



11 CRITICAL *PHYSICAL ACTIVITY* & *NUTRITION* POLICY OBJECTIVES TO MAKE WASHINGTON HEALTHIER

**NUTRITION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
POLICY LEADERSHIP GROUP
(NPA-PLG)**

A Washington State Collaborative
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These policy suggestions address some of the leading causes of preventable illness, injury and premature death by promoting both physical activity and nutrition policies that **make the healthy choice the easy choice**. Serious health complications caused by inactivity, overweight and undernutrition are tied to food insecurity, poverty and environments that limit physical activity. Though this document is not all encompassing of policies that could impact these health conditions, it is a comprehensive list of policy objectives that begin to address equal access to daily nutrition and physical activity.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY OBJECTIVES

EXAMPLES OF STATE & LOCAL POLICY IDEAS

1. Strengthen Health & Fitness in Schools

Implement school-based curricula, policies and procedures that inform children about healthy choices and lifelong fitness, and provide opportunities for quality, daily physical activity.

- Require school districts to have coordinated school health councils to monitor and evaluate the health, nutrition, physical education and activity policies at the local level.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of SB 5436 and HB 2195.
- Provide financial incentives to identify best practices in school health and fitness policies.

2. Create a Healthy Workforce

Establish healthy work environments that increase physical activity opportunities and improve the health of workers.

- Establish work environment policies that offer physical activity opportunities and incentives, and focus on healthy weight maintenance of the employee.
- Use physical activity friendly building standards for state construction projects, such as attractive stairways and walking paths.

3. Design Communities for Physical Activity

Use comprehensive land-use planning approaches to create compact, mixed-use neighborhoods and communities that support safe environments for indoor and outdoor physical activities where people of all ages work and live.

- Design mixed-use community centers with a rich mix of housing, transportation, appropriately scaled commerce, and cultural/recreation opportunities.
- Improve community safety and perceived safety by adopting Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- Reward/require building permits to designate areas for active indoor and outdoor recreation in senior housing, public housing, assisted living, and similar facilities.

4. Develop an Active Transportation System

Adopt transportation policies and build/adapt communities to support walking, bicycling, public transportation and other modes of transportation for children, adults and seniors of all ages and abilities.

- Plan and fund a network of streets, pathways & parks that support walking/biking/skating/etc. within and between neighborhoods, city centers, schools and senior centers.
- Adopt street design standards that support walking, biking, and public transit as viable forms of transportation, and attractive recreation options.
- Adopt a solid funding strategy for active transportation, such as a percentage of transportation funds that will be spent on bicycle and pedestrian facilities each year.

5. Create Active Recreational Opportunities

Provide people of all ages and abilities with access to free or affordable indoor and outdoor physical activities in public buildings (schools/community centers), recreation sites, open spaces, parks and trails.

- Keep schools in neighborhoods to encourage walking/biking/skating to school.
- Open schools/community centers after hours to provide open spaces, parks and indoor areas for community use and recreation.
- Plan and use federal, state and local funding to develop a connected statewide system of trails, parks and paths.

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NUTRITION POLICY OBJECTIVES

EXAMPLES OF STATE & LOCAL POLICY IDEAS

1. Implement Strong School Nutrition Policies

Implement strong school nutrition policies that require healthy food and beverage choices in school. Increase the availability of healthy foods and nutrition information for lifelong health.

- Require school districts to have coordinated school health councils to monitor and evaluate the health, nutrition, physical education and activity policies at the local level.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of SB 5436 and HB 2195.
- Limit competitive/unhealthy foods and beverages offered in K-12 schools and pre-K environments.
- Eliminate exclusive soft drink contracts in schools.
- Implement farm-to-school programs to incorporate fresh, local produce into school meals.

2. Create a Healthy Workforce

Establish healthy work environments and improve the health of workers by enhancing access to health-promoting foods.

- Provide health guidelines for foods and beverages purchased or provided at the worksite and offsite meetings/conferences.
- Establish healthy nutrition standards for cafeteria meals and vending machines.

3. Make Healthy Food Accessible for All

Make healthy foods accessible in underserved neighborhoods by encouraging the development of markets and grocery stores that provide affordable healthy food for all.

- Attract supermarkets and farmers markets to underserved communities through financial and regulatory incentives.
- Provide incentives to small storeowners in underserved areas to carry healthier foods, such as fresh produce.
- Fund or provide direct bus service or low/no-cost transportation to farmers markets and grocery stores.

