PROMOTING Wellness in Alabama Schools
State-Wide Wellness Initiative Grades K – 12

• Avenues:
  • Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program
  • Coordinated School Health
  • Wellness Policy: District and School
John J. Ratey, MD

Exercise is … “Miracle-Gro for the Brain”

Aerobic activity shaped 19,000 students from Naperville, Illinois making them the fittest and some of the smartest in the Nation

“Before school exercise has been shown to help increase the release of the brain-derived neurotropic factor (“BDNF”), which supports learning and memory function, also increasing new brain cell growth – essentially ramping up our children's brains to learn.”

Teaching Fitness instead of Sport – Creating a Lifestyle

“Exercise is the single most powerful tool that we have to optimize the function of our brains.”

*Research/Scans compliments of Dr. Chuck Hillman, University of Illinois

John Ratey, 2014
THE PHYSICAL INACTIVITY CYCLE

EARLY CHILDHOOD

- 17% of children are obese
- Misses school 2 days higher than average

ADOLESCENCE

- Lower test scores
- $2,741 per year higher health care costs
- 1 week per year of extra sick days taken

ADULTHOOD

- 5.3 million premature deaths/yr. due to inactivity

Physically inactive children

Preschoolers with inactive parents are far less likely to be active

2x as likely to be obese as adults
THE WORLD HAS STOPPED MOVING

• Today’s Children are the First Generation that may Have a Shorter Life Expectancy than Their Parents

• WE ARE DESIGNED TO MOVE
  • The First 10 Years of Life Provide a Critical Window for Creating a Lifelong Commitment to Physical Activity

• VISION: Future Generations Moving to Reach Their Greatest Potential
  • Create Early Positive Experiences for Children
  • Integrate Physical Activity Into Everyday Life
Our Partners
Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP)

- Champions
  - Promoting 60 Minutes of Physical Activity
- Physical Education
- Staff Involvement
- Community Involvement
- Nutrition Education
- Activity Before & After School
- Activity During School
Goal

To ensure that every school provides a comprehensive school physical activity and nutrition education program with quality physical education as the foundation so that youth will develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to be physically active for a lifetime.
Coordinated School Health

- HEALTH EDUCATION
- PHYSICAL EDUCATION
- FAMILY/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
- HEALTH PROMOTION FOR STAFF
- HEALTHY, SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT
- NUTRITION SERVICES
- COUNSELING, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES
- HEALTH SERVICES

ALABAMA Champions
for Healthy Active Schools
A coordinated approach to school health improves students’ health and their capacity to learn through the support of families, schools, and communities working together.

The eight components work together to develop and reinforce health-related knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors and make health an important priority at school.
Goal

• The components are linked in a mutually supportive, cooperative system focusing on children's health issues and the development of health literacy.

• No single component will achieve the level of health students need to support academic achievement. A coordinated approach to school health improves students' health and their capacity to learn through the support of families, schools, and communities working together.
Wellness Policy

• Each local educational agency that participates in the National School Lunch Program or other federal Child Nutrition programs is required by federal law to establish a local school wellness policy for all schools under its jurisdiction.

• Local wellness policies are an important tool for parents, local educational agencies (LEAs) and school districts in promoting student wellness, preventing and reducing childhood obesity, and providing assurance that school meal nutrition guidelines meet the minimum federal school meal standards.
THE CHANGE STARTS WITH A “CHAMPION”

A school champion can be a…

• Physical Education Teacher
• Classroom Teacher
• Administrator
• Nurse
• Wellness Coordinator
• Parent
PROMOTING Wellness in Alabama Schools

CHAMPIONS

Promoting 60 Minutes of Physical Activity

- Physical Education
- Activity Before & After School
- Activity During School
- Nutrition Education
- Staff Involvement
- Community Involvement
Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program

- 60 Minutes of Physical Activity During the School Day
- Physical Education:
  - Implement a standards-based curriculum that includes a clear scope and sequence.
  - National and State Standards
  - LIFE: Lifelong Individualized Fitness Education
  - HEAL: Healthy Eating Active Living
- Nutrition Education
  - HEAL (integral component)
  - LIFE (already a competency)
• **Physical Activity During the School Day**
  • Brain Boosters-short (5- to 10-minute) physical activity breaks during long stretches of seated instruction.
  • Provide breaks/recess in addition to physical education
  • After 50 – 60 minutes MOVE!

• **Physical Activity Before and After School**
  • Before school activity
  • Safe Routes to School
  • Open and supervise physical activity facilities (e.g., weight room and fitness center) for staff and student use before and after school.
  • Organize physical activity clubs and intramural sports to encourage physical activity participation by students of all abilities.
Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program

Outside of the School Day

• **Staff Involvement**
  • Provide staff professional development on creating opportunities for physical activity in the classroom.

• **Family and Community Involvement**
  • Include physical education and physical activity information on the school website and in each school newsletter.
  • Invite community participation in special events (e.g., Fitness Night and 5K run/walk).
  • Teach students how to use community physical activity resources such as the recreation center, bike path, and boating facility.
Successes

• HEAL and LIFE
• Faculty Wellness
• Brain Boosters
• Before School Activities
• Fitness Labs
• Community Fun Runs
• Health and Fitness Fairs/Nights
• And the list goes on…
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ISN’T AN OPTION... IT’S A NECESSITY!

A STUDENT’S SUCCESS IN SCHOOL — AND IN LIFE — DEPENDS ON IT!

THE CHALLENGE!

CHANGE STARTS WITH YOU!

THE HEART OF A CHAMPION