and schools benefit because healthier students have fewer disciplinary problems in the classroom, have better attendance, and are more prepared to learn. And the entire community benefits by having healthier, better educated children.

Fortunately, implementing a wellness program does not have to cost a lot of money or require health care professionals to lead the charge. Any committed parents, teachers, principals, or even students can make real changes in their school. Even better, a host of resources are available to help these individuals. And every small step counts.

As more and more day schools (and other Jewish institutions) accept this challenge, the changes will be easier and easier to make. Schools all over the country will be able to share their experiences and the materials they have developed. More importantly, the norms within the community will start to favor healthy foods and more active lifestyles. In this way, we can all better follow the command - **“V’nishmartem meod l’nafshesaichem”** – to diligently guard our health.

Acknowledgements

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- **Akiba Schechter Jewish Day School**
- **Arie Crown Hebrew Day School**
- **Hillel Torah North Suburban Day School**
- **Joan Dachs Bais Yaakov - Yeshivas Tiferes Tzvi**

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- **Rachel Zimmerman**, Mental Health Consultant, Jewish Child and Family Service
- **Chana Goldstein, NP**, School Nurse Practitioner, Associated Talmud Torahs
- **Lindsay Weil, RD**, Dietitian, formerly of the Sinai Health System

Last, but not least, we would like to thank to the **Michael Reese Health Trust** and the **Polk Bros. Foundation** for making this initiative possible. We are extremely grateful for their support and guidance over the years.

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ROLE OF SCHOOLS IN A SOLUTION

- Create environments for students that provide the following:
- Opportunities to practice healthy behavior
 - Messages reinforcing nutrition and physical activity
 - Exposure to more healthy options than less healthy options, including fundraising, celebrations and rewards

Suggestions:

1. **Form a school health advisory council** with parents, students, doctors, businesses, and school administrators to assess the school environment and implement policy.
2. **Integrate physical activity and nutrition education into the regular school day** by incorporating it into reading, math, science, and social studies lessons.
3. **Encourage faculty and staff to model healthy lifestyles** to enhance school effectiveness. Faculty and staff are influential role models for students.



For more information...

Visit the CLOCC website: www.clocc.net, or call us: (312) 573-7759

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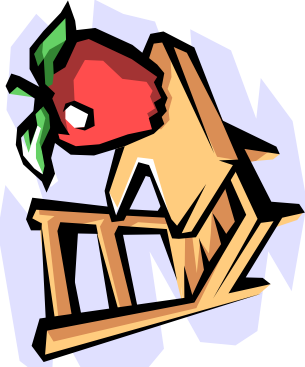
HOW NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AFFECT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT



FOOD CONSUMPTION AND COGNITIVE FUNCTION

Adapted from Action for Healthy Kids at www.ActionforHealthyKids.org

- Lasting effects of inadequate nutrition
 - **Compromised cognitive development**
 - **Diminished brain function**
- Undernourished and malnourished children have
 - **Shortened attention span**
 - **Difficulty concentrating**
 - **Irritability**
 - **Fatigue and low energy levels**



DEHYDRATION INTERFERES WITH ACADEMICS

Adapted from Water UK at www.water.org.uk and Lieberman, 2007

- Even mild dehydration affects thinking and learning
- Dehydration associated with
 - * Confusion
 - * Irritability
 - * Lethargy
 - * Fatigue
 - * Headache
 - * Dizziness
 - * Lightheadedness
 - * Dry Mouth
 - * Muscle Weakness

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND ACHIEVEMENT SCORES

From www.ActionForHealthyKids.org

- Opportunities for physical activity ⇔ **improved test scores**
- Improved activity ⇔
 - **Increased concentration**
 - **Higher self-esteem**
 - **Superior academic performance**

CHILDHOOD OVERWEIGHT STARTS BEFORE SCHOOL AGE

Mason et al, 2006; Ogden et al, 2006

- **24% of Chicago preschoolers are overweight**
 - 14 percent preschoolers nationally

CHILDHOOD OVERWEIGHT IN CHICAGO

IDPH, 2006; Mason et al, 2006; Ogden et al, 2006

- More children in Chicago are overweight or are at risk of overweight than in the nation or the state of Illinois
 - **26% of Chicago elementary school children are overweight**
 - 21 percent statewide
 - 19 percent nationally



CHILD HEALTH AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Adapted from Action for Healthy Kids at www.ActionforHealthyKids.org

- Student health is *directly* connected with achievement
- Active children and children who eat nutritious meals daily have:
 - **Higher academic scores**
 - **Better class participation**
 - **Reduced tardiness**

School Wellness Councils

Research shows that healthy children do better in school – from attendance and behavior to academics and overall performance. Your school is interested in exploring ways to improve student health. Schools across the country have found that an effective way to motivate and guide change is to form a School Wellness Council (SWC).

What is a School Wellness Council?

A SWC is a core group of parents, students, educators, health professionals, and others who represent different segments of the community. This group works together to give advice and support to the school on all parts of its school health program.

Why do we need a School Wellness Council?

- Children are facing an increasing amount of health problems, including obesity, asthma, diabetes, and food allergies
- Healthy children learn better
- Schools play an important role in teaching healthy habits
- Healthy homes and healthy schools support healthy children

What components of school health will be addressed?

- Health education
- Physical education
- Healthy school environment
- Family and community involvement
- Health promotion for school staff

What are some of the benefits of School Wellness Councils?

School Wellness Councils:

- Are an effective way to improve student health and create healthy schools;
- Provide a way for community members to work together to make the most of community resources and assets;
- Support school-health programs;
- Provide a forum for sharing information;
- Provide a range of advice and perspectives;
- Foster personal satisfaction and help members understand their roles in strengthening their community; and
- Foster cooperation by building trust and consensus among schools, parents, students, and the community.

What are the specific roles of a School Wellness Council?

SWCs can help advance school health programming and, therefore, improve the health of children and adolescents, in the following ways:

- 1. Program planning**, such as participating in curriculum review, identifying emerging health issues, and encouraging innovation in health education.
- 2. Advocacy**, such as ensuring that sufficient resources are given to support school health and health education programs, helping to build understanding between school and community, and linking the school to other community resources.
- 3. Fiscal planning**, such as helping to raise funds for programs and preparing grant applications.
- 4. Education**, such as initiating policies related to nutrition and physical education; and organizing school-wide health promotion events.
- 5. Evaluation and accountability**, such as ensuring that the school's health and physical education programs are achieving their goals, obtaining input from parents and school staff, and identifying health needs.

..... **Need for Action in the Jewish Community**

- Nationwide, over half of all children are overweight or obese.
- A recent study of Jewish children living in two Chicago communities found rates of obesity that were higher than national averages.
- Research shows that 70% of overweight children will become overweight adults.
- Less than a quarter of parents of overweight or obese children realize that their child has a weight problem.
- The study of Jewish children in Chicago found that the majority fail to eat the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables each day and approximately half do not get the recommended amount of daily physical activity.
- Other health concerns, such as diabetes, asthma, and food allergies are also on the rise.

To get involved, please contact your school's principal.

Want to Know More?

Check out "Improving School Health: A Guide to School Health Councils," published by Action for Healthy Kids. www.actionforhealthykids.org

All parents are invited to the first meeting of the

School Wellness Council



What: This meeting will discuss what a school wellness council is, why they are needed, and what role they will play in our schools.

When:

Where:

Why You Should Go: To find out how you can help shape this program and make a difference in our children's health!

Hope to see you there!

Best Resources for Parents and Teachers

★ Action for Healthy Kids

Website: <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org>

They are a national nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing the epidemic of overweight, undernourished and sedentary youth by focusing on changes in schools. They have hundreds of resources for parents, teachers, administrators, and students.

★ **Parents Advocating for School Wellness Toolkit.** Written by Action for Healthy Kids. Available to download from: <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/family/>. Or contact them by email: info@actionforhealthykids.org or phone: 1-800-416-5136.

★ **Changing the Scene: Improving the School Nutrition Environment, A Guide to Local Action.**

Team Nutrition USA. Free kit includes a Powerpoint presentation, script, transparencies, and brochures to help parents, teachers, administrators, food service professionals, or community members evaluate and improve a school's nutrition environment.

★ SWITCHH (The Soveya Wellness Initiative To Create Healthy Habits)

Website: www.oveya.com

This is a program to help Jewish Day schools address the issue of childhood obesity. This program raises awareness, stresses the urgency, educates and provides practical tools to assist Jewish children, families and schools in reducing the growing rate of childhood obesity. Among other resources, they offer a weekly newsletter that addresses health from a Torah perspective.

★ Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Website: <http://www.rwjf.org/childhoodobesity/>

This is one of the largest, and most respected, organizations in the country focused on health, with a particular focus on childhood obesity. Their website offers numerous research publications, policy briefs, recommendations, program examples, and other information on this topic.

★ Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program (IL NET)

Website: www.kidseatwell.org

Great organization that provides free nutrition education training, assistance, and resources to Illinois schools.

★ CLOCC – Consortium to Lower Obesity among Chicago Children

Website: www.clocc.org

This organization brings together schools, businesses, government, community organizations, and individuals to fight childhood obesity. Their website offers many resources, links to other resources, presentations, and other ideas for improving childhood health.

★ CATCH – Coordinated Approach to Child Health

Website: <http://www.catchinfo.org/>

This is a full model of school health that includes materials for all components. They also have training available. Hundreds or thousands of schools around the country are currently using CATCH.

