

Nutrition, Physical Exercise, and Obesity: What's Happening at Your School?

The Center for Health and Health Care in Schools gathered information from front-line school professionals on what is happening concerning nutrition, physical exercise, and obesity prevention at their local schools. Results from the first 1,000 surveys completed on the *healthinschools.org* web site are summarized here. The surveys were filled out between October 2003 and mid-January 2004. Additional analysis will be posted soon.

1. Please tell us who you are:

(n=1,000)

56.8%	School nurse
14.1%	Teacher
10.9%	School administrator
10.7%	Other
6.4%	School-based health center staff member
1.1%	Counselor

2. I practice:

(n=1,000)

58.7%	Full-time in one school
19.4%	Other
15.8%	Part-time in 2 – 3 schools
6.1%	Part-time in 4 or more schools

3. I am located in:

(n=1,000)

42.8%	Elementary school
16.2%	Middle/Jr. high school
15.6%	High school
10.8%	K – 12
9.1%	Other
5.5%	K – 8

4. My school(s) is (are) located in:

(n=1,000)

37.6%	A suburban area
32.9%	A rural area
29.5%	An urban area



Using a scale of 1 – 10, 1 = “Yes, a lot,” and 10 = “No, not much,” the following answers reflect percentages of those responding in each category.

5. Is obesity a concern in your school community? (n=995)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
13.27	10.85	14.97	11.56	11.96	8.64	6.93	11.16	5.63	5.13

6. Are efforts being made in your school to improve the nutritional quality of meals and snacks available to students? (n=994)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
7.55	7.04	9.86	13.58	12.68	7.95	6.84	11.57	10.76	12.17

7. Do school staff support efforts to improve nutritional quality of meals and snacks, for example, reduce fat and/or caloric content or replace sugared drinks with water or 100% juices? (n=989)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
7.38	8.70	12.74	12.03	12.03	9.71	6.98	10.72	10.52	9.20

8. Do parents support efforts to improve nutritional quality of meals and snacks, for example, reduce fat and/or caloric content or replace sugared drinks with water or 100% juices? (n=987)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
3.85	4.66	9.73	11.15	18.03	12.67	8.82	14.18	10.54	6.38

9. The following activities were implemented as appropriate school responses to the growing obesity problem among children during the [\(2002 – 2003\)](#) school year. (n=734)

Increased physical activity

31.34%	Increase in sports teams, intramural activities
29.56%	Changed PE curriculum
29.16%	Promoting walking/biking to school
10.76%	Increased PE time
6.81%	Increased recess time



Improved nutrition

<u>47.96%</u>	Changed lunch menu/choices
<u>31.61%</u>	Reduced access to vending machines
<u>28.75%</u>	Changed vending machine selections
<u>9.13%</u>	Changed food/drinks sold at school events or door-to-door
<u>7.22%</u>	Removal of vending machines
<u>4.91%</u>	Longer lunch periods

10. The following activities were implemented as appropriate school responses to the growing obesity problem among children during the [\(2003-2004\)](#) school year. (n=637)

Increased physical activity

<u>34.69%</u>	Promoting walking/biking to school
<u>31.08%</u>	Changed PE curriculum
<u>23.08%</u>	Increase in sports teams, intramural activities
<u>13.19%</u>	Increased recess time
<u>12.40%</u>	Increased PE time

Improved nutrition

<u>46.78%</u>	Changed lunch menu/choices
<u>30.14%</u>	Changed vending machine selections
<u>29.67%</u>	Reduced access to vending machines
<u>13.66%</u>	Changed food/drinks sold at school events or door-to-door
<u>8.01%</u>	Removal of vending machines
<u>5.02%</u>	Longer lunch periods

11. What are the biggest barriers at your school to promoting physical activity and improving nutritional choices? For example, money, time, vendor contracts, teacher contracts, school administration attitudes, parent attitudes, student attitudes. Please list your top three barriers.

Top Five Barriers to Change Listed by Sample of Survey Respondents

(N = 100, Responses could name an unlimited number of barriers)

<u>41</u>	Money
<u>33</u>	Parent attitudes & behavior
<u>29</u>	Time constraints
<u>25</u>	Vending machines
<u>22</u>	Student attitudes



12. Prevention work: How much of your work time is allocated to these or similar prevention activities? (n=995)

For example: Classroom presentations or exercises that promote an understanding of healthy eating behaviors and the importance of physical activity; individual or group counseling, and activities that may involve cooking for nutrition, learning new physical activities, and special projects related to these topics.

<u>65.4</u>	1 – 20%
<u>17.56</u>	21 – 40%
<u>5.85</u>	41 – 60%
<u>4.62</u>	61 – 80%
<u>6.57</u>	81 – 100%

Thank you again for your support and interest.

A more detailed narrative will be available very soon on www.healthinschools.org.
Please check back for updates.

