Get Your Game On: School Wellness is a Team Effort

Presented by: Ashley Carroll
NE State Coordinator, AFHK
Agenda

• What is Action for Healthy Kids?
• Make the Case for Healthy Schools
• Introduction to Game On
• Six Steps to a Healthier School Culture
• Commit to Action
• Q & A
What is Action For Healthy Kids?

Action for Healthy Kids® (AFHK) mobilizes school professionals, families and communities across the U.S. to take actions that lead to healthy eating, physical activity and healthier schools where kids thrive.
Who Are We?

Our goal is to create school communities where children learn how to make healthy choices from the minute they walk in the front door to the minute they leave at the end of the school day.
Childhood Obesity

- The obesity-hunger paradox
- Childhood obesity as a system failure
- It’s the symptom, not the root cause of the problem
- Factors that influence obesity are multi-dimensional, complex and inter-related
- We cannot just tell kids to eat better and move more, they have limited decision-making authority
- We have to re-engineer their environments to make them supportive of health-promoting habits (access, demand)
State of Obesity: Nebraska

- Current adult obesity rate (2016): 32.0%
- Rank among states (2016): 13

Direct and indirect medical costs associated with obesity are estimated at $147 billion annually.

State of Obesity: Nebraska

Childhood Overweight and Obesity New Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2- to 4-year-old WIC participants</th>
<th>10- to 17-year-olds*</th>
<th>High school students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/51</td>
<td>33/51</td>
<td>22/43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Historical rates (2000-2014)
Historical rates (2004-2016)
Historical rates (1999-2015)

* Represents the combined rates of overweight and obese 10-17 year-olds

Source: stateofobesity.org/wic
Source: stateofobesity.org/children1017
Source: stateofobesity.org/high-school-obesity

Learn • Act • Transform
At the end of the day...

- Student health impacts the **bottom line**.
- We have a moral obligation to address factors that affect students which are within our control (during the school day, within school hours).
- School wellness programs are **evidence-based, relatively easy to implement and low or no cost**
The Case for Healthy, Active Schools: The Learning Connection

-- Students who are physically active tend to have better grades, school attendance, cognitive performance, and classroom behaviors.

-- Higher physical activity and physical fitness levels are associated with improved cognitive performance among students.

-- More participation in physical education class has been associated with better grades, standardized test scores, and classroom behavior among students.

-- Increased time spent for physical education does not negatively affect students’ academic achievement.

The Learning Connection - *Continued*

-- Time spent in recess has been shown to **positively affect students’ cognitive performance and classroom behaviors.**

-- Brief classroom physical activity breaks are associated with **improved cognitive performance, classroom behavior, and educational outcomes** (e.g., standardized test scores, reading literacy scores, math fluency scores) among students.

-- Participation in extracurricular physical activities such as interscholastic sports has been associated with **higher grade point averages, lower drop-out rates, and fewer disciplinary problems** among students.

The Case for Healthy, Active Schools- SWP

• School wellness policies are required!
• The final rules took effect this year and require:
  • Reporting on policy content and implementation
  • Periodic assessment (at least every three years)
  • Results be published
  • Stakeholders (including staff and parents) be allowed to participate in development, implementation and review

Learn more about the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act and local wellness policies at: https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/local-school-wellness-policy
ESSA Changes the Game

• The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) replaces No Child Left Behind
• It sets a new framework and funding structure for elementary and secondary education
• Represents a shift in focus to a “well-rounded education” for all students

What is a “well-rounded education”?

Our State ESSA Plan

• State accountability measure = absenteeism
Health and physical education promotes school attendance by improving student health!
The Learning Connection

Severely obese kids miss school 4 times as much as healthy weight kids due to illness and social concerns, like bullying.

International Journal of Obesity, Feb 2012
What is Game On?

Game On supports America’s schools, their staff, students, and families to incorporate healthy food choices and physical activity into their daily lives and school environment, with the ultimate goal of getting nationally recognized as a health-promoting school.
Steps of Game On

- **Step 1:** Gather Your Team
- **Step 2:** Assess & Track Progress
- **Step 3:** Create & Implement an Action Plan
- **Step 4:** Find Activities
- **Step 5:** Engage Families & Community
- **Step 6:** Receive Recognition
Activity

Stand Up – Sit Down!
Step 1: Gather Your Team

- Invite teachers, school staff, parents and community members.
- Include key players/influencers in the school.
- Invite student input and participation
- Connect with your district
Step 1: Gather Your Team

Try to have the team represent the diversity of your community.

Involve people who have a deep understanding of the culture, norms and dynamics of your community.
Step 1: Gather Your Team

How can Game On: Step 1 help?

