
Nutrition for the Future, Inc.

Free School Wellness Tool Kit Provides Resources for Local Citizens Involvement

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<http://www.beefnutrition.org/matehealthyschoolnutrition.aspx>

In 2004, as part of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act, Congress added the requirement that all local educational agencies receiving USDA funds for meals must develop and implement a school wellness policy by the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year. This mandate addresses the growing national concern about the overall health and nutritional status of American children. A healthy school environment can help prevent childhood obesity with its associated health issues like Type 2 diabetes. The new law places the responsibility for creating this improved environment in the hands of local community members and school officials.

In this tool kit, concerned citizens, health professionals, and school officials can find all the information needed to develop, implement and manage a local school wellness program. This year provides a golden opportunity for individuals to become involved and help make a difference in the critical areas that affect kids' health and academic success.

To assist this effort, this tool kit provides:

- Background information on the health, weight, and nutrition issues facing American children today
- Evidence for the connection between health concerns and education issues, like academic performance and behavior at school
- Minimum requirements for school wellness policies as established by federal legislation and USDA guidance
- Links to agencies and groups working on school nutrition and physical activity in all 50 states, and to model policies (if available)
- Specific suggestions for effective involvement in school wellness policies at the local level
- General timeline for school wellness policy development, approval, and implementation at the local level

- Updated reprints from *School Foodservice & Nutrition*, the journal of the School Nutrition Association, which provide important information on the nutrition needs of children during various lifestages
- MyPyramid poster, MyPyramid for Kids poster, and relevant charts illustrating the nutritional status of youth and food sources of some essential nutrients.

To order a FREE Tool Kit, please e-mail bredson@beef.org with your UPS delivery address and phone number (for UPS purposes). Be sure to put "School Wellness Tool Kit" in the subject line.