

Making the Case for Healthy Kids

Overview

The percentage of young people who are overweight has more than tripled since 1980. Among children and teens aged 6-19 years, 16 percent (over 9 million young people) are considered overweight. Poor eating habits and inadequate physical activity can lead to childhood overweight and other serious health problems. In order to get schools to improve their nutrition and physical activity environment, you need to “make the case” with many of the key players to get this process started. The following reports and PowerPoint presentations can assist you in getting a school “on board” to create a healthier school environment. Included in this overview section are the following components to help make the case:

Michigan Action For Healthy Kids Coalition: Making the Case DVD

This informative, motivating 20-minute DVD narrated presentation is designed especially for school leaders. It highlights current health trends among our youth related to overweight and obesity, identifies resources developed by Michigan Action For Healthy Kids Coalition, and establishes the action steps schools need to take based on national and state recommendations.

Michigan Action For Healthy Kids Coalition: Pilot Schools Project Summary Report

Schools have been challenged to create environments that provide students with healthy choices. Responding to this call for action, Fowlerville High School and Williamston High School agreed to participate in a special Pilot Schools Project sponsored by Michigan Action For Healthy Kids Coalition. The Pilot Schools Project Summary Report provides a comprehensive look at the results of the interventions that took place over a one-year period and highlights solutions that will help other schools improve students’ health.

The Learning Connection: The Value of Improving Nutrition and Physical Activity in Our Schools

This document shows how the excessive rise in poor nutrition, inactivity and weight problems adversely affects academic achievement and possibly cost schools millions of dollars each year. The report calls on schools to work with partners to address the issue, and points to current best practices in schools. The report developed by Action for Healthy Kids is available in this kit and downloadable at: www.actionforhealthykids.org/AFHK/specialreports/index.php.

A PowerPoint presentation is also available at:
www.actionforhealthykids.org/filelib/toolsforteamspresentations/Learning%20Connection_Revised1104.ppt

The PowerPoints can be downloaded and customized to reflect your school district, shortened if you only have five minutes to present to a school board or adapted as needed to “make the case” to create a healthier school environment. PowerPoint presentations are included on the CD-ROM in the Resources folder.

— More —

An Additional PowerPoint to Help “Make the Case” is Found on the CD ROM in the Resources Folder:

Children’s Health: A Call to Action, What Schools Can Do—This is a “show to go” presentation designed to educate school boards, school administration, teachers, nurses, counselors, food service, coaches, community organizations, parent groups, and others on current overweight and obesity trends, the challenge ahead and a call to action. This is a great tool to use when educating others on the importance of addressing children’s health and seeking action. The presentation is designed to take about 15-25 minutes and includes speaker notes. This presentation was developed by West Michigan Action for Healthy Kids, March 2005. Access this PowerPoint at www.tn.fcs.msue.msu.edu/powerpoints.html

A Resource to Help “Make the Case” not Included in this Toolkit:

Changing the Scene—Improving the School Nutrition Environment is a toolkit that addresses the entire school nutrition and physical activity environment. This kit can help local people take action to improve their school’s nutrition environment. The kit includes a variety of tools for use at the local level to raise awareness and address school environment issues that influence students’ eating and physical activity practices. Sample press releases, fact sheets, letters, meeting notices and articles as well as a PowerPoint presentation are available. USDA’s Food and Nutrition Services developed the kit with input from 16 education, nutrition and health organizations. Order the kit at www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/changing.html.

Please note the kit does contain the “Improvement Checklist” to assess your school environment. Schools in Michigan are encouraged to use the Healthy School Action Tool (HSAT) to assess their school environment. HSAT can be found at www.mihealthtools.org/schools.