JDBY-YTT Wellness Policy

At Joan Dachs Bais Yaakov – Yeshivas Tiferes Tzvi, we recognize that proper service of Hashem requires each person to maintain a healthy lifestyle, as mandated by the pasuk: “V’nishmartem meod l’nafshesaichem” – you must diligently guard your health. While proper eating and exercise habits must be demonstrated at home, it is the responsibility of a Torah institution to partner with its parent body to instill this important mitzvah in our children.

To this end, we are committed to supporting and promoting the health of students, families, and staff through the provision of a healthy school environment and health education. To address the numerous factors that influence health, we will attempt to provide support and education in the following areas: health education, physical education, family involvement, school environment, and staff wellness. The programs, policies, and resources will be designed to foster the knowledge and skills necessary for all members of the JDBY-YTT community to achieve life-long health. We recognize that better health will not only lead to an enhanced quality of life for all involved, but also to improved academic achievement for the students.

SPECIFIC GOALS

Health Education

Health education is a planned, sequential, K-8 curriculum or supplemental education program that addresses the physical, mental, emotional, and social dimensions of health. The curriculum is designed to motivate and assist students, families, and staff to maintain and improve their overall health, prevent disease, and reduce health-related risk behaviors. Various educational methods will be used to teach individuals the long-term benefits of choosing a healthy lifestyle and to provide the information and skills necessary to make healthy choices.

Physical Education

It is recognized that regular physical activity in childhood and adolescence improves strength and endurance, helps build healthy bones and muscle, facilitates maintaining a health weight, reduces stress and anxiety, increases self-esteem, and improves academic performance. Moreover, physical activity at all ages leads to a better quality of life, reduced risk of diseases, and increased longevity.

Current recommendations suggest that children participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Recommendations for adults advise at least 30 minutes of [moderate-intensity](#) physical activity on 5 or more days of the week or at least 20 minutes of [vigorous-intensity](#) physical activity 3 or more days per week. The overall goal for the physical activity component of this policy is to give all members of the school community opportunities, support, and encouragement to reach these levels of activity both inside and outside of the school.

Specifically, we believe that all students in all grades should experience quality physical education and activity in a sequential, comprehensive, enjoyable, and safe learning environment. Physical education classes should follow national standards and utilize evidence-based curriculum to maximize the potential benefits of the limited time period. Students should spend at least 50% of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous activity. For students to receive the nationally-recommended 60 minutes of physical activity a day, other opportunities for physical

activity are obviously needed both at school and at home. To help to increase activity levels during the school day, teachers will be encouraged to incorporate physical activity into other subject lessons and children will be given opportunities to be active during recess.

Family Involvement

Family members are to be engaged as an integral part of the effort to teach children about health and wellness. The school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The school will make available information related to healthy eating, exercise, and other health-related topics. The school will also support health-related educational programs and activities for families throughout the school year. In addition, schools will encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks. To facilitate this, schools will provide parents with a list of foods and beverages that meet nutritional standards, and will offer ideas for healthy celebrations, rewards, and fundraising activities.

School Environment

The school will attempt to provide an environment that supports healthy eating, physical activity, and overall wellness. As part of this effort, all class celebrations and school functions will include healthy options, particularly fruits and vegetables for snacks and water to drink. Moreover, a list of healthy food and non-food alternatives may be made available to parents and teachers for classroom celebrations. Schools will recommend that foods or beverages that do not meet nutrition standards be limited. Schools will also look for nutritional foods or non-food items to use as rewards for academic performance or good behavior.

Foods and beverages provided by the schools will seek to be consistent with recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and USDA School Meals Initiative for Healthy Children in nutritional content and portion size.

Staff Wellness

The school encourages its staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. To achieve this goal, the school wellness council will work with administration and staff to develop and promote health and wellness educational programs and activities for the staff.

Monitoring

Schools will work with the school wellness council to develop, implement, and monitor policies and programs related to health. The school and wellness council will, as necessary, revise the wellness policy and develop work plans to facilitate its implementation. The council's role is advisory; final responsibility for implementation rests with the principals.

(Joan Dach Bais Yaakov – Yeshivas Tiferes Tzvi Elementary School, Chicago, IL)

Arie Crown Hebrew Day School Wellness Policy

Draft 2: August 22, 2008

“Venishmartem meod lenafshoteichem

Be very careful about your lives.”

--Chazal 3

Introduction:

Why concern ourselves, as a school, with wellness? It is our responsibility as a school to act in the best interest of all students. According to research gathered by the Orthodox Union, in 2007 more than 15 percent of American teenagers were considered obese; pediatricians in the Jewish community have seen firsthand a greater increase in cases of pediatric obesity among children and adolescents. In fact, they say “this phenomenon is particularly disturbing because it seems the Jewish community, its institutions and communal frameworks bear some responsibility for this epidemic.... We must embrace the principles of moderation and rationality when eating and serving food, particularly when it comes to our children. Obesity is such an alarming danger that former US Surgeon General Dr. Richard Carmona calls it the “greatest threat to public health today.” Maimonides, himself a physician, devoted much time and space to teach about healthful eating and ways of conducting one’s physical existence as part of mandated Jewish practice. He emphasizes the critical role of a balanced diet and lifestyle. Obesity is the result of moving away from that balanced lifestyle toward one of overeating, unhealthy diets, and increased sedentary lifestyles.

While obesity is an issue that must be addressed as a community; schools alone cannot solve or prevent childhood obesity, but they can have a positive impact on students’ awareness and behavior. There is an urgent need to address the problem in the school setting where children consume nearly 40% of their daily calories, explain members of the healthy schools campaign. The Student Body Challenge explains that even small changes, such as replacing soda with healthy beverages such as water or approved fruit juices, and eliminating junk food will get things moving in the right direction. While some people are afraid that a school wellness policy will put an end to celebrations, that is not so; while cakes, cookies, and sweets still can be available, they must be in proportion to healthier foods and nonfood items. In addition, time spent on eating, other than as sustenance, should be limited; physical activity should be increased as a reward instead, and still in keeping with appropriate time related to academics. The goal is to educate students, parents, and teachers about nutrition, balance, and alternate rewards in order to create a long term healthy lifestyle. Interestingly, while these suggestions come from the general population, they support the teachings of Judaism that one is responsible to care for his or her body as a gift, for example.

We recognize that wellness goes beyond the issues of obesity. Therefore, at Arie Crown Hebrew Day School, the wellness policy supports health and well-being in terms of nutrition, physical fitness, emotional health, hygiene, and safety as inclusive of all students, faculty, staff, and administration. It is set forth as a response to our knowledge, based on research, that in order to thrive, grow, and learn, students need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active. Good health fosters student attendance and education which in turn increase emotional well being in terms of confidence and self esteem. In the long term, we hope to help our students create healthy habits which should help ward off heart disease, cancer, stroke, and

diabetes due to unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, patterns often established during childhood. Additionally, research shows that a healthy physical body helps to support a healthy emotional body. It is the committee's intent to create an atmosphere that supports wellness by creating a safe, comfortable, balanced environment, one that Maimonides would deem fit for our Jewish lives. Our policy is to be implemented in a way that it becomes part of daily life at Arie Crown Hebrew Day School. We look forward to our joint efforts as a community increasing the opportunities for healthy lifestyles for our children.

Arie Crown Hebrew Day School is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating, physical activity, safety, and comfort in the building as well as within one's own body.

According to the 2004 Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act signed into effect by President Bush, school district policies address:

- Goals for nutrition education
- Goals for physical activity
- Nutrition guidelines for all foods available at the school
- Goals for school-based activities designed to promote student wellness
- Plans for evaluating the implementation of the policy

The developers of Arie Crown's school wellness policy include:

- School administrators, Judaic and English
- School teachers, Judaic and English
- Parents
- Students
- PTA members
- The school nurse
- The school social worker
- The physical education teacher

In this way the plan can be all-inclusive in order to best reach and model a healthy lifestyle, especially for students. With widespread support, a policy can be effective and will create a change in behavior. While this is a cultural shift that will take time, it will be best served with all of the Arie Crown community members, including families, faculty, and students, as proponents.

Goals:

These goals are guidelines, not limits to creating wellness at Arie Crown.

