



Top 15 Ways an Elementary School Can Be Healthy

Use this checklist to ask about wellness at your school and advocate for change!

- € Does school allow and promote walking or biking to school?
 - Walking or biking to school, where possible, is a great way for parents and kids to be active together!
- € Are students rewarded with non-food rewards?
 - Is candy used to reward? If so, suggest creative alternatives like No Homework Passes, Line Leader Pass, stickers, pencils, extra library time, or Sit with Teacher Pass for lunch.
- € Is child receiving physical education and physical activity during the school day?
 - Kids in SC elementary schools should be receiving 90 minutes per week of PE and 60 minutes per week of physical activity like recess...a state law!
- € Is recess revoked for disciplinary issues or missed school work?
 - Recess should never be withheld or used as punishment.
- € Is a nutrition education component taught each week?
 - This can be taught in PE, the classroom, by the school nurse, guidance, cafeteria, or even as part of morning announcements! It is state law!
- € Are teachers and staff modeling healthy behaviors?
 - Children mimic adult behavior and learn by example.
- € Are healthy celebrations the rule (or the exception)?
 - Many schools have implemented guidelines around cupcakes and individual parties and ask parents to only provide food for their child instead of an entire class.
- € Are fundraisers for the school promoting unhealthy food?
 - Bake sales dominating your school day? Students can be engaged to create new fundraisers (like Hat Day) to avoid food sales.
- € Do you received information about health and safety efforts?
 - Check out your school website, district website, principal newsletter or social media to learn more about efforts at your school and how you can help!
- € Is the school safe for kids with food allergies?
 - Cafeterias and classrooms can adjust to meet a student's needs.
- € Does the school have a wellness policy and committee?
 - If not, check your school district and offer to create a school version.
- € Is there a school garden is on-site? Is it used/maintained?
 - Gardens can be great tools to teach math and science standards, and items grown can be used for student taste-testing activities. Garden clubs can also form as an after-school activity.
- € Are healthy meals served by the school food service?
 - Look for the presence of high calorie (flavored) milks, vegetable and fruit offerings, and vegetarian options. Ask for variety, and go in and sample lunch (and share a meal with your child)!
- € Is the school playground open during non-school hours?
 - Technically called "joint use" or "shared use", school playgrounds can serve the community and promote physical activity.
- € Is water allowed during the school day?
 - Students should be allowed to have a water bottle in the classroom; water is the healthiest choice!