

Local Wellness Policies Fast Facts

To provide you with the best science and to reduce review time, please find the following science-approved facts for use in your campaigns and materials. After each fact, you will find fast facts based on the science, which can be cut and pasted word-for-word without need for additional science review. Please note that any change in wording will result in the need to run your documents through science review before release.

Healthy School Environment

FACT 1

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, schools play an important role in the overall health of children and adolescents. About 95 percent of the nation's children and adolescents are enrolled in schools, and they typically spend 6 hours a day for up to 13 years in school. Schools have been identified as some of the most effective settings in the community to address preventable health problems, such as obesity among children and adolescents.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Kids spend many of their waking hours at school, so schools have an important role to play in their health.
- ▶ Schools have a role to play in student health and can help reduce the risk of developing diet-related diseases like type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

Source:

Putting Local School Wellness Policies into Action. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2014. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/npao/pdf/SchoolWellnessInAction.pdf>

Snyder TD, Dillow SA. Digest of Education Statistics 2010. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Sciences, Institute of Education Sciences, US Dept of Education; 2011. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2011015>. Accessed September 15, 2014.

Snyder TD, Dillow SA. Digest of Education Statistics 2011. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Sciences, Institute of Education Sciences, US Dept of Education; 2012. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2012001>. Accessed September 15, 2014.

Institute of Medicine. Accelerating Progress in Obesity Prevention: Solving the Weight of the Nation. Washington, DC: National Academy Press; 2012.

FACT 2

According to Bridging the Gap, a growing body of evidence shows that school-based policies regarding foods, beverages, and physical activity are significantly related to calories consumed and expended by school-age children, and to their weight and body mass index levels.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Policies schools put in place for foods, beverages, and physical activity have an impact on student health.
- ▶ Creating a healthy school environment is important for improving student wellbeing.

Source:

Chiqui J, Piekarz E, Schermbeck R. School District Wellness Policies: Evaluating Progress and Potential for Improving Children's Health Eight Years after the Federal Mandate. Bridging the Gap. 2016. http://www.bridgingthegapresearch.org/_asset/98nbk1/WP_2016_monograph.pdf

FACT 3

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, researchers have linked healthy eating and physical activity with better academic performance and classroom behavior, such as concentration, attentiveness, and time-on-task. A study published in the Journal of School Health also reports that healthier students are better learners.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Healthier students are better learners.
- ▶ Healthy students do better in school.
- ▶ Kids who eat healthy and are physically active do better in school.
- ▶ Healthier students behave better in class.
- ▶ Healthier students can concentrate better and stay on-task in class.

Source:

Putting Local School Wellness Policies into Action. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2014.
<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/npao/pdf/SchoolWellnessInAction.pdf>

Basch CE. Healthier students are better learners: A missing link in school reforms to close the achievement gap. Journal of School Health. 2011;81(10):593-598. doi: 10.1111/j.1746-1561.2011.00632.x

FACT 4

A 2015 brief from the National Collaborative on Education and Health reported that student health issues are a leading contributor of chronic absenteeism, and ensuring that students are able to attend healthy school environments is a critical strategy for addressing chronic absenteeism. A healthy school environment means students have regular access to school health services, mental health services, healthy school food, physical education and activity, healthy school buildings and a supportive school climate.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Providing students with healthy school environments, including regular access to healthy food, physical education, and physical activity, is an important strategy for addressing chronic absenteeism.
- ▶ Students come to school more when their school supports their health.
- ▶ Schools can help improve student attendance by providing healthy food, physical education, and physical activity.

Source:

Brief on Chronic Absenteeism and School Health. National Collaborative on Education and Health. 2015.
<http://www.attendanceworks.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Chronic-Absenteeism-and-School-Health-Brief-1.pdf>

School Meals and Snacks

FACT 5

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, student participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture School Breakfast Program is associated with increased academic grades and standardized test scores, reduced absenteeism, and improved cognitive performance, such as memory.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Students who participate in the School Breakfast Program get better grades and do better on standardized tests.
- ▶ Participation in the School Breakfast Program can help kids do better in school.
- ▶ Students who participate in the School Breakfast Program attend school more often and do better in school.

