



# School Wellness Newsletter

Physical  
Activity

Fall  
2007

## highlighting success: pedaling safety

A few decades ago, half of all school children walked or biked to school. Today, the vast majority arrive on four wheels. Along with the drop in bicycling and walking to school came a spike in childhood obesity, traffic congestion and air pollution. Commute Options for Central Oregon works to encourage kids to try biking and walking to school.

In Central Oregon last year, one thousand 5th and 6th graders learned Bicycle Safety Education (BSE), a 10-hour course that teaches students to be traffic-savvy. Since 1998, more than 25,000 Oregon students have completed the program using this curriculum. BSE strives to increase bicycle ridership and safety awareness among youth so they can travel safely while conserving resources. Students received training from Commute Options for Central Oregon staff during school hours at no charge to the school or student. Now that's a life skill worth 'pedaling'!

Submit a school success story for publication in a future newsletter. Send stories to:  
[tanya.frisendahl@state.or.us](mailto:tanya.frisendahl@state.or.us)



## evaluate local wellness policies

School districts across Oregon have worked hard to develop wellness policies. When the federal government reauthorized the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) as part of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, they included a mandate for all school districts receiving federal money for the NSLP to develop and implement a district-wide wellness policy. Rising obesity rates among American children was the impetus for the new requirement. The wellness policy must include goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities designed to promote wellness, as well as nutrition guidelines for all foods available on school grounds. Policy development should involve parents, students, school food service personnel, the school board, school administrators, and the community. Policies must also include plans for implementation.

Implementation of wellness policies will look different at each school. Some districts have chosen wellness or health committee meetings one or more times per year to monitor and revise policies, assess progress, and determine areas needing improvement. Others have one individual responsible to monitor and report to superintendents and/or the local school board. There are many ways to successfully implement a wellness policy. Once the policy is in place, it is important for schools to evaluate whether the policy is making a difference.

Here are a few tools available for districts to use to evaluate wellness policies:

CDC School Health Index (SHI)

<http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/shi/default.aspx>

Healthy Kids Learn Better – Coordinated School Health

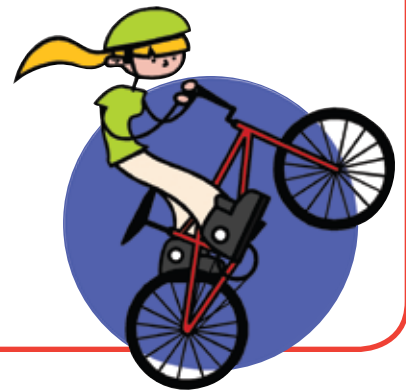
<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/CSHP/>

USDA Changing the Scene Improvement Checklist

<http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/support.pdf#search=%22USDA%20Changing%20the%20Scene%20Check%20list%22>

USDA Team Nutrition School Wellness Policy Checklist

[http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Healthy/wellnesspolicy\\_tools.html](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Healthy/wellnesspolicy_tools.html)



## get your game on!

From Action for Healthy Kids, "Game On!" is the Ultimate Wellness Challenge! Celebrate back-to-school with this fun-filled activity course perfect for a community or school event. "Game On!" helps students learn about nutrition and physical activity while having a blast! Everything you need to get your school off to a great start is included in the toolkit. Better yet, it's free!

To learn more about "Game On!", visit:  
[http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/special\\_GameOnToolkit.php](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/special_GameOnToolkit.php)

## wellness awards

This is the first year that Superintendent Susan Castillo will formally reward outstanding school wellness implementation. Schools will be recognized for outstanding implementation of their district wellness policy.

Schools are invited to apply, so watch for award applications at: <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=62> or <http://www.healthykidslearnbetter.org>

# healthy schools for kids.

let's get movin'!

## Walk and Bike to School

Walking and biking to school is fun, economical, and good for the environment. Plus, it is a great way for kids to be physically active. Research indicates that children who are physically active are happier, healthier and do better in school.

Many of us have memories of walking or biking to and from school, but today only about 10% of kids walk or bike to school regularly. Fortunately, Walk and Bike to School programs are working to reverse the trend.

How Parents and Teachers can help:

### Walk or bike to school on October 3rd:

Walk and Bike to School Day is celebrated internationally on the first Wednesday of

October. To learn more or to register your school, visit:

<http://www.walknbike.org> OR <http://www.walktoschool.org>

### Start a Walking School Bus:

It's like a car pool without the car. The "bus" consists of a group of children with one or more adults, picking up additional kids along the route. Walking school buses provide supervision and foster friendships.

[www.walkingschoolbus.org](http://www.walkingschoolbus.org)

### Create safe routes to school:

The Federal Safe Routes to School Program empowers communities to make walking and bicycling to school a safe and routine activity. Funding is available for a wide variety of programs and projects.

[www.saferoutesinfo.org/legislation\\_funding](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/legislation_funding)



## snacks for young athletes

For many teams, the end of a game or practice signals snack time. Snacks are a great way to refuel. Young athletes need nutrient-rich snacks from all five food groups, which provide carbohydrates for energy and protein for rebuilding muscles. Smart snacking also provides vitamins, minerals and fiber. Besides, snacks can taste good!

Selecting snacks for your athlete:

- \* Avoid empty calorie treats like cookies, cakes, donuts or candy bars
- \* Provide water rather than juice drinks.
- \* Aim for 180 calories, no more than 10% of calories from saturated fat, and no more than 0.5 grams of trans fat.

Smart snack ideas:

- \* Apple and orange slices
- \* String cheese
- \* Carrots with cream cheese
- \* Celery with peanut butter
- \* Cereal bars

- \* Trail mix
- \* Low-fat yogurt
- \* Fruit leathers
- \* Whole wheat crackers with hummus

Water's on tap

Make sure your child brings his/her own water bottle. Athletes need water before, during, and after exercise to replace the water lost in sweat. Sweating cools the body down, but can lead to dehydration if too much water is lost. A dehydrated athlete does not feel or perform well.

What about Other Drinks?

Sports drinks provide energy and replace electrolytes that athletes lose in sweat. In most cases, lost electrolytes can be replenished by a balanced post-game meal. Consider sports drinks when activity exceeds 90 minutes. And, low-fat chocolate milk is a nutrient-rich choice for refueling tired muscles after a workout.

## turn off TV, turn on life

Watch for TV Turnoff Week in April 2008. Take a one-week break from the hours of screen time that fill our leisure hours. The average child in the US watches almost 4 hours per day, or over 1400 hours per year—which is more hours spent watching TV than being in school each year! Participating in TV Turnoff will provide awareness of how much screen time is part of our lives and provide a springboard for change.

Research has shown that TV and other screen media have many negative effects:

- undermines family time
- harms reading and academic performance
- encourages violence
- linked with increased tobacco and alcohol use
- promotes early awareness of sexuality
- promotes sedentary lifestyles and obesity

For more information and organizer kits for your school's TV Turnoff event, go to [www.tvturnoff.org](http://www.tvturnoff.org)

"Television is a chewing gum for our eyes"  
Frank Lloyd Wright

## additional resources

For promoting physical activity

Action for Healthy Kids. Promoting active schools and healthy students. Available at: <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org>

School Employee Wellness. Guide to wellness for schools' teachers and staff. Available at: <http://www.schoolempwell.org>

Shape Up Across Oregon. Fitness programs for schools, communities, and workplaces. Available at: <http://www.shapeupacrossoregon.org>

The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. The President's Challenge: Physical Activity and Fitness Awards Program. Available at: <http://www.presidentschallenge.org>

KidsWalk-to-School. Community-based program developed by the CDC to promote physical activity. Available at: [www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/)