

Improved Nutrition + Increased Physical Activity = Improved School Finances And Academic Performance

Problem

Poor nutrition, inactivity, and weight problems =
Significant economic costs to schools

- ✓ Average size school districts in Indiana lose approximately **\$95,000** of state aid per year due to the rate of absenteeism among overweight students.
- ✓ A single-day absence costs school districts **\$9-\$20** per student.
- ✓ Indiana school nutrition departments lose access to approximately **\$562 million** each year in federal reimbursement due to competitive food sales
- ✓ Schools bear significant costs helping students whose academic performance and/or behavior suffer because of poor nutrition, inactivity, and weight problems
- ✓ Schools are increasingly burdened by rapidly rising costs of employee healthcare coverage, employee absenteeism, and productivity loss related to weight problems

Solution

Improved nutrition and physical fitness =
Improved academic performance

- ✓ Numerous studies show a direct link between nutrition intake, physical activity and academic performance.
- ✓ Increased participation in breakfast programs is associated with increased academic test scores, improved daily attendance, better, class participation, and reduced tardiness.
- ✓ More than 200 studies show the effectiveness of exercise and fitness level on cognitive functioning and academic achievement.
- ✓ Physical activity in adolescents is consistently related to higher self-esteem and lower anxiety and stress.



Call to Action

- ✓ Ensure all foods and beverages available during the school Day are consistent with the new Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- ✓ Restrict food sales that compete with the Child Nutrition Program.
- ✓ Implement programs to increase school breakfast Participation.
- ✓ Provide daily, quality physical education and health education for every student in every public school in Indiana.
- ✓ Incorporate body mass indexing (BMI) measurement into Already scheduled vision, hearing, and scoliosis screenings by trained individuals.
- ✓ Provide sample wellness policies to school districts to support compliance with the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004.
- ✓ Write to your state and national legislators and encourage tougher physical education and nutrition guidelines.

For more information about Indiana Action for Healthy Kids, go to our website:

www.IndianaActionForHealthyKids.org

Resources

- ✓ *The Learning Connection: The Value of Improving Nutrition and Physical Activity in our Schools.*
www.actionforhealthykids.org
- ✓ *Study on Academic Achievement and Physical Fitness.*
California Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance.
- ✓ Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), July 2004 Policy Statement on School Health. www.ccsso.org
- ✓ Schimmer, JB; Burwinkle TM; Varni JW. *Health-Related Quality of Life of Obese Children and Adolescents.* JAMA April 9, 2003; 289(14): 1818.
- ✓ Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005. USDA.
www.health.gov
- ✓ Hoelscher, et al. *Measuring the prevalence of overweight In Texas Schoolchildren.* Am J Public Health, 2004; 94:1002-1008.

