

# State Reports

## Progress in the Healthy Schools Program

### Tennessee 2011

HealthierGeneration.org



Generous support is provided by:



## The Alliance for a Healthier Generation

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation, founded by the American Heart Association and the William J. Clinton Foundation, was formed in 2005 as a response to the dramatic increase in prevalence of childhood obesity across the nation. Currently, as many as 1 in 3 students in many states meet the criteria for overweight.

The goal of the Alliance is to reduce the prevalence of childhood obesity by 2015 by fostering an environment that helps all kids pursue healthy and active lifestyles. To that end the Alliance is working to positively affect the health of children by forging voluntary agreements with the healthcare and food service industries and by working with kids and schools across the nation.

The Alliance believes that helping schools is one of the most efficient and effective ways to shape the lifelong health and well-being of children and adolescents. That is why the Alliance has created the Healthy Schools Program, which aims to improve schools in the areas of nutrition, physical activity and staff wellness. The Alliance launched the Healthy Schools Program in February of 2006 with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.



### Major Accomplishments

By engaging and activating the leaders who can transform the environments and communities that nurture our children, the Alliance for a Healthier Generation:

- ◆ Supports nearly 12,000 schools in all 50 states in transforming their environments into places where students have better access to physical activity and healthier foods before, during and after school.
- ◆ **Activates more than 2.5 million teens and tweens** to commit to eat better, move more and serve as leaders to their peers.
- ◆ Brokered voluntary agreements with the beverage, snack and dairy industries that has contributed to a **88 percent decrease in total beverage calories** shipped to U.S. schools between 2004 and 2009.
- ◆ Negotiated agreements with 13 of the leading school meals manufacturers, group purchasing organizations and technology companies to **develop, market and competitively price** healthier school meal options.
- ◆ Convened national medical associations, leading insurers and employers that agreed to **offer comprehensive health benefits** to children and families for the prevention and treatment of childhood obesity.

### A Quick Look at Childhood Obesity in Tennessee

	TN	National
Percentage of children ages 10- 17 years who are overweight or obese <sup>1</sup>	36.5%	31.6%
State rank for overweight or obese children (1 is best) <sup>1</sup>	47	Rank in 2003: 44
Estimated adult obesity-attributable medical expenditures, 1998-2000 (in 2003 dollars) <sup>2</sup>	\$1,840 M	\$75 Billion

1. 2007 National Survey of Children's Health. [www.childhealthdata.org/](http://www.childhealthdata.org/)

2. 2009 edition of *F as in Fat*, published by Trust for America's Health. [www.reversechildhoodobesity.org](http://www.reversechildhoodobesity.org).

## The Healthy Schools Program

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The Healthy Schools Program provides technical support to schools across the country in their efforts to engage the entire school community (including administrators, parents and school vendors) in increasing access to physical activity and healthier foods for students and staff. In addition to providing schools with best practice resources and support, the Healthy Schools Program recognizes successful schools through a national award program.



The work of the Healthy Schools Program is based on the Healthy Schools Program Framework, a set of best practice guidelines developed by a national panel of experts that serves as a “roadmap” for creating a healthier school environment. These guidelines form the basis of the National Recognition Program which awards schools at the Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum levels based on the policy and programmatic changes made in eight separate areas;

- ◇ Before and Afterschool Programs
- ◇ Competitive Foods and School Beverages
- ◇ Health Education
- ◇ Physical Education
- ◇ Physical Activity
- ◇ Policy/Systems
- ◇ School Employee Wellness
- ◇ School Meals

**The Healthy Schools Program outlines the course of action for making sustainable changes in its Six Step Process:**

**Step 1:** Convene a school wellness council to plan and lead implementation of the Healthy Schools Program in the school.

**Step 2:** Complete the Inventory in the Healthy Schools Builder to identify areas for improvement.

**Step 3:** Develop an Action Plan based on what is important and achievable in the school community.

**Step 4:** Identify resources that can facilitate implementation of the Action Plan.

**Step 5:** Take Action! Follow the Action Plan to create a healthier school environment.

**Step 6:** Celebrate Success! The Healthy Schools Program works with schools to celebrate small victories and big successes along the way.

**Every school has support** from a Healthy Schools Program staff member who works one-on-one with the school to meet its wellness goals. Schools also have access to a team of staff with expertise in each content area. These content experts are available to support schools through phone or email consultations, online trainings and professional development opportunities.

Schools are able to access a wide variety of information and resources on the Healthy Schools Program website at [healthiergeneration.org](http://healthiergeneration.org). Schools will find hundreds of success stories from schools around the country, toolkits that provide step-by-step information for meeting the best practice criteria, a wealth of local, state and national resources and funding opportunities to help them make meaningful and lasting changes to their school health environment.

