

School Health Guidelines: School Connection

Guideline 2: School Environment

September 2015

Guideline 2: Where to Start

This guideline is about the physical environment of the school to make sure students can make healthy eating and physical activity choices in a safe and supportive setting.

Things to think about from a safety standpoint:

- Where do kids eat? Where do they play?
- Are goal posts padded? Is there shade outside for sun safety? Are bleachers safe? Enough room for PE?
- Are drinking fountains available, working, and clean?
- Is there enough time to eat (at least 10 minutes for breakfast, 20 minutes for lunch AFTER sitting down)?

Ideas to Try at School :

- Look for ways to increase community access to school facilities like the weight room, gym, track or hallway walking.
- Ensure wellness policy language includes: acceptance of diverse abilities, does not tolerate weight-based teasing, prohibits physical activity as punishment
- Develop student rewards that support health such as non-food rewards, extra recess or physical activity
- Assess the school environment annually: is it safe? Is safety equipment functioning and/or needed?

Healthy Kids Learn Better.

Resources/links:

[School Health Guidelines Executive Summary \(short\)](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/npao/pdf/PAN_Guidelines_Executive_Summary.pdf): http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/npao/pdf/PAN_Guidelines_Executive_Summary.pdf

[Consumer Product Safety Commission Handbook for Public Playground Safety](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpspub/pubs/325.pdf): www.cpsc.gov/cpspub/pubs/325.pdf

[The National Policy and Legal Analysis Network \(NPLAN\)](http://www.nplanonline.org): www.nplanonline.org



School Environments
Establish school environments that support healthy eating and physical activity.



School Health Guidelines

1. Policies and Practices
2. School Environments
3. Nutrition Services
4. Physical Education and Physical Activity
5. Health Education
6. School Health Services
7. Family and Community
8. School Employee Wellness
9. Professional Development

It's not what you DO for your children, but what you have taught them to do for themselves that will make them successful human beings. ~ unknown

Questions? Need more information?

Melissa Walker: melissa.walker@iowa.gov and 515.281.5327

{Provided by 1305 CDC Grant}

School Health Guidelines: Home Connection

Guideline 2: School Environment

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Working Together

Schools work very hard to ensure students have safe environments in which to learn. This includes looking at physical things such as bleachers, playground equipment, sidewalks, shade coverings, water access, cafeteria spaces, buses, and weather-related decisions.

Parents/families and schools partner in the efforts to keep students safe so they can learn and grow. When parents/families teach kids how to be safe and role-model those healthy behaviors at home, students are able to then use those skills at school. When home and school work together, there is greater success to keep kids healthy, well and safe.

Ideas to Try at Home:

- Reinforce table manners to keep kids safe during meal times
- Use non-food rewards to celebrate successes
- Teach safety skills and rules that apply to your home and neighborhood
- If the school facilities are open to the public, use them! Play on the equipment, attend open gym, take a walk at the track or kick a soccer ball.

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[Healthy Snacks A to Z](https://www.educateiowa.gov/sites/files/ed/documents/1314_np_tn_SnacksAtoZ.pdf): https://www.educateiowa.gov/sites/files/ed/documents/1314_np_tn_SnacksAtoZ.pdf



GUIDELINE

2

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