Source:

Health and Academic Achievement. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2014.
https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/health_and_academics/pdf/health-academic-achievement.pdf

FACT 6

According to a study published in *Childhood Obesity*, students responded positively to the new lunches that follow the updated nutrition standards set by the 2010 Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act. They consumed more fruit, threw away less of the entrees and vegetables, and consumed the same amount of milk. Plate waste declined as a result.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ With the updated nutrition standards for school meals established by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, a study found that students are eating more fruit.
- ▶ Students in one study ate more of the vegetables and entrees they took for lunch under the updated school nutrition standards set by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.
- ▶ One study found plate waste went down in school cafeterias after the updated nutrition standards set by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 were implemented.

Source:

Schwartz MB, Henderson KE, Read M, Danna N, Ickovics J. New School Meal Regulations Increase Fruit Consumption and Do Not Increase Total Plate Waste. *Childhood Obesity*. 2015. Vol. 11 (3). doi: 10.1089/chi.2015.0019

FACT 7

According to a poll released by The Pew Charitable Trusts, more than seven in 10 parents support the nutrition standards for the national school meal program that were put in place by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. Specifically, 72 percent of parents favor the standards for school meals, and 72 percent of parents support Smart Snacks standards.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Parents support healthier school meals and snacks.
- ▶ Parents support the nutrition standards for all food sold in schools put in place by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.
- ▶ The majority of parents nationwide support the healthy standards for school meals and snacks put in place by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

Source:

Nationwide Polling Regarding Parents' Views of School Meal and Smart Snack Standards. Hart Research Associates and Ferguson Research. 2014. https://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/surveys_and_polls/2014/rwjf415456

FACT 8

According to a National Wellness Policy Study, competitive foods and beverages found in vending machines, school stores, and à la carte lines can detract from a healthy eating space if the nutrition standards are not consistent with the healthy standards promoted in school meals. Historically, when given the option, children chose less healthy options when available.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold in vending machines, school stores, and à la carte lines help students make healthier choices.
- ▶ If foods and beverages sold in vending machines, school stores, and à la carte lines do not meet nutrition standards, they take away from the healthy school food environment promoted through healthier school meals.
- ▶ Children are more likely to choose less healthy options when they are available.

Source:

Piekarz-Porter E, Schermbeck RM, Leider J, Young SK, Chriqui JF. Working on Wellness: How Aligned are District Wellness Policies with the Soon-To-Be-Implemented Federal Wellness Policy Requirements? National Wellness Policy Study, Institute for Health Research and Policy, University of Illinois at Chicago. 2017. https://www.ihrp.uic.edu/files/Working_on_wellness_508.pdf

FACT 9

According to a study published in JAMA Pediatrics, California high school students consumed lower quantities of fat, sugar, and calories in school than students in states with no competitive food nutrition standards.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Schools that offer healthier snacks can help students consume fewer calories.
- ▶ Schools that offer healthier snacks can help students consume less sugar, fat, and calories.
- ▶ According to a study published in JAMA Pediatrics, California high school students consumed less fat, sugar, and calories at school than students in states that didn't have nutrition standards for food served in vending machines and à la carte lines.

Source:

Taber DR, Chriqui JF, Chaloupka FJ. Differences in Nutrient Intake Associated with State Laws Regarding Fat, Sugar, and Caloric Content of Competitive Foods. JAMA Pediatrics, Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med. 2012;166(5):452-458. doi: 10.1001/archpediatrics.2011.1839

Nutrition Education

FACT 10

According to a National Wellness Policy Study, well-implemented nutrition education can:

- ▶ Help children obtain healthy weights and BMIs.
- ▶ Increase fruit and vegetable consumption and positive attitudes toward those foods.
- ▶ Improve academic performance.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Nutrition education can help students be healthier.
- ▶ Participating in nutrition education can lead to students eating more fruits and vegetables.
- ▶ Nutrition education can help students do better in school.

Source:

Piekarz-Porter E, Schermbeck RM, Leider J, Young SK, Chriqui JF. Working on Wellness: How Aligned are District Wellness Policies with the Soon-To-Be-Implemented Federal Wellness Policy Requirements? National Wellness Policy Study, Institute for Health Research and Policy, University of Illinois at Chicago. 2017. https://www.ihrp.uic.edu/files/Working_on_wellness_508.pdf

Physical Education and Physical Activity

FACT 11

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, physical education benefits students by:

- ▶ Increasing their level of physical activity.
- ▶ Improving their grades and standardized test scores.
- ▶ Helping them stay on-task in the classroom.