- Teach healthy eating habits as part of the curriculum
- Provide students with healthy school meals that are attractive and appealing to children including a variety of fruits and vegetables
- Make available healthy foods as part of meals, as fruit snacks, at fundraisers, at celebrations, and as reward activities
- Model healthy lifestyles by encouraging adults to adopt health-promoting practices
- Provide adequate time and space for students to eat; these places should be clean and pleasant; a minimum of 20 minutes after sitting down to lunch which is served some time between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.; provide hand sanitizing before

eating; discourage students from sharing their food or beverages with each other to minimize spreading germs as well as for allergy concerns

- Offer adequate time and opportunity for physical activity moving toward the nationally recommended amount of daily activity which is at least 60 minutes per day cumulative throughout the day
- Encourage physical activity in the curriculum as it supports learning

Suggestions for implementation of the goals:

- Bring in speakers to discuss all aspects of wellness such as a nutritionist, a social worker, a trainer; embed nutrition and fitness into curriculum; create physical education programs based on activity and nutrition; create extracurricular activities involving wellness
- Training for teachers and staff is essential for wellness to become part of the Arie Crown culture
- Adherence to and consistency in supporting the policy is mandatory for all faculty and administrators, Judaic (morning) and English (afternoon), in order for wellness to become part of the Arie Crown culture
- Evaluate and modify, according to healthy standards, the meals served at school for lunch, fundraisers, teacher meetings, community meetings; provide nutritional information for food served at school; offer suggestions for parents for healthy snacks, fruit breaks, and lunches, as well as for Shabbat, life cycle events, and holidays
- Beverages encouraged in school: plain or flavored water without caloric sweeteners, vegetable and 100% fruit juices, milk (on dairy days) Beverages discouraged and no longer served in school: soft drinks, sports drinks, iced teas, caffeinated drinks, fruit drinks (not juices)
- Offer parent suggestions for increasing physical activity in the family and decreasing sedentary behavior such as watching t.v., and playing computer games; perhaps open school gym during weekends, evenings, vacations, for activity space; create family gym nights or other activities that include the Arie Crown community; work with local JCC to create Arie Crown physical activity events
- Create ways to celebrate at school that do not involve food; create a common time during school for “fruit break” or scheduled classroom parties. Eliminating random acts of eating also should help to provide a healthier learning environment in terms of clean classrooms and hallways, as well as respect for the body
- Remove soda machine from teacher’s lounge, serve healthy food at faculty meetings, limit unhealthy food in the teacher’s lounge; encourage physical fitness for faculty through organized programs—include students when possible
- Do not schedule clubs or meetings during lunch time, allow lunch in the cafeteria only—not in classrooms
- Increase time for students in physical education class on a regular basis
- Create after school extracurricular sports/fitness programs; create recess fitness programs; do not allow students to wander the halls or congregate in inactivity during recess (20 minutes daily of supervised outdoor recess engaged in moderate to vigorous activity is the national standard suggested)
- Teachers, administrators, or community members should not use physical activity as punishment or withhold opportunities for physical activity such as recess and physical education

- Create opportunities to share wellness information, including nutrition and fitness, with the Arie Crown community through the weekly newsletter, at gatherings such as conferences, curriculum night, PTA meetings, classroom presentations; tailor presentations to respect and support kashrut and Orthodox observance

Conclusion:

We at Arie Crown are not alone in moving toward an environment of physical and nutritional health for our students, faculty, and community. The efforts to support wellness are prevalent in the Jewish community as well as the general American community. Local actions and national laws are enacted to support movement toward a healthier population. Maimonides' notions of balance and moderation still are professed today. Additionally, in keeping with Jewish teachings against excess indulgences, linking the body and the soul as we navigate life's journey, and the body as ours to take care of while we inhabit it, it is natural and necessary to support community action regarding wellness. Looking into this idea of creating a wellness policy at Arie Crown is enlightening; creating wellness for children starting in schools is a national, not just a school issue. Therefore, resources toward that end are abundant. Realization that our children's immediate and future health and well-being are at stake should unite our Arie Crown family to take action toward creating a culture of wellness; we must be united in thought *and* action.

“When health is absent, wisdom cannot reveal itself, art cannot manifest, strength cannot fight, wealth becomes useless, and intelligence cannot be applied.”

--Herophilus, Father of Anatomy

Hillel Torah North Suburban Day School

Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition

Hillel Torah North Suburban Day School recognizes that a healthy child is a happy child. A child that begins his/her day with a healthy breakfast has more energy to learn and concentrate. This is one example of a healthy habit that is stressed here, at Hillel Torah.

Both physical activity and healthy eating habits are stressed on a regular basis. Both the faculty and parent body are aware that these habits are for life and students are better able to learn when these needs are met. To that end, the following policies are in place in order to support these goals.

- **School Wellness Committee**

A Wellness committee has been established consisting of faculty, parents and administration in order to develop, implement and ensure that all nutrition and physical activity policies are met.

- **Health Education**

Health Education is a K-8 curriculum that addresses all aspects of health including both physical and mental well-being.

Students learn through various educational methods, that choosing a healthy lifestyle will reduce health-related risk behaviors such as heart disease, obesity etc.

Female students in 5th and 6th grade participate in a health education class every year regarding their changing bodies and how that affects their mental well-being. They know they can ask questions in a supportive and loving environment.

- **Physical Education**

All students participate in physical education classes each week. Nursery through 4th grade participates twice a week for 30 minutes, while 5th through 8th grade, once a week, for 40 minutes. Additional opportunities exist for increasing activity such as daily recess and special programming. For example, at the end of each year a 'Field Day' is planned for all students and includes games such as tug-of-war and other traditional outdoor games. Every year we incorporate roller skating as part of the physical education class, and after school as an extra activity. Skating not only is a physical activity but also a lifetime activity. This year for the first time and we incorporated the Dance Revolution into our curriculum. This will be a yearly activity. Children were able to use this system during recess and after school.

For students to receive the nationally recommended 60 minutes of physical activity a day children are being motivated and encouraged to participate in daily physical activity at school and at home.

To help increase activity levels during the school day, teachers are encouraged to incorporate physical activity into other subject lessons, for example, several teachers incorporate stretching and/or yoga in the classroom on a daily basis.

Children are given opportunities to be active during recess; both teachers and administration realize that when children receive physical activity each day, and fresh air (weather permitting), they are better able to concentrate on their studies during the school day. We are trying to organize a ten minute workout before the kids start classes every morning.

- **Staff Wellness**

All staff has an opportunity to participate in a weekly exercise program. The program targets their physical and emotional wellness from aerobics to yoga. Staff is given written health information on a regular basis. The school wellness council will work with administration and staff to promote these activities on a regular basis.

- **School Meals**

While Hillel Torah does not participate in a Federal Lunch Program, we do serve a 'Hot Lunch' twice a week that includes an entrée, fruit and vegetable. Sanitation procedures are followed and strictly adhered to by the PTA while serving lunch.

Low fat milk is provided as part of a Federal program to those children that pay for it.

Only water and 100% fruit juice is served during lunch programs – no other beverages are served in school.

Nursery school through 4th graders are required to bring two healthy snacks to school consisting of a fruit or a vegetable.

Allergies are duly noted and substitutions are made.

The sharing of food is strictly prohibited.

- **School Environment**

An effort is made to include healthy options for class celebrations and school functions. We recommend that foods or beverages that do not meet nutrition standards be limited. All teachers and parents are aware that healthier options exist and every effort is made to include them.

Class celebrations and school functions include healthy options, such as fruits and vegetables. Food is not used as a reward and, as an alternative, prizes are given such as small toys like bubbles etc.

Medications are strictly monitored by school staff via a log. Each time a child requests pain medication, a parent is called for approval and the information is then recorded. Written instructions are required from a parent for any other medications to be administered by a staff member.

- **Family Involvement**

Parents are involved in every aspect of our school. We encourage physical activity and healthy eating at home and offer newsletters on a regular basis with information regarding health-related topics.

In addition, the school strongly encourages parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks. A list of foods and beverages that meet nutritional requirements is available to parents in order to provide a basis to make healthier choices.

- **Monitoring**

The school wellness council is an ongoing initiative and will work with parents and administration in order to implement policies related to health and wellness.

The school and wellness council will revise the wellness policy as necessary in order to include updates and new information.

**HEALTHY SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN
STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO DEVELOPING A WELLNESS POLICY**

STEP	Purpose	Who Should Be Involved?	What to Do	Other Recommendations
1. Form the Team	Get input and support from a diverse group within the school community	District and local school administrators, parents, students, teachers, food service directors, school nurses, school health coordinators, healthcare practitioners, businesspeople, clergy, social workers, and others.	Recruit members who are active and willing, and who understand the cultural, political and economic structures of the community. Choose a chairperson to coordinate and keep the team running smoothly.	Meet with district administrators first to assess commitment to the issue and whether there are other groups already working on school wellness that should be considered. School Wellness Team meetings may fall under the Open Meetings Act. If you run into obstacles, check with your local board of education.
2. Assess Needs	Understand current status of student health and identify needs and barriers.	A core working group of individual who are knowledgeable about school health policies	Briefly survey your school’s nutritional, food quality, physical education, nutrition education and other wellness policies and needs using the assessment tool posted at www.studentbodychallenge.org .	Consider privacy requirements when reviewing available health data and identifying specific student and community health needs.
3. Establish Goals & Strategies	Identify major outcomes and the strategies you will use to reach them.	The entire wellness team.	Develop a series of phrases or short statements the express what your team’s overall vision for student health and fitness. For each goal, identify 1 – 3 specific steps your team will take to achieve these goals.	Visit www.studentbodychallenge.org to obtain resources on goal-setting and examples of innovative and creative strategies adopted by other schools.
4. Draft Policy	Turn goals and strategies into official school policy.	Designated members of the wellness team.	Many school districts adopt model policies as written while others customize them. HSC recommends using the NANA model policy as a template, which can be downloaded at www.studentbodychallenge.org .	Good policies define their terms (low-fat = 1% milk) and include measurable standards, e.g., “offer at least 2 non-fried vegetables and 2 fruit options each day and offer 5 different fruits and 5 different vegetables each week.”
5. Get Feedback & Support	Get broader input and support.	School and community interest groups, e.g., student council, PTA, teacher’s union and school decision-makers.	Present draft policy at general meetings or conduct special school wellness meetings. Give school decision-makers frequent progress reports. Example communications tools are available at www.studentbodychallenge.org .	Incorporate helpful feedback whenever possible to help increase buy-in by various sectors of the school community. For resources on conflict resolution, see www.studentbodychallenge.org .
6. Adopt the Policy	Obtain official	The school board and/or	Find out your district’s procedure for getting a policy	Publicize the new policy throughout the district.

	school district approval	other decision-making body and wellness team.	adopted. It may involve providing a written rationale and support materials and/or a public hearing. Choose an influential spokesperson and encourage supporters to show their support.	Celebrate your accomplishment and energize supporters! Visit www.studentbodychallenge.org for helpful promotional tools.
7. Measure Results	Measure progress and impact	Wellness team members, school health leaders, food service personnel, teachers and administrators.	Meet two or three times during the first school year and annually thereafter to assess results, identify roadblocks and develop strategies to overcome barriers. Observe changes in student eating habits and physical activity to make program adjustments, obtain grant funding, and build ongoing support.	Consider institutionalizing the effort in the form of a standing School Health Advisory Council or a Coordinated Health Program. For more information, Visit www.studentbodychallenge.org .