• Steps to building a strong School Health Team
• AFHK Wellness Policy Tool
• Strategies to make the case for school wellness
• Tips for recruiting team members, including suggested roles for each team member
• Tips for hosting effective meetings and developing a clear vision
Why do you need a school health team?

We don’t work best in silos, we need cross-functional collaboration (WSCC)
So often we are talking to ourselves- we need to broaden the base of support for student health initiatives
Step 2: Assess & Track Progress
Step 2: Assess & Track Progress

How can Game On: Step 2 help?

• Outlines why it’s helpful to complete an assessment
• Links to AFHK’s School Portal, where you can complete AFHK’s modified School Health Index
• Provides a step-by-step guide for how to complete the AFHK’s online School Health Index
Why Do a Wellness Assessment?

- Develop relationships with key staff.
- Determine your school’s strengths and weaknesses.
- Define goals that suit your school’s needs.
- Justify your decision to make changes.
- Document starting points to show progress over time.
Keep in Mind

Conduct your wellness assessment annually so you can measure your progress over time.
School Health Index (SHI)

Also a great tool to assess the implementation of your district’s wellness policy!
School Health Index (SHI)

During the 2016-17 school year:

- Total average score: 76%
- Most schools were:
  - Implementing recess (75%)
  - Meeting school nutrition standards for Smart Snacks (73%)
  - Communicating with families about health and wellness initiatives (72%)
School Health Index (SHI)

During the 2016-17 school year:

• Most schools did not:
  • Implement farm-to-school activities (23%)
  • Implement individual physical activity and fitness plans for students (26%)
  • Promote walking and biking to school (29%)
Step 3: Create & Implement an Action Plan

MARY LYON SCHOOL - ACTION PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>End Date</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Measure of Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>04/20/2017</td>
<td></td>
<td>Health Fair listed on school calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host Annual Health Fair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>05/11/2016</td>
<td></td>
<td>Policy language and implementation plan for withholding or used as punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement procedures to ensure that physical activity is not withheld or used as punishment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Copies of communications to students, parents and community members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate wellness efforts to multiple audiences (e.g., students, parents, community members)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
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Learn • Act • Transform
Step 3: Create & Implement an Action Plan

How can Game On: Step 3 help?

• Outlines why it’s helpful to complete an action plan
• Provides steps for how to customize your online action plan (in AFHK’s school portal)
• Links to a list of National Health Observances to help you plan activities/initiatives around key national initiatives
Why Create an Action Plan?

- Team camaraderie
- Group brainstorming
- Clear communication
- Timeline
Sustainability

Incorporate sustainability into your action plan:

• Involve your community
• Promote your initiatives widely
• Track and communicate your progress
• Incorporate health and wellness objectives into your school improvement plan
For schools that have a school improvement plan, do you include student health indicators?

- Consider including health and wellness measures on your school’s improvement plan
- How?
  - Review school priorities – How does health and wellness impact existing priorities?
  - Review your district’s wellness policy – Where could your school use improvement?
  - Come up with a short list of wellness priorities and link them back to learning
  - Garner support, especially among decision-makers and parents
Step 4: Find Activities

Select a room on the school blueprint to find nutrition and physical activity challenges for every aspect of the school building.
Eat Better During the School Day

“Change the food in schools and we can influence how children think.”

– Alice Waters
Author and Founder of the Edible Schoolyard Project
Game On Activity Examples

- Healthy & Active Parties
- Healthy Fundraising
- Healthy & Active Non-Food Rewards
- Offer Healthy Snacks
- Healthy Carnival
- Host a Taste Test
- Health & Wellness Fair

Step 4: Find Activities - [http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges)
Why Focus on Eating Better?

Studies have related the availability of snacks and drinks sold in schools to higher intakes of calories, sugary drinks, total fat and saturated fat, and lower intakes of key nutrients, fruits, vegetables and milk.


Benefits of Eating Better

- Supports classroom lessons
- Encourages consumption of healthy foods
- Contributes to good health
- Promotes the right messages
- Creates excitement about nutrition

& “Alternatives to Food Rewards.” Connecticut State Department of Education, May 2005 (Revised November 2011)
Best Practices

Make healthy options standard whenever foods are shared – parties, fundraisers, school events, celebrations – in and out of the classroom.

Healthy Halloween Party
Ryan Elementary
Westminster, CO
Best Practices

Choose fresh fruits and vegetables, water, whole grains and low-fat/fat-free dairy products as the primary options.

Learn • Act • Transform
Best Practices

Shift the focus from food – host events which promote physical activity along with music, art, and games.

