

## INTRODUCTION

The school community has a vital role in shaping children's current and lifelong health and dietary patterns. Because children spend the majority of their day at school—including before and after school activities—the foods and beverages available on the school campus represent a potentially significant proportion of a child's daily nutrient intake. Schools have an important opportunity to facilitate healthy eating patterns that are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and wellbeing. Similarly, physically active students are more ready to learn and are more likely to achieve their academic potential. Emphasis on establishing healthy eating and physically active lifestyles with school children can help build lifetime health and social wellbeing and prevent adverse health consequences that include obesity, cardiovascular disease, stroke, osteoporosis, and Type 2 diabetes.

The school community encompasses public and private schools; grades pre-K through 12; before and after school programs; early child care; colleges and universities that reach children, youth, young adults, faculty and staff; and family and community members throughout New Hampshire. In order to realize the potential for the school community to support lifelong healthy eating and active living, an integrated approach to developing appropriate nutritional and physical activity patterns is required. Such an approach includes attention to nutrition standards and policies for all foods and beverages available on the school campus, meeting or exceeding standards for high quality physical education programs, integration of nutrition and physical education within the overall school curriculum, and support for highly qualified food service, physical education and health education staff. An integrated approach in the school setting also requires partnerships between families, schools and community organizations to establish priorities, practices and environments conducive to instilling lifelong patterns of healthy eating and active living.

## TOP PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDED INTERVENTIONS

The school sector can have a significant impact on the health of NH residents by implementing the recommended interventions listed on pages 22–25. Highest priority is given to the following:

### Goal 1 | Objective 1

Adopt statewide nutrition standards

Adopt statewide K–12 nutrition standards for all foods provided in venues within the school's control beyond the school meals program.

### Objective 2

Increase the number of schools, before and after school programs, early child care and preschool facilities that adopt nutrition standards for healthy meals, snacks and beverages.

**Goal 2** | **Objective 1**

Increase awareness, commitment and resources for school efforts to provide a healthy eating and active living environment

Provide funding and technical assistance to school wellness committees to complete periodic assessments of and improvement plans for the school nutrition and physical activity environment.

**Objective 2**

Increase awareness of school, and before and after school program efforts to facilitate healthy eating and active living by funding activities and materials for staff, family and community education and communication such as school wellness committee newsletters, nutrition and physical education materials, and results from assessments of school nutrition and physical activity environments.

**Goal 3** | **Objective 1**

Promote lifelong healthy eating and active living through integrated curriculum, communication, facility design, practices, and partnerships with families and communities

Increase the number of schools that implement an integrated curriculum for nutrition, physical education and health-focused media literacy.

**Objective 2**

Mobilize commitment to wellness through the school setting by integrating HEAL information in general school communications and community partnership activities that include students, staff and families.

**Objective 3**

Increase the number of schools, before and after school programs, early child care and preschools, and colleges and universities that support students, staff and families in achieving recommended duration of developmentally appropriate daily physical activity.

**Objective 4**

Provide developmentally appropriate equipment and safe playground facilities for active play.

**Objective 5**

Increase the number of schools and communities implementing a walk/bike to school program; link with overall efforts to develop livable, walkable communities.

A complete list of recommended interventions and useful resources follows.