Appendix 9

Teacher Evaluation of Health Curriculum and Related Materials

Name: _____

Date: _____

Grade: _____ School: _____

How would you rate the following... (Please check the best answer)

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
The educational content of the lessons?				
The ease of preparing for the lessons?				
The ease of teaching the lessons?				
The students' reactions?				
The one-minute physical activity breaks?				
The supplementary materials?				

What do you like the MOST about the health lessons?

What do you like the LEAST about the health lessons?

What changes would you suggest for the lessons? _____

What additional resources would be helpful for you as you continue teaching health lessons?

How confident are you about teaching health education topics?

Not at all
Confident

Not very
confident

Somewhat
confident

Pretty
confident

Very
confident

How many health lessons have you taught this year? _____

During what subject(s) do you teach the health lessons? _____

Alternatives to Using Food as a Reward



Teachers, administration, parents, and the community often offer kids food as a reward for “good” behavior. Typically “food rewards” have little or no nutritional value but are used because they are easy, inexpensive treats that are thought to bring about short-term behavior change. **Teachers and staff are encouraged to reward students with non-food items.**

Disadvantages of Using Food as a Reward

- It sends a mixed message between nutrition education taught in the classroom and the school environment
- It encourages over-consumption of foods high in added sugar and fat
- It may displace more nutritious foods offered in the school meal program or in lunches
- It teaches children to eat when they are not hungry to reward themselves

Free Alternatives

- Verbal praise
- Recognize over announcements
- Sit at the teacher’s desk
- Sit by friends
- Take a walk with teacher or principal
- Eat lunch with the teacher or principal
- Make a delivery to the office
- Be the classroom helper
- No homework pass
- Teach class or help teacher teach
- Read or eat lunch outside
- Read to a younger class
- Extra recess time
- Class walking break
- Listen/dance to music
- Note of recognition from teacher/principal
- Free choice time
- Game day
- Listen to a book on tape
- Extra computer time
- Play a game
- Teacher reads a special book to the class
- Read morning announcements
- Go to library to select a book to read
- Design a class/school bulletin board
- Photo recognition board
- Walking field trip

Low-Cost Alternatives

- Books
- Bookmarks
- Pencils, pens, and erasers
- Notepads/notebooks
- Trophy, plaque, ribbon, certificate
- Stickers
- Sidewalk chalk
- Movie/Video coupons
- Pedometers
- Drawing for donated prizes
- Stencils
- Stamps
- Trip to the “treasure box”
- Coloring books
- Art supplies
- Rulers
- Glitter
- Gift certificate to a bookstore
- Pass to zoo, aquarium, museum
- Paddleballs, Frisbees, hula hoops, or jump ropes
- Water bottles
- Toys/trinkets (like yo-yos)
- Key chains
- Plant, seeds & a pot for growing
- Point/token system for privileges or prizes

What Schools Can Do

Ideas for Alternatives to Using Food as a Reward ^{5,6}

Schools can help promote a healthy learning environment by using nonfood rewards. The ideas below are just a beginning and can be modified for different ages. Be creative, and don't forget the simple motivation of recognizing students for good work or behavior.

Elementary School Students

- Make deliveries to office
- Teach class
- Sit by friends
- Eat lunch with teacher or principal
- Eat lunch outdoors with the class
- Have lunch or breakfast in the classroom
- Private lunch in classroom with a friend
- Be a helper in another classroom
- Play a favorite game or do puzzles
- Stickers, pencils, bookmarks
- Certificates
- Fun video
- Extra recess
- Walk with the principal or teacher
- Fun physical activity break
- School supplies
- Trip to treasure box filled with nonfood items (stickers, tattoos, pencils, erasers, bookmarks, desktop tents)
- Dance to favorite music in the classroom
- Paperback book
- Show-and-tell
- Bank system - Earn play money for privileges
- Teacher or volunteer reads special book to class
- Teacher performs special skill (singing, cart wheel, guitar playing, etc.)
- Read outdoors or enjoy class outdoors
- Have extra art time
- Have "free choice" time at end of the day or end of class period
- Listen with headset to a book on audiotape
- Items that can only be used on special occasions (special art supplies, computer games, toys)



Middle School Students

- Sit with friends
- Listen to music while working at desk
- Five-minute chat break at end of class
- Reduced homework or "no homework" pass
- Extra credit
- Fun video
- Fun brainteaser activities
- Computer time
- Assemblies
- Field trips
- Eat lunch outside or have class outside



High School Students

- Extra credit
- Fun video
- Reduced homework
- Donated coupons to video stores, music stores or movies
- Drawings for donated prizes among students who meet certain grades standards



Share what works! Let us know your strategies to motivate students so we can share with others.

For more information on a healthy school environment, contact Susan Fiore, MS, RD, Nutrition Education Coordinator at susan.fiore@po.state.ct.us or (860) 807-2075.

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Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Health and Nutrition Services and Child/Family/School Partnerships



September 2004

Internal Guidelines for Class Parties Celebrating Academic Accomplishments

The highest grade level to make a celebration for the following accomplishment:

- A. Perek of Chumash: **Grade 1**
- B. Parsha of Chumash: **Grade 8**
- C. Chazarrah of a complete Parsha: **Grade 3**
- D. A Mesechta of Mishnayos: **Grade 7**
- E. A Major Topic: **Grade 6**
- F. A Perek of Gemara: **Grade 8**

Level of celebration that is appropriate:

Kids bring nosh: **Grades 1-3**

Treat from the bakery: **For a parsha siyum up to 8th, for Chazzarrah up to 3rd**

Pizza lunch from shop (\$2 each): **For a Parsha up to 4th, 5th -7th only for Mishnayos**

Pizza, fries, etc. (\$5 each): **Siyum Mishnayos up to 5th Siyum Perek Gemara up to 8th**

Fleishig meal in school: **Perek Gemara up to 8th**

**The consensus was not to have eat out affairs for any Siyumim.
The only possibility would be for extra learning such as finishing Maakos.**



Delicious Dish



Salmon is high in protein and full of heart-healthy omega-3 fats. Try this recipe from Chef Bobby Flay for all of its healthy benefits.

Grilled Salmon Fillet with Honey-Mustard (serves 4)

In a small bowl, whisk together 1/4 cup dijon mustard, 2 tbsp whole-grain mustard, 3 tbsp honey, 2 tbsp horseradish, 2 tbsp finely chopped fresh mint leaves, 1/4 tsp salt and 1/4 tsp black pepper. Let sit for 30 minutes. Heat the grill or a nonstick skillet to high. Brush a 2-pound salmon fillet with 2 tbsp canola oil and season with salt and pepper. Place the salmon on the grill or skillet and cook until golden brown and cooked through, about 3-4 minutes.

While the salmon is cooking, place 1 bunch of coarsely chopped watercress in a medium bowl. Add 1 small red onion - thinly sliced, 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar, and 2 tbsp olive oil. Toss to combine, and season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer the salad to a platter, top with the salmon fillet and drizzle with the mustard sauce.



SAVE THE DATE!

Illinois NET School Wellness Policy Conference

The Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program (ILNET) is supported by the Illinois State Board of Education. This March, they are offering a conference that support schools in implementing and evaluating school wellness policies. Participants will learn how to assess their wellness policy, hear various panel discussions, and learn about funding for school wellness initiatives. Teachers, administrators and parents are invited. Earn 4.5 CPDU credits!

Choose from 3 dates and locations:

- NIU Outreach Center, March 18, 2009
- Holiday Inn Champaign, March 19, 2009
- Rend Lake Resort, March 20, 2009

The \$17 registration fee will be reimbursed by the school wellness grant, and a \$75 substitute teacher reimbursement is available for schools through ILNET.

For more information or to register by March 6, 2009, visit kidseatwell.org, call 1.800.466.7998 or email ilnet@kidsroe.org.

What Are Other Schools Doing?

Joan Dachs Bais Yaakov, Illinois



Arie Crown Hebrew Day School, Illinois

Second-graders at JDBY received a special treat when health educators from *Health World Outreach Education* paid a visit. They participated in an interactive program called "Clean Machine", which taught them about germs, tooth decay and proper dental hygiene.

Arie Crown now offers weekly yoga classes for teachers, preschoolers and kindergarteners. Yoga not only helps to improve strength and flexibility, but also tones muscles and relaxes the mind.

"He that takes medicine and neglects diet, wastes the skill of the physician."

~Chinese proverb

Let's Get Cooking!

