



AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Action for Healthy Kids
www.actionforhealthykids.org

Illinois Nutrition Education & Training
www.kidseatwell.org

USDA Food Pyramid
www.mypyramid.gov

Kidnetic.com
www.kidnetic.com

Eat Smart, Play Hard Healthy Lifestyle
www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardhealthylifestyle/default.htm

Healthy Dining Finder
www.healthydiningfinder.com/site/

Health and Wellness, PTA
www.pta.org

Kids Nutrition
www.kidsnutrition.org

Healthy Youth
www.cdc.gov

Real Life Guide for Parents
www.ific.org/publications/brochures/upload/KidneticParentsGuideWEB.pdf

Physical Activity and Nutrition for Spanish-Speaking Teens
win@info.niddk.nih.gov

Illinois Action for Healthy Kids is a nonprofit organization addressing the epidemic of overweight, undernourished and sedentary youth by focusing on changes in schools.

Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program provides training, technical assistance and resources to school and child care staff to improve children's health and support achievement

A Parent's Guide to
School Wellness Policies

What is a School Wellness Policy?

Under the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, school districts that participate in the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program and/or Special Milk Program are required to develop and implement school wellness policies that address student nutrition and physical activity issues.

According to the law, the policy must contain:

- Goals for nutrition education
- Goals for physical activity
- Goals for other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness
- Nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages available on school campuses during the school day with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity
- A plan for measuring progress

PARENTS CAN HELP!

Parents are the BEST role models for their children and can be a vital partner in the school wellness policy team. As a parent you can:

- Let the school know that nutrition education and physical activity in the school is important to you.
- Volunteer to serve on a wellness advisory council to help assess the current school environment and plans for improvement.
- Request nutrition facts to confirm school menus are meeting the Dietary Guidelines.
- Ask if physical education is provided daily and is taught by degreed physical education specialists to meet the state mandate.
- Support school activities and programs that promote a healthy school environment and smart food choices.

Parent support and involvement is essential for the success of the wellness policy!



What Can Parents Do?

Nutrition Education and Healthy Eating

AT SCHOOL

- Ask if teachers or others provide nutrition education at your school or plan to in the future.
- Explore nutrition education-related after-school programs (gardening programs, healthy cooking classes) and enroll your child to participate.
- Offer to help with nutrition education learning activities in the classroom. Do a cooking demo of healthy foods, create a bulletin board or poster or read a book with a nutrition-related message.
- Go through the school breakfast and lunch menus with your child and pick out healthy choices.
- Send healthy snacks such as fruit, vegetables, yogurt, low-fat cheese or whole grain crackers for class parties.
- Help organize fundraisers that do not involve food such as a car wash, sports competition or sale of school spirit items.



AT HOME

- Sign up to take a class on healthy eating in your local community.
- Guide your child in learning about how to make healthy choices. Read nutrition facts labels together.
- Go to the website www.mypyramid.gov to learn about healthy eating.
- Let your child help plan/prepare healthy meals.
- Offer fruits and/or vegetables with every meal.
- Encourage your child to eat breakfast at home or at school every day.
- Be a role model. Drink milk at dinner, eat your broccoli and snack on fruit. If you do, so will your child!
- Learn about portion sizes. See chart for details.



Physical Education and Activity

AT SCHOOL












- Encourage your child to be active during school physical activities and throughout the day.
- Plan a healthy fundraiser such as a walk-a-thon or dance marathon to help purchase physical activity equipment for the students.
- Plan a Family Fun Night that encourages the entire family to learn about the importance of physical activity and healthy eating.
- Volunteer for parent committees to support having recess before lunch or other school policies that support students being more physically active.
- Follow the National Association for Sports and Physical Education guidelines which state that children should accumulate at least 60 minutes of age-appropriate physical activity on all or most days of the week.

AT HOME

- Limit screen time viewing (television and video games) to no more than two hours each day.
- Encourage your child to be active by participating in sports, dance, tumbling and other active programs they enjoy.
- Go for a bike ride, hike, swim, play catch or fly a kite with your child.
- Enjoy being active with your child. If they see you enjoying it, chances are they will too!

For Your Child

Use this chart to determine “just right” serving sizes that promote healthy eating habits

Grains	1 cup pasta = tennis ball  Bagel = hockey puck 	Make half your grains whole
Vegetables	medium potato = computer mouse  1 cup vegetables = large fist 	Vary your veggies
Fruits	A piece of fruit = light bulb 	Focus on fruits
Dairy	1 ounce of cheese = thumb  1 cup of milk = baseball 	Get your calcium-rich foods
Meats & Beans	1 ounce of nuts = handful  3 ounces of meat = deck of cards 	Go lean with protein
Oils	1 teaspoon of butter = dice  1 tablespoon mayo = thumb tip 	Know the limits on fats

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