Goals	Recommended Interventions		
	Policy	Practice	Communication
Adopt statewide nutrition standards.	Adopt statewide nutrition standards for all foods provided in venues within the school's control beyond the school meals program to include cafeterias, a la carte sales, classrooms, vending machines, school stores, concession stands, school-sponsored functions, fund-raisers, meetings and celebrations. Such standards will be periodically reviewed for consistency with current science as disseminated through nationally recognized professional sources.	Provide enough meal time and space to eat in a relaxed, clean, safe environment, ensure that clean sources of water are accessible at all times, and encourage recess before lunch.	
Increase awareness, commitment and resources for school efforts to provide a healthy eating and active living environment.		<p>Provide funding and technical assistance to school wellness committees to complete periodic assessments of and improvement plans for the school nutrition and physical activity environment.</p> <p>Develop a statewide program, including criteria and resources, for engaging schools to become HEAL Partner Schools.</p> <p>Improve capacity to collect statewide information describing school efforts to support healthy eating and active living.</p>	Increase awareness of school efforts to facilitate healthy eating and active living by funding activities and materials for staff, family and community education and communication such as school wellness committee newsletters, school food service policies and practices, nutrition and physical education materials, and results from assessments of school nutrition and physical activity environments.
Provide skills-based education and learning opportunities for students, staff and families.	<p>Expand the number of schools that promote best practices in skills-based nutrition education, physical education, health-focused media literacy and opportunities for developmentally appropriate daily physical activity that encourage HEAL behaviors and meet or exceed NH Education Laws and Rules.</p> <p>Form a study committee to examine current research and evidence suggesting the need to redistribute Department of Education requirements for health and physical education by placing greater emphasis on elementary grades when attitudes and skills are developing.</p>	Do not use food as a reward or discipline and do not withhold recess as a punishment.	Increase understanding of the importance of healthy eating and active living by increasing the number of schools that provide education for staff and families on nutrition, physical activity, health-focused media literacy and effective role modeling.

Goals	Recommended Interventions		
	Policy	Practice	Communication
Promote lifelong healthy eating and active living through integrated curriculum, communication, facility design, practices, and partnerships with families and communities.	<p>Increase the number of schools that implement an integrated curriculum for nutrition, physical education and health-focused media literacy through school subjects such as science, math, history, language and other arts. Begin by disseminating and applying a set of state guidelines and resources including the K–12 New Hampshire Physical Education Curriculum Guidelines, the New Hampshire Health Education Curriculum Guidelines and New Hampshire Resources for Coordinated School Health Programs; by incorporating concepts of media literacy within health education; and by working towards a comprehensive, integrated curriculum for healthy eating and active living.</p> <p>Encourage integration of media literacy across curricula in art, language arts, physical education and science to teach children how media markets to them and competes for their time, how consumption of media replaces other activities, how to think critically about media, how to produce media promoting healthy living, physical activity and nutritionally balanced eating and healthy lifestyles.</p>	<p>Increase the number of schools that support students, staff and families in achieving recommended duration of developmentally appropriate daily physical activity by promoting unstructured play and active recess time; by ensuring that physical education programs provide substantial amounts of moderate-to-vigorous developmentally appropriate physical activity (at least 50% of the class time); and by integrating practices, in addition to the physical education program, that emphasize lifelong physical activity.</p> <p>Provide developmentally appropriate equipment and safe playground facilities for active play.</p> <p>Increase the number of schools and communities implementing a walk/bike to school program; link with overall efforts to develop livable, walkable communities.</p>	<p>Mobilize commitment to wellness through the school setting by integrating HEAL information and the lifelong benefits that result from HEAL in general school communications, such as websites, monthly calendars, and newsletters, and community partnership activities that include students, staff and families such as wellness committees, health fairs, and sport and recreation events.</p> <p>Fund workshops to train school staff in the integration of nutrition, physical activity and media literacy into school curriculum, and to foster partnerships between school food service and the classroom.</p> <p>Disseminate communication &amp; training—to teachers, school nurses and families—that supports changes to increase physical activity at school and at home, such as the KidPower! newsletter.</p>
Assure highly qualified food service, health and physical education staff.	<p>Assure that nutrition and physical education are taught by certified and highly qualified staff and encourage their ongoing professional development.</p> <p>Increase the number of schools that provide a qualified school nutrition/food service director, credentialed by an approved, nationally recognized program to oversee the operation of school meals and to maintain state health and sanitation requirements.</p>		

## BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Goals	Recommended Interventions		
	Policy	Practice	Communication
Adopt statewide nutrition standards.	<p>Increase the number of before and after school programs that have policies, programs and environments that support and promote physical activity and healthy eating behaviors.</p> <p>Incorporate nutrition and physical activity standards in Licensed Plus guidelines for licensing NH child care programs.</p>	Use snack/mealtimes to introduce a variety of different healthy food options and ensure that clean sources of water are accessible at all times.	
Increase awareness, commitment and resources to create a healthy eating and active living environment.			Increase awareness of before and after school program activities to facilitate healthy eating and active living
Provide skills-based education and learning opportunities for students, staff and families.		<p>Ask parents in program brochures to supply healthy snacks and lunches.</p> <p>Endorse and promote no more than two hours of non-educational screen-time a day (TV, video games, computer use, text messaging). Substitute non-educational screen time with activity programs such as games and team building exercises.</p>	Provide training to before and after school program staff to lead activity sessions, select healthy foods and model positive behaviors.
Promote lifelong healthy eating and active living through integrated curriculum, communication, facility design, practices and partnerships with families and communities.	<p>Involve before and after school programs in development and implementation of school wellness policies and plans.</p> <p>Improve and simplify access to federal nutrition entitlement funds to support healthy nutrition for before and after school program participants.</p>	Provide time to engage in a variety of physical activity options and integrate activities that emphasize lifelong daily activity.	

## EARLY CHILD CARE & PRESCHOOLS

Goals	Recommended Interventions		
	Policy	Practice	Communication
Adopt statewide nutrition standards.	Increase the number of child care and preschool facilities that adopt nutrition standards for healthy meals, snacks and beverages consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.  Incorporate nutrition and physical activity standards in Licensed Plus guidelines for licensing NH child care programs.	Use snack/mealtimes to introduce a variety of different healthy food options and ensure that clean sources of water are accessible at all times.	
Provide skills-based education and learning opportunities for students, staff and families.		Ask parents to supply healthy snacks and lunches.	Provide training to staff to lead activity sessions, prepare healthy food options and model positive HEAL behaviors for parents and children.
Promote lifelong healthy eating and active living through integrated curriculum, communication, facility design, practices and partnerships with families and communities.	Adopt policies establishing mealtime as part of the preschool curriculum.	Provide regular opportunities for developmentally appropriate daily physical activity and play.	Adopt educational materials that contain positive references to healthy food and avoid educational/play materials that endorse products such as fast food, candy or cookies.

## COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES\*

Goals	Recommended Interventions		
	Policy	Practice	Communication
Develop community partnerships to provide experiential learning opportunities for students in health, nutrition and physical education professions.	Advocate for early, progressive field-based learning beyond 'the walls of the institution' in the area of health education and physical education.	Design academic programs that are continually assessed to ensure visionary programming based upon research.  Explore opportunities for integration among all content areas that will foster learning related to nutrition education and physical activity (e.g., 'walking into history' unit, data collection on activity levels using pedometers and software applications, movement and literacy experiences).	

\*Graduates entering the teaching profession whose focus is the promotion of health, nutrition education and physical activity for all children (pre-K through 12th grade) are a significant resource for positively affecting school outcomes relative to healthy eating and active living. In the academic preparation of these future teachers, it is recognized that knowledge and skills are maximized through practical application or experiential learning opportunities. Early and on-going practical field opportunities assist pre-service teachers in understanding the expectations of those they will serve. Consequently, New Hampshire colleges and universities must develop community partnership opportunities that are vital in preparing pre-service teachers for the teaching community they will be entering.

## HELPFUL TOOLS AND RESOURCES TARGETED TO SCHOOLS

Team Nutrition is an initiative of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service to support the Child Nutrition Programs through training and technical assistance for food service, nutrition education for children and their caregivers, and school and community support for healthy eating and physical activity. [www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Default.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Default.htm)

Changing the Scene - Improving the School Nutrition Environment is a USDA and UNH Cooperative Extension program that addresses the entire school nutrition environment. <http://extension.unh.edu/News/ChangeSc.htm> or [www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/changing.html](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/changing.html)

Guidelines, resources and classroom activities for educators and school nutrition professionals to develop an integrated approach to nutrition education and school wellness. [www.newenglanddairycouncil.org](http://www.newenglanddairycouncil.org)

NH Department of Education Bureau of Nutrition Programs & Services: National School Lunch Program, Child & Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, Special Milk Program, NH Local Wellness Policy Toolkit. [www.ed.state.nh.us/nutrition](http://www.ed.state.nh.us/nutrition)

School Nutrition Association: Local School Wellness Policies. [www.schoolnutrition.org/Index.aspx?id=1075](http://www.schoolnutrition.org/Index.aspx?id=1075)

5-2-1-0 Goes To School: Display materials, tools and tip sheets available from the Foundation for Healthy Communities. [www.healthynh.com/fhc/initiatives/ch\\_obesity/5210gts.php#](http://www.healthynh.com/fhc/initiatives/ch_obesity/5210gts.php#)

New Hampshire K-12 Physical Education Curriculum Guidelines and other resources and links related to physical activity available from the NH Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. [www.nhahperd.org](http://www.nhahperd.org)

New Hampshire Health Education Curriculum Guidelines.