Healthy eating doesn't have to be boring! Check out these great cookbooks:

- 📖 *Kosher by Design Lightens Up: Fabulous Food for a Healthier Lifestyle*
~Susie Fishbein
- 📖 *Enlightened Kosher Cooking*
~Nechama Cohen
- 📖 *Healthy Helpings: 800 Fast and Fabulous Recipes for the Kosher (or Not) Cook*
~Norene Gilletz
- 📖 *The Healthy Jewish Cookbook: 100 Delicious Recipes from Around the World*
~Michael Van Straten
- 📖 *Nutritious and Delicious Kosher Cooking*
~Naomi Muller
- 📖 *Norene's Healthy Kitchen: Eat Your Way to Good Health*
~Norene Gilletz



Food for thought...

Accomplishments from the Chicago Jewish Day School Wellness Initiative

JDBY-YTT Joint Accomplishments (Years 1-2)

- ❖ The schools formed a joint school wellness council made up of parents, school administration, teachers, the project dietician, the traveling school nurse, and the project director.
- ❖ The wellness council wrote a school wellness policy that explains why student health is important for schools to address and outlines specific health-related goals.
- ❖ The school wellness council met 7 times over the year. An invitation to attend each meeting was extended to all parents and staff.
- ❖ A mental health consultant, Mrs. Rachel Zimmerman, was hired through JCFS to develop and teach a mental and emotional health component for the intervention.
- ❖ A family education event was held on August 28 to hear a social worker speak on issues related to body image and eating disorders. Approximately 20 women attended.
- ❖ During the orientation night for each school, the health educator held two educational sessions. Time was provided for parents to ask questions, and materials such as healthy menu ideas were distributed.
- ❖ The directors of the school's hot lunch program consulted with the project dietitian to look for healthier options (on the same budget). The lunches now include: a) fresh fruit, b) fresh vegetables, c) whole wheat bread, and d) whole wheat pancakes.
- ❖ A new column, "The Wellness Word" is included in the weekly school newsletter for parents. This column is written by a teacher and offers basic nutrition information.
- ❖ The menu options at an annual school event, Melava Malka, were broadened to include choices, such as water on every table and a choice of chicken for the main course.
- ❖ An educational event was held for mothers at the local Jewish Community Center. It featured talks by two physicians and the project dietitian. A one-year membership to the gym was raffled off and tours of the women's-only workout room were given. Approximately 45 women attended.

JDBY Accomplishments (Years 1-2)

- ❖ A Gym & Swim program was held in conjunction with the JCC during which all girls in grades 5-8 were bused to the JCC for swim or fitness lessons once a week.
- ❖ Over \$1200 worth of equipment was purchased for the PE program, including basketballs, volleyballs, soccer balls, hula hoops, Frisbees, jump ropes, scrimmage vests, and storage carts.
- ❖ The soda vending machine was removed from the school.
- ❖ Soda was not served at any staff meetings or during parent-teacher conferences. Only water and/or juices were offered for drinks and fruit was served.
- ❖ Grant funds were used to provide fresh fruit salad to students after the Kedoshim Tihyu program, instead of the normal cookies.
- ❖ The project dietician spoke to the Hebrew staff about general nutrition, reading food labels, and understanding the new food pyramid.
- ❖ Each student was given a pedometer for the opening school "gift" instead of a piece of candy.

- ❖ JDBY purchased a variety of equipment including nets, aerobic steps and music, and exercise mats for their gym program. In addition, jump-ropes and balls were purchased for recess.
- ❖ A lunch-time milk program was started by a parent member of the wellness council. During the pilot period, nearly all students participated.
- ❖ A “Health Awareness” bulletin board was set up in the teacher’s lounge with articles on health and healthy recipes. Many staff members are also parents, so this addresses a dual audience.
- ❖ Three to four days a week the principal brings in fruit to be served in the teacher’s lounge.
- ❖ A healthy snack program for grades 1-4 was started. This program includes a poster and stickers for each class to track the number of healthy snacks brought in, and a prize (popcorn party) for the classes that hit their goal.
- ❖ The 8th grade now sells pickles and healthy foods instead of candy.
- ❖ A new healthy fruit program was started to provide a different fruit to students each week, free of charge.

YTT Accomplishments (Years 1-2)

- ❖ The youth director of the local Agudah Youth Program spoke to students in grades 5-8 about healthy choices. He brought in real food samples and demonstrated the amount of sugar, fat, and other ingredients in many of the foods we choose to eat.
- ❖ Books about food, nutrition, exercise, or other health-related topics were purchased for the library and for individual classrooms.
- ❖ The boys were treated to three activity-based field trips over the year.
- ❖ YTT held a weekly Gym & Swim program for 6 consecutive Sunday evenings at the YMCA. Approximately 80 boys received an hour of instruction and free time in the pool or an hour of basketball lessons and free play in the gym.
- ❖ An additional four weeks of swimming was held later in the spring, as well as a basketball league, in which approximately 50 students participated on Sundays.
- ❖ The school also developed a walking program targeted toward boys who do not normally participate in sports during recess or after school. All participants receive a pedometer, as well as prizes for different mileage goals. The overall goal of the program is to “walk” to Israel.
- ❖ The boys’ school also removed their soda vending machine.
- ❖ Grant funds were used to purchase fresh fruit for the “Fruit of the Week” program.
- ❖ A school-wide event was held on Lag B’Omer in a park near the school. During this event, called Family Fitness Fun, over 100 students went through the course. In addition, 30 to 40 parents attended and participated in the activities with their sons.
- ❖ A speaker was brought in during a staff in-service day to speak about maintaining one’s health.
- ❖ An obstacle course was included as part of an annual school activity.
- ❖ The administration encouraged teachers to offer non-food incentives for students.
- ❖ One teacher contacted the JCC about getting staff membership discounts.
- ❖ The school continues its policy of only giving out juice or water at its programs. Staff meetings no longer have soda available and salads are always available.
- ❖ A Student Wellness Committee was formed to solicit student input on the Wellness Program.
- ❖ A Sunday Gym Program was held in the JDBY gym. Approximately 60 – 70 children participated for 2 hours each Sunday. The boys played floor hockey, football, kick ball, dodge ball, and other games.

- ❖ A lunch-time milk program is being planned and will hopefully begin soon.

Collective Accomplishments of Five Schools Participating in Year 3 (2008-09)

- ❖ Health curriculums were distributed to all new schools. All teachers were introduced to the grant and oriented to the new curriculum. The pilot schools continue to teach health lessons as well.
- ❖ The project Mental Health Consultant (Mrs. Rachel Zimmerman) is continuing to work with 8th grade girls on topics of body image, confidence, and self awareness. So far this year, she has held a series of 6 sessions with hundreds of female students from Arie Crown, JDBY, Hillel Torah, and Akiba Schechter.

Akiba-Schechter Accomplishments (Year 3)

- ❖ The amount of physical education for older students has been doubled. Specifically, gym classes are now provided twice weekly for grades 5-8.
- ❖ The school started a wellness council. Their first project involved improving school lunches.
- ❖ Specifically, Laura Frankel of Wolfgang Puck now caters a delicious and healthy meat lunch once weekly. The meals exclude bread and dessert, and emphasize lean meat with plenty of fruits and vegetables. This replaces the former lunch that was provided from a local fast food establishment.
- ❖ The school is implementing “Girls on the Run,” a running program for girls that is held after school two days a week.
- ❖ The school is planning the “Akiba Shuffle,” a family running event to be held in the spring.
- ❖ The weekly parent newsletter now includes health tips written by the school nurse (shared among 5 schools).
- ❖ Lunch-recess time has been extended in order to include required outdoor play.
- ❖ The refreshments at parent meetings have changed to include fruit and water, and no soda.
- ❖ The principal wrote a wellness policy and included it in the school hand-book. Revisions, including input from members of the wellness council, are forthcoming.

Arie Crown Accomplishments (Year 3)

- ❖ A thriving school wellness council called “*Healthy Choices*” was established. Committee members include administration, teachers and parents and it meets regularly.
- ❖ A walking club for 8th grade girls was established.
- ❖ For grades 1-3, birthday parties have been combined into once-a-month celebrations. Healthy choices of treats will be available at these celebrations.
- ❖ The nutritional content of the school lunch program was upgraded by adding whole wheat pizza, tuna fish and chicken breasts.
- ❖ A policy that prohibits the sale of soda at all school-sponsored functions was passed.
- ❖ Healthy snacks such as nuts, dried fruit, and whole wheat pretzels have replaced cookies as the refreshments for parent orientation.
- ❖ The project Health Educator attended the school brunch at the beginning of the school year to share healthy recipes and snack ideas with families. Information on healthy choices was also shared with parents during parent-teacher conferences in December.
- ❖ The sodas in the vending machine were replaced with healthier beverage options.
- ❖ Yoga classes are held once a week after school for teachers.

- ❖ Yoga classes are held once a week for preschool and kindergartners.
- ❖ Healthy choices for all class celebrations have increased.
- ❖ An extensive wellness policy has been drafted. Plans to include it in the parent handbook for the following school year are being made.
- ❖ Plans to transfer leadership of the wellness council from administration to the parent teacher organization are underway. This change would facilitate long-term sustainability of the council, as well as increase the amount of parents involved with the changes and able to volunteer for projects.
- ❖ New after-school basketball program for boys in grades 6-8 started.
- ❖ Healthy snack ideas and recipes shared with parents during March parent conferences.
- ❖ Article about “Healthy Choices” program written for annual community flyer distributed in April.