**Who can join the Healthy Schools Program?  
Everyone. And it's free.  
[www.HealthierGeneration.org](http://www.HealthierGeneration.org)**

## State Specifics: Tennessee

**Table 1. Healthy Schools Program Reach**

Initial Year	Participating Schools	Students Enrolled
2007–08	4	2,317
2008–09	15	13,283
2009–10	62	35,261
2010–11	61	33,809
Total	142	84,670

### 2011 Recipients of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's National Recognition Award:

**Bronze:** Arlington Elementary School  
North Stewart Elementary School  
Nova Elementary School



**Table 2. Characteristics of Schools**

Characteristic	Healthy Schools Participants	All Schools in State
School Level		
Elementary	65%	58%
Middle School	20%	18%
High School	10%	18%
Other/missing	6%	6%
Free or Reduced-Price Lunch		
0-24%	13%	10%
24-49%	13%	26%
50-74%	33%	41%
75-100%	41%	24%
Primary Ethnicity		
Caucasian	39%	77%
African American	60%	22%
Hispanic	1%	1%
School Locale		
City	51%	30%
Suburb	18%	13%
Rural or small town	31%	57%

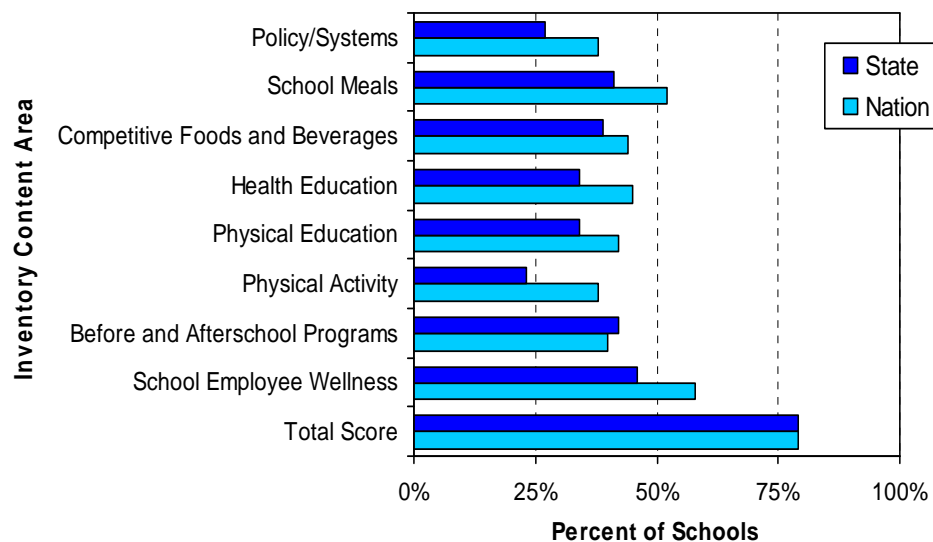
**Table 3. A sample of Healthy Schools Program (HSP) criteria and the percentage of participating schools in the district currently meeting the criteria, compared to participating schools across the country.**

Criterion	HSP Schools in Tennessee (n = 106)	HSP Schools in U.S. (n = 3,455)
Convened a school wellness council that meets every other month.	86%	72%
Goals from the health action plan are integrated into the overall School Improvement Plan.	58%	39%
School offers only whole grains daily at breakfast and lunch.	44%	41%
School offers at least four non-fried, no-added-sugar fruit and/or vegetable options daily.	83%	73%
All competitive foods offered for sale to students meet the Alliance Competitive Foods Guidelines.	79%	70%
Substituted at least two "less healthy" food fundraisers with nonfood fundraisers or with only products that meet the Alliance's Guidelines.	25%	28%
Health Education is required for at least one term for high school students.	81%	83%
At the elementary school level, at least 20 minutes of recess is offered daily.	72%	78%
Students receive 150 minutes of physical education or more per week for K-5th grade.	11%	24%
Before and afterschool program offerings dedicate at least 20 percent of time to physical activity.	49%	58%
School is implementing an employee wellness action plan.	58%	52%
School has a plan in place to promote safe walking and bicycling to/from school.	41%	39%

## Healthy Schools Inventory

The Healthy Schools Inventory is embedded in the Healthy Schools Builder, an interactive online tool designed to help guide schools through the process of conducting a needs assessment, prioritizing action steps and developing a customized action plan for school health and wellness. All schools are encouraged to complete the Inventory soon after they begin their participation in the program and at least once each year thereafter.

The Healthy Schools Inventory is based on the Healthy Schools Program Framework and requires 102 responses organized around the eight content areas (i.e., Policy/Systems, School Meals, Competitive Foods and Beverages, Health Education, Physical Education, Physical Activity, Before and Afterschool Programs and School Employee Wellness). The scoring rubric designates four levels of recognition for achievement: Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum. The evaluation team uses the Healthy Schools Inventory to assess change in school policies and practices over time.



