

Thriving Schools All Year Long

Thriving Schools is a national effort to improve the health of students, staff, and teachers in K-12 schools by making the healthy choice the easy choice.

Evidence indicates that physical activity and better nutrition in schools can increase focus and attention, decrease discipline problems, improve attendance, boost academic achievement, and improve the health of students.

Here are some things you can do to help the students, teachers and staff of your school thrive, learn, and have fun **all year long**.



SPRING

- Participate in a **Fire Up Your Feet** activity and your school can earn financial rewards.
- Smell the flowers, pet a friendly dog and get some exercise in by **walking or riding your bike to school**.
- **Healthy celebrations:** Find ways to **celebrate** the end of the school year with fruit, spa water, and fresh vegetables instead of sugary/salty snacks and sodas. Look to **Edible Schoolyard.org** for inspiration.

SUMMER

- Hold a healthy **school fundraiser**—instead of selling candy bars and other sweets, try water bottles, stationary, greeting cards, fruit baskets, jewelry, first aid kits or plants.
- Use the summer to teach kids simple, healthy, and fun recipes they can use for school lunches.
- Get kids in the habit of eating a healthy breakfast every day, so it's not a major adjustment when school starts. Breakfast burrito, anyone?

AUTUMN

- Enroll in a **Fire Up Your Feet** activity and earn rewards for your school.
- Make sure **vending machine** items include healthy options such as low-salt, low-calorie snacks; fruit and nuts; and items with fewer than 35 percent of calories from fat and zero trans fats.
- Did someone say dance break? Find ideas at **Center for Weight and Health** and **letsmove.gov**.

WINTER

- Ask **for access** to the gym during lunch hours, evenings, or weekends.
- Make a presentation and write articles on nutrition, wellness, and childhood obesity for influential groups such as the PTA.
- Evaluate **classroom incentives:** Reward students with a dance party or lunch with the teacher. Bad day? Instead of assigning pushups or withholding recess, try cleaning, writing a letter of apology, or extra homework.