Hillel Torah Accomplishments (Year 3)

- ❖ Teachers are actively implementing health curriculums in grades K-8.
- ❖ A wellness council was convened and is planning a health fair to be held in May.
- ❖ The 1st grade utilizes Just-a-Minute exercises in classrooms.
- ❖ The Health Educator gave a presentation for grades 5-8, along with staff, about making healthy choices.
- ❖ A dedicated parent coordinated a “Race for Health” event one Sunday morning in October. The Village of Skokie blocked off several streets so that families, students and staff could safely run – beginning and ending at a local park. After the race, water, fruit and other healthy snacks were available as refreshments.
- ❖ Administration met with the PTA presidents to review lunch menus and identify ways to improve the nutritional value of school meals.
- ❖ The project Health Educator attended the parent orientation at the beginning of the school year to share healthy recipes and snack ideas with families.
- ❖ Banners that say “Eat well and keep moving” were hung throughout the school.

JDBY Accomplishments (Year 3)

- ❖ Rabbi Eli Glaser of Baltimore, Maryland was invited to speak about health from a Torah perspective at an event open to all parents. Approximately 50 parents (mostly mothers) attended.
- ❖ As a celebration of keeping their classroom neat, 4th graders made a healthy fruit salad and nut cluster treat.
- ❖ The project Health Educator attended the parent orientation at the beginning of the school year to share healthy recipes and snack ideas with families.
- ❖ Grades 1-8 went to Pump It Up for a fun day of jumping around.
- ❖ Nursery and kindergarten went to the Exploratorium for physical activities.
- ❖ The entire school went ice skating for the mid-winter break school-wide activity.
- ❖ 2nd grade had Health World Outreach Education visit to discuss important health and safety information. Some of the topics covered included germs, tooth decay, and proper dental hygiene.





- ❖ The project Health Educator taught several nutrition lessons for grades 2, 5, 6 and 7. The younger girls learned about the different colors in fruits and vegetables, and how they work to prevent disease. The older girls learned about the six types of nutrients and how the body uses them.
- ❖ The school lunch program continues to provide healthier items.
- ❖ Rabbi Dov Brezak will teach a parenting session for families and teachers. During this, he will talk about the importance of nutrition. Healthy snacks will be served, and there will be a table with health tips and healthy recipes.
- ❖ The school nurse instructed all teachers on how to manage diabetes problems among students.

YTT Accomplishments (Year 3)


- ❖ A recess program was started to encourage non-athletic students to participate in 5 minutes of exercise.
- ❖ A new policy that limits the amount of “junk” food allowed at school-sponsored celebrations and class parties is now in place.
- ❖ The project Health Educator attended the parent orientation at the beginning of the school year to share healthy recipes and snack ideas with families.
- ❖ A list of health and wellness books purchased last year was made available to the parent body. Parents are asked to take advantage of these wonderful resources and encourage their children to bring the books home from the library.
- ❖ A policy that disallows soda or candy being given to students remains in effect. Water is always provided as an option when drinks are being served.
- ❖ A 15-week Sunday gym program for boys in grades 1-5 was launched. Fifty to sixty minutes of structured physical activity is provided for each grade level. A similar program for grades 6-8 may be underway. Parents are charged a small fee in order to make the program self-sustaining.
- ❖ The school organized a baseball league (“Yiddle League”) to be run following the Passover break until the end of school.
- ❖ The schools is offering bike riding and a healthy barbeque as an incentive for students qualifying for a learning program that is currently underway.

Mental and Emotional Health Book Recommendations





For Parents

-  *Reviving Ophelia*, Mary Pipher, PhD
-  *The Rules of Normal Eating*, Karen Koenig
-  *101 Ways to Help Your Daughter Love Her Body*, Brenda Richardson and Elane Rehr
-  *The Parents Guide to Eating Disorders*, Marcia Herrin

For Teachers

-  *Healthy Body Image: Teaching Kids to Eat and Love Their Bodies Too*, Kathy Kater

For Students

-  *Life Without Ed: How One Woman Declared Independence from Her Eating Disorder and How You Can Too*, Jenni Schaefer
-  *Reviving Ophelia*, Mary Pipher, PhD
-  *Full Mouse, Empty Mouse: A Tale of Food and Feelings*, Dina Zeckhausen, PhD.
-  *Shapesville*, Andy Mills



Tips for Healthy Snacking

Snacks are an important part of a child's daily diet. Because they have smaller stomachs than adults, children need to eat more often. Allowing children to have a small snack every 2½-3 hours is ideal. So what can you do to ensure your child gets satisfying snacks that provide the nutrition she or he needs? Take note of the following suggestions:

- Choose fresh, whole foods whenever possible. Most of the pre-packaged snacks found on grocery store shelves are highly processed and offer few nutrients in return. Fresh foods such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, whole grains, meats and cheeses are the best sources for nutrients.
- If you select a high-carbohydrate food as a snack, try to balance it with some healthy fat or protein. High-carbohydrate foods, when eaten alone, cause blood sugar to rise quickly and then crash down. The crash triggers a craving for another high-carb snack, which creates a vicious cycle of hunger. *Since the purpose of snacking is to satisfy hunger until the next meal, it's important to avoid these highs and lows by including adequate fat and protein with snacks.* Meat and fish, avocados, nuts, cheese, eggs, yogurt, and hummus are good additions to high-carbohydrate snacks. For example:
 - Apple slices with cheddar cheese, almond butter or peanut butter
 - Slices of avocado wrapped in deli turkey
 - 100% whole wheat crackers (no hydrogenated oils) with cheese, tuna, or lox
 - Raisins and pecans, pistachios and dried cherries, or any fruit/nut combo
 - Veggie dippers with hummus, cream cheese, or ranch dressing (be careful- low fat dressings often contain more sugar)
 - A piece of fruit with a hard-boiled egg
 - Cottage cheese with melon cubes or canned peaches
 - Yogurt sprinkled with low-sugar cereal
 - Mashed avocado or guacamole with a few baked tortilla chips
- Low-calorie, low-fat, or 'lite' snacks are not necessarily healthy. For example:
 - The popular "100-Calorie Packs" are little more than processed white flour, which means they lack essential vitamins and minerals. Their lack of protein and small size makes them unsatisfying as well.
 - Pretzels and animal crackers are very high in refined carbohydrates and almost devoid of nutritional value. 100% whole grain pretzels may be a better option, but be sure to pair them with some protein or fat.
 - In general, granola bars and breakfast bars are extremely high in sugar. Some contain more sugar than the average candy bar, along with unhealthy trans fats. If your child insists on granola or breakfast bars, try to find a brand with under 4 grams of sugar and no hydrogenated oils.
 - Some low-fat yogurts, especially those marketed towards children, contain so much sugar that they'd be more appropriately labeled as desserts! Buy plain yogurt instead.



Ideas for Snacks from the Food Groups

- **Fruits and vegetables**

- ~ Fresh fruits and vegetables are excellent choices, and can be dipped in yogurt or ranch dressing.
- ~ Pickles and olives are healthier choices for salty snacks.
- ~ Unsweetened applesauce, canned fruit packed in juice, and small amounts of dried fruit with no added sugar are also good choices. Be careful with pre-packaged banana chips; they are usually deep fried in trans fat.
- ~ Remember, fruits and vegetables are digested very quickly and don't satisfy hunger for long. Add some protein or fat, such as yogurt or dip, with fruits and veggies.

- **Meats and protein**

- ~ Beef jerky is actually a convenient, portable snack that offers satisfying protein. There are now brands available without MSG and sodium nitrate.
- ~ Hard-boiled eggs or deviled eggs are great options (it used to be thought that eggs raised cholesterol levels, but this has been shown to be untrue).
- ~ Slices of deli meat are nutritious and easy to pack.
- ~ Homemade bean dips are easy to prepare and contain satisfying fiber and protein.

- **Dairy**

- ~ String cheese and sliced deli cheeses are fun to eat and easy to pack.
- ~ Plain yogurt is low in sugar and goes well with fresh fruit. Cottage cheese is great.

- **Grains**

- ~ When choosing crackers, look for a brand without hydrogenated oils. Ideally, the first ingredient listed should be whole grain.
- ~ Whole grain tortillas can be filled with cheese and salsa, hummus, bean dip, etc.
- ~ Remember, whole grain is always healthier than white.

Key Points

- The best snacks are whole, fresh foods. Most pre-packaged snacks have no nutrition.
- Including protein or fat with snacks will stave off hunger longer. Children need higher amounts of protein and fat for growth and development.
- Read food labels and try to avoid products that contain hydrogenated oils, added sugars, or corn syrup.
- Healthy snacking doesn't have to be all or nothing. Fun snacks like cookies and chips are perfectly OK every now and then.

Why It Pays to Shop in Season

Better Taste

Because they're grown in the best possible conditions, seasonal foods develop a more robust flavor. When a food is out of season, it must be shipped long distances—often from another country. The produce is picked while still immature to ensure that it doesn't spoil during the journey. This premature picking causes a noticeable loss of flavor.



Better Nutrition

Out-of-season produce is picked before it has a chance to ripen on the vine, which causes many nutrients to be lost.

Better for the Planet

The shipping of produce over long distances depletes energy resources and adds to air pollution.

