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Health, Wellness & Safety Committee

HOW TO CREATE A HEALTHY SCHOOL FOOD AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CULTURE

ACTION FOR HEALTHY KIDS partners with teachers, students, parents, school wellness experts and more to fight childhood obesity, undernourishment and physical inactivity by helping schools become healthier places so kids can live healthier lives. Programs, tools and resources make it possible for everyone to play their part in ending the nation's childhood obesity epidemic. The Colorado PTA works collaboratively with Action for Healthy Kids to promote this important initiative.

Action for Healthy Kids has created a series of Tip Sheets full of activities, ideas, tips for success, resources, kits, options, and fundraising suggestions to provide a healthier school environment. To be a part of the solution to childhood obesity, and to create a healthier school environment, please visit Action for Healthy Kids at:

<http://www.ActionforHealthyKids.org/ShareHealthyFood>

You can access the Tip Sheets by creating a login, which will only take a minute. The Tip Sheets referenced are provided as a service only to identify potentially useful ideas for creating healthier school cultures. Below you will find a brief descriptive paragraph for each Tip Sheet.

TIP SHEETS: CREATING A HEALTHY SCHOOL FOOD ENVIRONMENT

NUTRITION EDUCATION & PROMOTION: Nutrition education is the process of teaching students how to choose and enjoy healthy foods along with the benefits that healthy foods have for one's body and mind. Nutrition education and promotion can take place across the school, formally and informally, inside and outside of the classroom – in the cafeteria, all around the school and at school events.

HEALTHY FUNDRAISERS – PROMOTE FAMILY HEALTH AND WELL-BEING: Fundraising events and activities that don't involve selling foods for immediate consumption provide schools with a powerful opportunity to send consistent, positive health messages, enhancing classroom lessons and promoting healthy living to students and families. Active fundraisers go even further, providing students and families with opportunities and positive reinforcement for increasing physical activity

HEALTHY FUNDRAISERS – FOOD SALES DURING AND AFTER SCHOOL: When schools promote healthy foods and beverages to fuel their student scholars, artists and athletes, they send a strong, positive message about how much they value student health and success. All competitive foods and beverages sold to students on campus during the school day must meet the United States Department

of Agriculture's (USDA) *Smart Snacks in School* standards. The standards do not cover evening, weekend or community events.

HEALTHY NON-FOOD REWARDS: Rewards happen at many levels across a school. Teachers, administrators and parent groups offer rewards to recognize and celebrate student accomplishments. The most effective rewards fit naturally into the context and mission of the school community and should promote healthy living as a desired value of the community.

HEALTHY FOOD IDEAS; SCHOOL SNACKS, CELEBRATIONS & FAMILY EVENTS: Snack time, celebrations, and family events are great opportunities to promote a healthy lifestyle, provide consistent messages and create excitement around nutritious choices.

HEALTHY SCHOOL SNACKS: Children need snacks to keep their busy bodies and minds going. Healthy snacking can help kids get important nutrients, make up for skipped meals and provide necessary fuel for learning, sports and other activities. Making those snacks as nutritious as possible is important for student performance and the development of healthy eating habits.

HEALTHY BIRTHDAYS, CELEBRATIONS & FAMILY EVENTS: Plan events such as birthdays, celebrations, and family events that emphasize healthy foods and align with classroom lessons or shift the focus and plan non-food events centered on physical activity, music, art and games. Host events that make it easy for children to practice making healthy choices.

TIP SHEETS: ADDING MORE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INTO THE SCHOOL DAY

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES: Schools can increase students' daily at-school physical activity levels by incorporating more movement into after-school programs, through intramural activities like sports and clubs or through walk and bike to school programs. Before and after school activities like those mentioned in this Tip Sheet provide parents and other community members with lots of ways to get involved.

RECESS FOR LEARNING: Scaling back recess comes at a cost to learning and academic success. Research has shown that recess helps students focus and learn better.

FITNESS BREAKS AT SCHOOL: Fitness breaks activate the brain, improve on-task behavior and leave students more focused and ready to learn. There are lots of fun and creative ways to include fitness breaks in the daily schedule, and there are lots of resources available to help schools get started.

Healthy Kids Learn Better.
ActionforHealthyKids.org