4. Alleviate Hunger and Food Insecurity

Support quality healthy food and nutrition programs that promote food security for all Washington residents, especially for vulnerable senior and youth populations.

- Provide adequate and sustainable funding & support for the WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Programs.
- Set aside public land for community vegetable gardens.
- Implement higher nutritional standards for government food assistance programs.

5. Create Incentives for Healthy Eating

Use pricing and taxing strategies to promote the consumption of healthy foods. Promote consumer knowledge by providing nutrition information/labels on food and menu items.

- Create incentives for restaurants, grocery stores and schools to provide nutrition information on food items and menus.
- Adjust wholesale and retail taxes to increase the price of unhealthy foods in order to encourage consumption of healthy food.

6. Promote Breastfeeding

Create comfortable, private spaces in public buildings, worksites and childcare facilities to promote breastfeeding.

- Provide funding for implementation of infant-friendly, breastfeeding-friendly worksite legislation, HB 1590.
- Require employers to provide daily, unpaid breaks/flexible schedules for mothers to express breast milk.
- Establish worksite and childcare policies that provide for safe storage and procedures for using breast milk.

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PARTNERSHIP REPRESENTATION

The **NUTRITION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY LEADERSHIP GROUP (NPA-PLG)** is a broad statewide collaborative partnership made up of a diverse set of private, public and non-profit organizations, business, and coalitions representing all sectors of our communities. This includes public health, health care, transportation, planning, parks and recreation, the food industry, agriculture, academia, schools, and others. The strength of this group lies in the diversity of perspectives, knowledge and expertise represented by its membership. The goal of the partnership is to create a cohesive, collective voice to promote policies that improve access to healthy foods and facilitate physical activity.

RECENTLY PASSED STATE LEGISLATION

House Bill 1554: Reduced taxes for farmers who donate to food banks (2005).

House Bill 1590: Certified infant friendly-workplaces (2001). Funding limitations prevented implementation.

House Bill 1771: Required school breakfast programs in severe-need schools (2005).

House Bill 2195: Included health and fitness in the Essential Academic Learning Requirements and Assessments (2004).

House Bill 2416: Prohibited the State Park & Recreation Commission from charging park fees at state parks (2006).

Senate Bill 5186: Revised the Growth Management Act to require physical activity considerations (2005).

Senate Bill 5436: Required schools to develop model policies regarding nutrition, fitness and health (2004).

DEVELOPING POLICY PRIORITIES: KEY RESOURCES

Washington State Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan. Nutrition and Physical Activity Program, Washington State Department of Health. June 2003. Available at:

http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/NutritionPA/wa_nutrition_pa_plan.htm

Lamson E. & Colman V. **Nutrition and Physical Activity: A Policy Resource Guide.** Office of Community Wellness and Prevention, Washington State Department of Health. February 2005. Available at:

http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/steps/publications/nutrition_activity_policy_guide_final.pdf.

The Environment Nutrition and Activity Community Tool (ENACT). Strategic Alliance. Available at:

<http://www.preventioninstitute.org/sa/enact/enact/index.htm>.

An Action Checklist. *The Council of State Governments' (CSG) Healthy States Initiative.*

Youth Obesity available at: <http://www.healthystates.csg.org/NR/ronlyres/F7AA5423-B899-4853-825F-91B30AB21B43/0/coChecklist.pdf>.

Adult Obesity available at: <http://www.healthystates.csg.org/NR/ronlyres/4CE8C0D0-97A5-421D-A15D-88FD743F5478/0/aochecklist.pdf>.

Policy Prioritization NPA PLG, December 2004 Work Product. Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy Leadership Group
Available at: http://devwww/cfh/steps/npa_plcy_grp_2004.htm

KEY CONTACTS

Victor Colman
Washington State
Department of Health
(360) 236-3721
victor.colman@doh.wa.gov

Shelley Curtis
Children's Alliance
(206) 324-0340 x17
shelley@childrensalliance.org

Rob Johnson
Transportation Choices
Coalition
(206) 329-2336
rob@transportationchoices.org

Michael O'Sullivan
Action for Healthy Kids
American Cancer Society
(253) 272-5767 Ext. 234
michael.o'sullivan@cancer.org