Students who are physically active tend to have better school attendance.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Kids do better in school when they have physical education.
- ▶ Physical education helps students improve their grades and standardized test scores.
- ▶ Physical education helps students stay on-task in the classroom.
- ▶ Kids who are physically active are more likely to miss fewer days of school.
- ▶ Kids who are physically active are more likely to attend school consistently.

Source:

The Association Between School-Based Physical Activity, Including Physical Education, and Academic Performance. Atlanta, GA; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US Department of Health and Human Services; 2010. https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/health_and_academics/pdf/pa-pe_paper.pdf

Health and Academic Achievement. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2014. https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/health_and_academics/pdf/health-academic-achievement.pdf

Food and Beverage Marketing

FACT 12

According to Change Lab Solutions, research shows that, despite common misperceptions, marketing relationships with fast food and sugary drink companies result in little to no revenue for schools. In addition, they encourage students and staff to make unhealthy food choices and compromise the educational mission of schools.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Despite common misperceptions, schools make little to no money through marketing unhealthy products.
- ▶ Marketing unhealthy products encourages students and staff to make unhealthy choices.
- ▶ Unhealthy food and beverage marketing compromises other school efforts to teach students about healthy eating.

Source:

Restricting Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools. Change Lab Solutions. 2017. http://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/Restricting_Food_and_Beverage_Marketing_in_Schools-FINAL-201705.pdf

FACT 13

According to Change Lab Solutions, limitations on food and beverage marketing in schools are critical because children are particularly susceptible to advertising. Young children do not have the cognitive ability to discern that advertising presents a biased point of view. Older kids and adolescents understand the intent of advertising, but are often still too young to understand its long-term effects.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Children are particularly susceptible to advertising.
- ▶ Young children don't understand that ads can be biased.
- ▶ While older students understand the intent of advertising, they often don't understand the long-term effects.

Source:

Restricting Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools. Change Lab Solutions. 2017. http://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/Restricting_Food_and_Beverage_Marketing_in_Schools-FINAL-201705.pdf

FACT 14

According to a systematic review and meta-analysis, unhealthy food and beverage marketing increases dietary intake and preference for energy-dense, low-nutrition food and beverage. For children exposed to unhealthy food and beverage marketing, dietary intake significantly increased during or shortly after exposure to advertisements, and children had a higher risk of selecting the advertised foods or beverages.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Children exposed to marketing for unhealthy foods and beverages are more likely to consume those products.
- ▶ After seeing ads for unhealthy foods and beverages, children are more likely to select those products.
- ▶ Marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages can shape children's preferences for those products.

Source:

Sadeghirad B, Duhaney T, Motaghipisheh S, Campbell NRC, Johnston BC. Influence of unhealthy food and beverage marketing on children's dietary intake and preference: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized trials. *Obes Rev.* 2016. 17(10):945-959. doi: 10.1111/obr.12445

Fundraisers

FACT 15

According to an issue brief from Healthy Eating Research and Bridging the Gap, school fundraisers involving nutrient-poor, high-calorie foods increase children's and adolescents' exposure to unhealthy options. These types of fundraisers are likely to adversely impact longer-term health outcomes and have been associated with adolescent obesity when they are held frequently. There are several other options for schools to generate revenue in ways that promote children's health, such as physical activity fundraisers, and many schools are implementing them.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Unhealthy food fundraisers in school can negatively impact kids' health.
- ▶ Schools don't have to implement unhealthy food fundraisers to make money because there are other healthier options that can be profitable.
- ▶ There are many healthy fundraising options available that can also be profitable for schools.
- ▶ Many schools have implemented physical activity fundraisers that can generate revenue and promote kids' health.

Source:

Turner L, Chiqui JF, Terry-McElrath Y. School Fundraisers: Positive Changes in Foods Sold, but Room for Improvement Remains. Durham, NC: Healthy Eating Research; 2016.
http://healthyeatingresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/her_btg_fundraiser_FINAL.pdf