Lower Prices

Produce is more abundant when it's in season, and higher yields mean cheaper prices.

Year-Round Produce

Avocados
Bananas
Bell Peppers
Celery
Onions
Papayas

Winter Produce

Chestnuts
Grapefruit
Kale
Leeks
Lemons
Oranges
Tangerines
Radicchio
Radishes
Rutabaga
Turnips



Spring Produce

Apricots
Artichoke
Asparagus
Avocado
Carrots
Celeriac
Chives
Collard Greens
Fava Beans
Fennel



Fiddlehead Ferns
Mangos
Morels
Mustard Greens
New Potatoes (redskin)
Pineapple
Rhubarb
Spinach
Spring Baby Lettuces
Strawberries
Sugar Snap Peas
Snow Peas
Vidalia Onions
Watercress

Fall Produce

Acorn Squash

Apples

Belgian Endive

Brussels Sprouts

Butternut Squash

Cauliflower

Celeriac

Coconut

Cranberries

Figs

Garlic

Ginger

Grapes

Huckleberries

Mushrooms

Parsnips

Pears

Persimmons

Pomegranate

Pumpkin

Quince

Sweet Potatoes and Yams

Swiss Chard



Summer Produce



Beets

Blackberries

Blueberries

Bok Choy (Chinese Cabbage)

Boysenberries

Broccoli

Cantaloupe

Cherries

Corn

Cucumber

Eggplant

Green Beans

Honeydew Melon

Kiwifruit

Nectarines

Okra

Peaches

Plums

Raspberries

Summer Squash

Tomatoes

Watermelon

Zucchini

Seasonal Guide to Produce



20 Healthy Snacks

1. Apple slices tossed in fresh lemon juice and lemon zest
2. *Ants on a Log*: spread no-sugar-added peanut butter on celery sticks and dot with raisins
3. Veggies dipped in ranch dressing (baby carrots, red pepper strips, cauliflower, cherry tomatoes, cucumber slices, snap peas, broccoli)



4. Fresh fruit (berries, pears, peaches) topped with plain, unsweetened yogurt. Sprinkle with chopped pecans, walnuts or slivered almonds
5. Trail mix made with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup raw nuts (almonds, walnuts, pecans, pistachios) and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup unsweetened dried fruit (raisins, cherries, cranberries, apricots, prunes)
6. *Green Smoothie*: blend $\frac{1}{2}$ banana, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup frozen no-sugar-added berries, peaches, pineapple or mango and 3 ounces 100% apple, orange or grape juice.

Add 1 cup fresh baby spinach and blend until smooth and green. All you taste is the fruit!

7. One mozzarella string cheese and 4 ounces 100% fruit juice

8. Two hard boiled eggs



9. Two tablespoons no-sugar-added peanut butter spread on apple slices



10. $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cottage cheese mixed with melon cubes, peaches, cucumber or berries
11. Mashed avocado spread on slices of deli turkey, rolled up
12. One cup steamed broccoli topped with 2 tablespoons parmesan cheese

13. Two tangerines

14. Half of a 100% whole-grain bagel topped with hummus

15. One packet plain instant oatmeal mixed with $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cinnamon, 1 teaspoon honey and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup peach slices



16. Banana smeared with 2 tablespoons no-sugar-added peanut butter, dipped in chopped nuts
17. Unsweetened applesauce snack cup
18. Half of a pita pocket stuffed with hummus, tuna, shredded carrots, cucumber and red bell pepper

19. Celery sticks spread with cream cheese and chives

20. Cherry tomatoes tossed with shredded mozzarella, balsamic vinegar and olive oil

Parent Handbook Statement

Meals, Nutrition, Health

Nutrition is an important factor in a student's ability to learn and keep up with the Yeshiva's educational requirements. Breakfast is an important meal. Parents are asked to see to it that each talmid eats a nutritious and adequate breakfast. Talmidim going to the Yeshiva Minyan may eat the breakfast offered by the Yeshiva or one brought from home.

Lunch, snacks, and foods brought for snack during the day should be healthy and limited in sugar content. Lunches should be made in consultation with your son, so he looks forward to the meal provided. In the event that a student does not have lunch, a simple nutritious lunch will be available through the office. Students may not order lunch from outside establishments during school. Pizza or special lunches are ordered by the teachers as incentives on occasion.

Talmidim may not sell, trade or barter food or non-food items.

The Yeshiva does not sell or serve soda. Students may bring soda from home; however the Yeshiva recommends healthier drinks.

Talmidim may fast on a Taanis (with parental permission) if they have reached their 12th birthday. Talmidim younger than 12 may not fast.

Adequate sleep is a must for proper talmid performance in the Yeshiva. Please make sure your child gets the sleep he needs to function well. If a child has trouble sleeping, or is uncooperative when getting to bed, teachers should be notified. An ongoing lack of sleep must be addressed before it affects learning, behavior, and social performance.

Carpool and recess times require that talmidim be outdoors. Please check the weather each day and dress your child appropriately.

Lice checks are conducted at the start of the school year and after Sukkos, mid-winter, and Pesach breaks. Parents are notified of where and when the checks take place.

Contagious illnesses must be reported to the office. Students who are contagious are not permitted in school.



Healthy Fundraisers for Schools: Tips from AFHK Team Members

Healthy fundraisers contribute to a healthy school environment. Products with mass appeal can be inexpensive to sell, provide generous fundraising margins, and support healthy choices. To find innovative and healthy ways for schools to generate income, take a look at the “Fundraising for Schools” resources on the AFHK website as well as the following ideas that team members have shared on the AFHK listserv.

Type of Fundraiser	Description	Ideas and Considerations
Auctions	Community-donated items, gifts, gift certificates, theme baskets, services e.g., lawn care, house cleaning, car waxing, baby sitting, storytelling, etc..	Ideas: Solicit high-quality items to raise big money. Considerations: Time and resources to collect and store items, inventory items, handle cash, and process checks and credit cards.
Celebrity sports challenges	Students vs. teachers, coaches, local TV celebrities or radio personalities, local restaurant and shop owners, professional or semi-professional athletes from any sport.	Ideas: Lots of fun with real competitive sports or games. May get publicity on local news. Can also sell healthy snacks and beverages and school paraphernalia. Considerations: Need to promote someone or something that will sell tickets. Without a connection, celebrity could be costly.
Walk-a thons	Pledges collected by lap or mile.	Ideas: Offers opportunity for healthy physical activity for all ages. Open to many variations e.g., mini-walk for pre-K, bike ride for middle school. Considerations: Requires volunteer help to coordinate route details, water stands, and traffic.
Raffles	Prizes perceived as high-value, which could be donated by local business or other community organization.	Ideas: Can be an extremely low-cost fundraiser, especially if the prize is donated by a local business or other organization. Considerations: Must be an item that will generate adequate ticket sales.
Food concessions	Offer healthy food options e.g., fresh fruits and vegetables, fruit juice, juice drinks, low-fat milk, flavored milk, and water at school, community, and local sporting events.	Ideas: Great opportunity to promote healthy eating at after-school and weekend events. Considerations: May require some shopping and food preparation immediately before the event.

Type of Fundraiser	Description	Ideas and Considerations
Healthy food and snack sales	Cheese, nuts, fruits.	Ideas: Look for vendors who stock healthier alternatives. Considerations: May still encourage overeating—even if the food consumed is healthier. Storage of perishable items may be difficult.
Non-food product sales	Everything from magazines to pizza kits, candles to wrapping paper, T-shirts to memorial markers, coupon books to entertainment packages, scratch cards to calendars—and more!	Ideas: These commonly used fundraisers are generally recognized and accepted by the public. Considerations: Coordinate with other community fundraisers to avoid too many fundraisers at the same time and to avoid selling the same items.
Sports concessions	Lanyards, key chains, stickers, headbands, wristbands, visors, bookcovers, pencils, water bottles, temporary tattoos—anything with the school name or logo on it.	Ideas: A great way to promote team spirit and school identity. Considerations: Selling opportunities may take place throughout a sports season, so return on investment may be slow. Lots of small items to inventory and store.
Special occasions	Mothers' Day: plants Super Bowl: healthy snacks, pizza kits, deli sandwiches, soup mix kits Homecoming: school sweaters, hats, scarves, jackets, etc. Christmas: plants, wreaths, wrapping paper, note cards, stockings, etc.	Ideas: Theme or holiday tie-ins can provide a focus and reason to buy. Considerations: Must plan carefully for in-time delivery.
Yard sale	Student, faculty, staff, families, community members can donate items for large-scale yard sale.	Ideas: Everyone can participate by donating something. Low-cost activity. Can combine with sale of healthy foods and beverage sale. Considerations: Time and resources to collect and store items, inventory items, handle cash, process checks and credit cards.