**Figure 1. Percent of schools showing an improvement of at least one item in each content area of the Healthy Schools Inventory for HSP schools in Tennessee (n = 56) and for HSP schools in all states (n = 2,421).**



**SUCCESS STORIES:**

## Superintendent with a Vision for Healthy Schools and Community

JACKSON-MADISON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT | JACKSON, TENNESSEE

**Jackson-Madison County Schools is a Tennessee school district with momentum and enthusiasm. The twenty-eight schools, a mixture of suburban, rural and urban schools, have fully embraced the tenets of Coordinated School Health and all schools are members of the Healthy Schools Program. These accomplishments are due in large part to the tremendous vision and support from Superintendent Dr. Nancy Zambito.**

Zambito came to the district two years ago from Pinellas County, FL. She brought with her a vision for how schools can work with their surrounding community on health initiatives and how these efforts can enrich the lives of students, staff and families. “Overall, I believe that a healthy lifestyle is integral to students, staff and the community.” In the last two years the district has adopted a number of best practice programs and they have worked closely with city and county officials to maximize their efforts.

Some of the recent achievements in Jackson-Madison County include:

- Breakfast in the classroom for all elementary schools, and now moving to high schools
- Ensure that Coordinated School Health is part of district’s wellness policies, school improvement plans, and council meetings
- Removed all unhealthy items from school vending machines, with no push-back
- Established an exercise room for staff at the School Board office
- Determined that all schools would form Healthy School Teams (School Wellness Councils)
- One elementary school was named one of the ten healthiest schools in America by a leading national publication

Firmly believing that the community and families play a role in wellness, one of the biggest achievements of the district has been a program called Jump Start Jackson, a wellness initiative supported by both the city and county mayors, and of course, the school district. Among the

activities in Jump Start Jackson include an annual walk – free for all participants. Schools are challenged and recognized for having the most participants (not just staff, but students and families as well). There is also a monthly run held in various parks in which many principals participate.

When asked about why the Jackson-Madison School District joined the Healthy Schools Program, Zambito shares, “Because you at the Alliance emphasize that healthier students make better students – that’s a



fact I wholeheartedly embrace. It is also just as important for me to know that healthier teachers make better teachers. Your school employee wellness best practices are key to helping us reach this goal and are one of our top priorities this school year.”

With Healthy Schools Teams now formed at each school, the district

is starting to see results. Three schools in the district are already eligible for the Healthy Schools Program’s National Recognition Award at the Silver level and another school has met the requirements for the Bronze Award.

On October 15<sup>th</sup>, both the city and county mayors, along with Zambito signed a new wellness policy for the entire community. With support from the National League of Cities, this new policy reinforces the support of Coordinated School Health, details how improving roads and parks will promote walking, bicycling and exercise, uses multi-media to increase public awareness of wellness and exercise, and encourages wellness activities for city and county employees. Zambito and schools play a crucial role in the policy. “After all,” she states, “we cannot let our children not outlive their parents.”

## 100% Participation in Physical Activity Means *Everyone* Can Join the Fun

DRUMMONDS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL | DRUMMONDS, TENNESSEE

The Coordinated School Health program in Tipton County has always been supportive of innovative physical education ideas but has not always been able to implement everything they would like due to funding constraints. When state funding did become available for new physical education equipment, the staff jumped at the opportunity to help make sure that every student would be able to participate in physical education.

Drummonds Elementary has 90 minutes of physical education per week. The biggest challenge they faced was helping students with disabilities stay active. This led Kenya Reed, physical education teacher, to request that they use the funds to purchase equipment for wheelchair basketball, a parachute and Hand Dance Pro™, an upper-body version of the popular dance game which enables students with an injury or disability to participate. School staff will receive training on the new equipment in January and plan on fully integrating the equipment into their curriculum following the training.

One of the criteria in the Healthy Schools Program Framework is to tailor activities to the needs of the students and that reflect the diversity of that student population. Drummonds Elementary staff saw that there was a gap in what they were offering for students and found resources to help them fill that gap. They are thrilled that they now can have 100 percent participation and every student can join in the active fun.

## Healthy School Meals, Just a Click Away

SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT | SHELBY COUNTY, TENNESSEE

For the past eighteen years, School Nutrition Director Marsha Landstreet has dreamed about finding a more comprehensive educational tool on school meals for parents to use. She wanted to be able to communicate nutritional values of all foods offered in a way that would allow parents to see cost and nutritional information for any combination of selected foods. With funding and support from Coordinated School Health, Shelby County is now the only district in Tennessee with a “Virtual Café.”

The Virtual Café is an online tool which allows parents to see what is offered every day, help their children select what might be a healthier meal and to have a record of what types of meals their children have selected in the past. There is an added feature that allows parents or school nurses to select appropriate food choices for children with special diets, such as those with diabetes.

The school worked with a company called Nutri-Link to develop the site and it took about five months to develop and test the site. When the site was ready the district sent letters to the parents to tell them about the new tool. An added incentive for parents to go online was that they could also now use an electronic payment program to purchase the meals for their children. Landstreet has also spoken at PTA meetings to get the word out about the Virtual Café.



Landstreet continues to think about ways to improve the tool. In the future she would like to have a place for users to leave comments and a way to compare the school meal options to fast food options and other commercial products. She said, “I’m proud of our Virtual Café because it not only gives users more control and more choice, it gives them the power of making a decision. Besides, it is pretty cool.”