

Team Up for Kansas Kids: School Wellness Quiz

- 1. Do you feel your school leaders model healthful habits for students such as drinking water, snacking on fresh fruits and veggies and encouraging physical activity?**

Healthy students are better learners. Studies show kids who eat breakfast and participate in regular physical activity are more likely to pay attention in class, comprehend lessons and score higher on tests.

- 2. Does your school support healthy food options during classroom parties, celebrations and/or as rewards?**

Promoting healthy options during certain meal or snack times while allowing foods high in calories, fat, sugar and sodium at celebrations sends youth conflicting messages. It is important to provide consistent messaging around healthy eating.

- 3. Does your school sponsor or host at least one school-wide event, forum or activity during the year focused on developing healthful habits?**

Every year, children spend up to 2,000 hours at school, where teachers, peers and the environment have an enormous influence on behaviors related to nutrition, wellness and exercise, which provides the perfect opportunity to have at least one major event during the year.

- 4. Does your school only support fundraising activities involving the sale of healthy foods (no candy, cookie dough or other unhealthy options)?**

Traditional fundraisers often focus on selling low-nutrition foods and beverages, putting students' health in jeopardy. Studies have found that every separate food-related activity that promotes low-nutrition foods in school is associated with a 10% increase in students' Body Mass Indexes.

- 5. Has your school established an active Wellness Committee?**

Did you know school districts are required by law to implement wellness policies? Wellness committees help put nutrition, student wellness and physical activity education and programming into practice, and are a great way for parents to become involved in the development of their school's wellness policies.

- 6. Are family members encouraged to participate in school-sponsored nutrition or wellness events, forums or activities?**

Research shows that parent engagement in schools is closely linked to better student behavior, higher academic achievement, and enhanced social skills. This relationship between schools and parents can help your child to learn and reinforce healthy habits both in and out of school.

- 7. Does your school have punishment protocol that does not include withholding physical activity?**

Physical activity has actually been shown to help improve classroom behavior. Even moderate exercise increases brain activity. School time spent on physical activity not only improves fitness, but actually boosts concentration and performance.

8. Are students in your school able to drink enough water throughout the day?

Children should always have unlimited access to safe drinking water. It not only keeps children healthy, but also helps them perform better in school. Dehydration leads to a reduction in both mental and physical performance. Long-term chronic dehydration may cause health problems and illnesses.

9. Does your school offer extra-curricular opportunities that promote physical activity?

Adolescents who participate in school-based extracurricular activities and sports have more positive attitudes, higher grades and more ambitious educational aspirations.

10. Does your school provide resources to encourage healthful habits and conversation at home?

In Kansas, nearly one-third of kids between the ages of 10 and 17 are overweight or obese. Continued wellness at home is crucial to reversing and preventing dangerous health trends and making sure kids grow up healthy and strong.