Team members from Action for Healthy Kids recommend the following websites:

General Fundraising Companies

Common-Threads Fundraising
<http://www.common-threads.com>

123 Fundraising
<http://www.123fundraising.com>

Western Fundraising Programs --includes "Read-a-Thons," "Bowl-a-Thons," "First Aid Kit Fundraiser," etc.
<http://www.westernfund.com>

Alternative Fundraising Ideas

"Things to Do" and "Things to Sell," from No Junk Food.org
<http://www.nojunkfood.org/fundraising>

"School Fund Raiser Ideas: Alternatives to Selling Junk Food and Sodas," from Center for Food & Justice, Urban & Environmental Policy Institute, Occidental College
<http://departments.oxy.edu/uepi/cfi/resources/AlternativeFundRaisers.htm>

Partners for Kids: Community-wide fund producing campaigns for public education
<http://www.partnersforkids.com>

Innovative Fundraising Items

Stone memorial markers --Brick & Stone Graphics:
<http://www.brickstonegraphics.com>

Soy candles and alkaline batteries --Fundraising Batteries.com:
<http://www.fundraisingbatteries.com>

Personalized books --Treasure Books and Gifts:
<http://www.treasurebooksandgifts.com>

8. About how many times in a week do you order out or eat at fast food restaurants?

- Less than once a week
- 2 times a week
- More than 5 times a week
- Once a week
- 3-5 times a week

<p>9. During the past 7 days, on how many days were you physically active for a total of at least 60 minutes per day? (Add up all the time you spent in any kind of physical activity that increased your heart rate and made you breathe hard some of the time.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> 0 days <input type="radio"/> 1 day <input type="radio"/> 2 days <input type="radio"/> 3 days <input type="radio"/> 4 days <input type="radio"/> 5 days <input type="radio"/> 6 days <input type="radio"/> 7 days
<p>10. On an average school day, how many hours do you play computer or video games, or use a computer for something that is not school work? (Include activities such as Xbox, PlayStation, and the internet)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> I do not you play computer or video games, or use a computer for something that is not school work <input type="radio"/> Less than 1 hour per day <input type="radio"/> 1 hour per day <input type="radio"/> 2 hours per day <input type="radio"/> 3 hours per day <input type="radio"/> 4 hours per day <input type="radio"/> 5 or more hours per day
<p>11. On an average school day, how many hours do you watch television (TV)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> I do not watch TV on an average school day <input type="radio"/> Less than 1 hour per day <input type="radio"/> 1 hour per day <input type="radio"/> 2 hours per day <input type="radio"/> 3 hours per day <input type="radio"/> 4 hours per day <input type="radio"/> 5 or more hours per day

12. How often do you ride your bike or walk to or from school?

- Never
- Rarely
- Some days
- Most days
- Every day

13. How often do you feel very sad or depressed?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always

14. To you personally, how important is it to...?

	Not At All Important	Not Too Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Eat a lot of fruits and vegetables?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintain a healthy weight?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Get some exercise every day?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. How often...?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Do you have healthy snacks (like fruit or whole wheat crackers) around the house?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you eat breakfast?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do your parents limit the amount of sweets (like cookies and candy) that you eat?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do your parents limit the amount of soda you are allowed to drink?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do your parents encourage you to exercise?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do your parents exercise or play sports with you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do your class parties involve cookies, candy, or other sweets?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do your teachers give you candy or sweets as a reward for good or extra work?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

For each question, please mark the one best answer that applies to you.

16. In general, how happy or unhappy are you with your body and physical appearance?	<input type="radio"/> Very unhappy <input type="radio"/> Slightly unhappy <input type="radio"/> Neither happy nor unhappy <input type="radio"/> Slightly happy <input type="radio"/> Very happy
17. How do you describe your weight?	<input type="radio"/> Very underweight <input type="radio"/> Slightly underweight <input type="radio"/> About the right weight <input type="radio"/> Slightly overweight <input type="radio"/> Very overweight
18. Which of the following are you trying to do about your weight?	<input type="radio"/> Lose weight <input type="radio"/> Gain weight <input type="radio"/> Stay the same weight <input type="radio"/> I'm not trying to do anything
19. During the past 30 days, have you ever exercised to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
20. During the past 30 days, have you ever eaten less food, fewer calories, or foods low in fat to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

21. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am confident that I can exercise or be physically active every day.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am confident that I could choose to eat healthy goods most of the time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

22. Health experts recommend that you eat a certain amount of fruits and vegetables each day. How many total servings of fruits and vegetables should you eat each day?

- None 1 2 3 4 5 or more

23. According to the U.S. Dietary Guidelines, how many servings from the milk, yogurt, and cheese group should a person of your age and gender eat each day for good health?

- None 1 2 3 4 5

24. How much physical activity do you think experts recommend that kids your age should get each day?

- 20 minutes 30 minutes 40 minutes 60 minutes or more I don't know

25. Do your religious beliefs help you decide whether to do (or not do) the following things?

(check one response for each)

- | | <u>Not At All</u> | <u>Somewhat</u> | <u>A Lot</u> |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Take care of yourself by being physically active. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Take care of yourself by eating healthy. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

We are asking for some extra information so that we can connect your answers to this survey to the answers you give to the same survey next year without knowing who you are. This is important so we can measure changes in your responses. This information is used for research purposes only and will NEVER BE REPORTED. No one from the schools will be able to see your information or survey. We will not link your answers to your name, only to your answers to this survey next time your teacher asks you to fill it out.

Please write the first letter of your first name (your real name, not your nickname) in this box:

Please write the 3rd letter of your first name (your real name, not your nickname) in this box:

Please write the 1st letter of your mother's first name in this box:

For example, if your name is David and your mother's name is Rachel, you would put the following letters: D, V, R

Thank you very much for your help!

Guidelines for Measuring Students' Height and Weight

Grades K-8

March 2006

*Adapted from guidelines published by the Indiana State
Department of Health and the Indiana Department of Education,
and the Center for Weight and Health at UC-Berkeley*

Introduction

The purpose of this training manual is to provide guidance to school personnel or volunteers who will be collecting student height and weight data at the school. The training guide is intended to explain the purpose of this activity and to provide procedural guidelines for the measurements. It also emphasizes issues related to sensitivity and confidentiality.

Purpose of Program

Weight and height data will be collected for all students as part of a larger initiative to improve students' health and well-being. The intent of collecting and analyzing this data is to determine if the students are at a healthy weight and to examine changes over time. The data collected will be used to create policies and programs that promote healthier lifestyles for our children. Your participation in this effort is greatly appreciated.

Importance of Program

Obesity is the second leading cause of preventable deaths in the United States. Unfortunately, the prevalence of overweight among children has more than doubled over the past two decades. Because of this, there are predictions that today's children will be the first generation to live shorter, less healthy lives than their parents. Beyond a shorter life expectancy, being overweight also puts children at greater risk for health problems such as diabetes, asthma, high blood pressure, heart disease, and adult obesity. Being overweight is also associated with behavioral problems and lower academic achievement.

Obesity within the Jewish Community

Overweight and obesity are not just problems that affect the general public- they are also prevalent within the Jewish community. In fact, findings from a recent study of Jewish individuals in West Rogers Park and Peterson Park revealed that the *majority* of adults *and* children living in these communities weigh too much. Disturbingly, 54% of our children ages 2–12 years of age are overweight, including 26% who are obese. These numbers indicate that a Jewish child in West Rogers Park is approximately *twice* as likely to be obese as the average American child. It is obvious that our community must begin addressing the complex issues that are preventing our children from achieving optimal levels of health.

General Instructions

1. Inform students of the screening processes that will be used to collect height and weight measurements.
2. Work with teachers to schedule measurement times that have the least interruption of instructional time.
3. Identify a central location within the building where the measurements will be done.
4. Make sure the correct equipment and forms are available.
5. For efficiency, two people should work together to measure and record the measurements. No students should be performing or recording the measurements.

Important Points to Remember

- The screening area should ensure the privacy of each student during measurements.
- Only the screener should observe the results. No other students should be present or allowed to hear the results.
- Do not comment on the height or weight of a student as measurements are taken. Only neutral comments such as “thank you” are appropriate.
- All results should be kept confidential.

Measuring Weight

Equipment:

There are two important issues for obtaining accurate weight measurements. First, the scale needs to be properly calibrated using items with known weights. Secondly, the scale needs to go back to zero between each person. Also, the scale should be placed on a solid, level floor (with a hard surface, not carpeting).

Procedure:

1. Ask the child to remove heavy outer clothing and shoes.
2. Zero the scale.
3. Have the child step on the scale and stand still, with both feet in the center of the platform, facing away from the scale.
4. Record the weight to the nearest 100 grams.
5. Have the child step off the scale and return the scale to the zero position to ensure privacy.

Measuring Height***Equipment:***

Several different types of equipment can be used, such as a tape measure attached to a wall, a standing height board, or a stadiometer. It is not recommended that a height bar attached to a scale be used, as these are very inaccurate. You may wish to mark the floor with masking tape to indicate where the child should stand.

Procedure:

1. Before you begin, ask the child to remove shoes, hats, and heavy outer clothing.
2. Direct the child to stand with shoulders level, hands at sides, and weight evenly distributed on both feet.
3. The child's feet should be flat on the floor, with heels comfortably together and touching the wall or back of the vertical board.
4. The child's shoulders and buttocks should be touching the wall.
5. Have student inhale deeply and stand straight without altering heel position or allowing heels to rise off the floor.
6. Have the student look straight ahead.
7. Lower the height bar until it is resting comfortably on the top of the head and is level.
8. Read the measure to the nearest 0.1 cm and record.

What To Do If?**If student refuses to be measured:**

- Be non-judgmental
- Re-affirm that the student has the right to refuse.
- Mark the data collection sheet appropriately.

If the student asks for results of height and/or weight:

- Write down the numbers on a paper without the student's name and hand it to student directly without comment
- If the student makes a negative remark, it is appropriate to respond with a supportive comment.
- If the student asks if he is too fat or too short, say you don't know. Suggest the student ask his doctor or the school nurse (where available).