[www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/instruction/HealthHIVAIDS/nhhealtheducationcurriculumguidelines.htm](http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/instruction/HealthHIVAIDS/nhhealtheducationcurriculumguidelines.htm)

KidPower! a NH program, works with schools and other organizations to help children be more physically active.

[www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/NHP/children.htm](http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/NHP/children.htm)

Policy recommendations for developmentally appropriate daily physical activity.

[www.ed.state.nh.us/education/News/physical\\_activity.htm](http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/News/physical_activity.htm)

LiveFIT NH initiative demonstrates-through television segments, educational and outreach activities, and online resources-how individuals, families, schools and communities can combat obesity trends. [www.nhptv.org/livefitnh](http://www.nhptv.org/livefitnh)

Safe Routes to School program designed to facilitate increased physical activity by addressing barriers to walking or riding to school. [www.nh.gov/dot/bureaus/planning/SRTS\\_home.htm](http://www.nh.gov/dot/bureaus/planning/SRTS_home.htm)

Strategies for promoting physical activity and healthy eating in after school settings.

[www.nccic.org/afterschool/fitness\\_nutrition.html](http://www.nccic.org/afterschool/fitness_nutrition.html)

Resources and technical assistance for youth, parents, and educators to develop media literacy skills and educational programs. [www.childhealthservices.org/id24.htm](http://www.childhealthservices.org/id24.htm)

The NH Farm to School Program is a project to connect NH farms and schools with the goal of developing a healthy, community-based, community-supported school food system. [www.nhfarmtoschool.org](http://www.nhfarmtoschool.org)

NH Department of Education Coordinated School Health Program.

[www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/instruction/HealthHIVAIDS/coordinatedschoolhealthnh.htm](http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/instruction/HealthHIVAIDS/coordinatedschoolhealthnh.htm)

Connecticut's Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) Toolkit includes a self-assessment instrument and planning guide to identify baseline in terms of policies, practices, and environmental factors.

[www.cadh.org/CADHResources/HealthyEatingActiveLivingToolkit/tabid/61/Default.aspx](http://www.cadh.org/CADHResources/HealthyEatingActiveLivingToolkit/tabid/61/Default.aspx)

PlusTime NH provides training, advocacy, and financial and human resources to support after school programs. [www.plustime.org](http://www.plustime.org)

The Environmental Nutrition and Activity Community Tool (ENACT) presents useful information based on current research and practice and includes model policies and programs, hands-on tools, articles and other publications, and resources. [www.preventioninstitute.org/sa/enact/members/index.php](http://www.preventioninstitute.org/sa/enact/members/index.php)

Media Smart provides consultation, training and resources on appropriate use of mass media and understanding of both the positive and negative effects of the mass media on child and teen health/behaviors. [www.childhealthservices.org/id24.htm](http://www.childhealthservices.org/id24.htm)

Referral resources to regional activities and educational materials on nutrition. [www.lightenupnh.org](http://www.lightenupnh.org)

Walk NH! is a program designed to promote walking in New Hampshire as a part of a healthy lifestyle. [www.walkNH.org](http://www.walkNH.org)

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans provide authoritative advice for people two years and older and serve as the basis for federal food and nutrition education programs. [www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines](http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines)

HEAT Club After School Curriculum is designed to be used with elementary school children in after school programs in order to improve eating habits and increase physical activity levels. The HEAT Club curriculum is available to after school care providers in conjunction with a comprehensive training that teaches creative and effective ways to use the program. [www.childreninbalance.org](http://www.childreninbalance.org)

Bike-Walk Alliance of NH offers grade specific training on bicycling. [www.bwanh.org](http://www.bwanh.org)

Calculates the amount of fruits and vegetables you should eat each day based on your age, gender and daily activity. [www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov)

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