Hippity-Hop-A-Thon fundraiser
Hoffman Trails Elementary
Hillard, Ohio
Best Practices

Provide students non-food rewards for good behavior – help set them up for lifelong healthy eating patterns.
Best Practices

Increase opportunities for nutrition education through:

- School gardens
- Healthy snacks
- Taste tests
- Healthy vending & school stores
- Cross- curricular integration
- Newsletter articles
- Special workshops or events
Move More During the School Day

“I call (exercise) Miracle-Gro for the brain. Exercise keeps these cells healthy in a way that even playing chess (and other highly cognitive activities) does not.”

– John J. Ratey, MD
Co-Author of Spark - The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain
Game On Activity Examples

- Outdoor Active Recess
- Indoor Active Recess
- Recess at Home
- Playground Circuit Challenges
- Recess Before Lunch
- AFHK Tip Sheet: Recess

Step 4: Find Activities - http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges
Physical Education vs. Physical Activity

Physical activity = anything that gets your body moving

- P.E.
- Recess
- Fitness breaks
- Field trips
- Classroom learning that incorporates movement
- Before and after school activities
- Walk and bike to school programs
Game On Activity Examples

- Active Learning Opportunities
- Brain Breaks, Instant Recess & Energizers
- Songs & Stories with Movement
- AFHK Tip Sheet: Fitness Breaks

Step 4: Find Activities - http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges
Game On Activity Examples

- Activity Clubs
- Fitness Classes
- Get Your Groove On
- Intramural Programs
- Open Gym
- Walking Trails with Fitness Activities
- AFHK Tip Sheet: Before/After School Activities

Step 4: Find Activities - http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges
Walk and Bike to School

- In 1969, 48% of children 5-14 years old walked or biked to school.
- By 2009, that number had decreased to 13%.
- Start or support a Safe Routes to School program in your community.

Game On Activity Examples

- Bike Racks
- Bike Train
- Remote Drop Off
- Walking School Bus
- Crossing the Street Program
- Bike Rodeo/Bicycle Skills Clinic

Step 4: Find Activities - http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges
Active Events

Does Your School Culture Support an Active Lifestyle?

Shift the focus from food - host active events that promote physical activity.

Celebrations ▪ Rewards ▪ Fundraisers ▪ Family events

www.ActionforHealthyKids.org/game-on
Step 5: Engage Families and Community

How can Game On: Step 5 help?

- Strategies for engaging parents in school wellness initiatives, including Parents for Healthy Kids
- Tips for engaging community organizations and members
- Resources to host an Every Kid Healthy Week event

www.ParentsforHealthyKids.org
Why parent involvement is important

• Students who feel supported by their parents are less likely to experience emotional distress, practice unhealthy eating behaviors, consider or attempt suicide, or disengage from school and learning.
• School efforts to promote health among students have been shown to be more successful when parents are involved.
• When parents volunteer at their children’s school, the likelihood of their children initiating smoking decreases and the likelihood of their children meeting the guidelines for physical activity increases.
• Interventions with a parent engagement component have been shown to increase positive health behaviors such as children’s school-related physical activity.

Every Kid Healthy™ Week

- Annual celebration of schools’ wellness achievements
- Effort to create nationwide momentum
- Recognized on the National Health Observances calendar
- Takes place last week of April each year
- Over 1,200 schools nationwide hosted Every Kid Healthy events in 2017

Register your event: actionforhealthykids.org/every-kid-healthy-week

Joslyn Elementary, OPS
SuperFit School Challenge

A fun, healthy, active fundraiser for students

It’s a triple-play event:

• Raises funds for school and AFHK;
• Energizes the entire school community;
• Includes a healthy eating and physical activity toolkit, fundraising program and five station obstacle course

www.superfitschoolchallenge.org
Step 6: Get Recognized- HUSSC: SL

How can Game On: Step 6 help?

- Checklists to find out if you’re ready to apply
- AFHK HUSSC:SL Sample Application
- Mini-webinars and Tip Sheets for each section of the application
- School Health Team Roles

Find these resources on Step 6 of Game On!
Game On Grants

Support Eat Better and Move More projects with a grant!

Grant Writing Tips:
• Stay focused and specific
• Use data to support your project
• Clearly identify partnerships
• Articulate how the program will sustain post-grant
• Next application cycle: March- April 2018

www.ActionforHealthyKids.org/grants
**Game On: Omaha Program Impacts**

### Physical Activity Strategies
- **12** Avg. increase in school-based physical activity mins.
- **100%** Of schools provide at least 30 mins. of school-based physical activity

### Nutrition Ed/Promotion/Access Strategies
- **100%** Engaged parents via school health team meetings, wellness events and healthy eating/physical activity info.
- **44%** Of students impacted qualified for free/reduced price meals

**Game On: Omaha**

3,911 Students impacted

Every kid healthy and ready to learn

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**PE Curriculum & Equipment**

Runnning clubs

School gardens

Playground improvements
Commit to Action

What is one thing you will do to support a healthy school culture at your school?
Q & A
Thank you!

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