

Student Wellness Team

Overview

Do you have students who are passionate and interested in eating right and being active? If you are trying to improve your school's wellness, engaging students is key! Students are your voice to knowing what is most important to them, and it can drive more meaningful impact for your school. While student wellness teams function best with older students, incorporate younger students in planning and executing events as much as possible.



Take Action

Help students create meaningful change in your school by encouraging them to mobilize, organize, and speak out for a healthy and active school culture. Here are some steps to starting a student wellness team:

- First, discuss with your school administration your plans for the student wellness team. Advocate for a team by sharing how involving students in school wellness policies develops young leaders, increases support for changes, and encourage students to be true partners in the creation of a healthy school.
- Recruit students to join the team. Consider recruiting students from health and physical education classes or targeting existing student leadership groups like the student council.

- In your first meeting, encourage students to use their voices: Why do they care about health and wellness? What changes would they make to improve healthy eating and physical activity at school? Why did they join the team?
- With student members, review your district's local school wellness policy and any other health requirements.
- Ask students to investigate their school. An investigation gives a clear picture of what you're already doing well, provides information about attitudes and feelings toward health and wellness, and will help the team determine where to focus their efforts. Investigations can include: the [School Health Index](#), a visual assessment, interviews with key staff members, student surveys, etc.
- Based on the investigation results, work with students to determine what changes they want to make. Create an action plan to set short, mid, and long term goals.
- Work with students to plan ahead for potential obstacles, such as resistance from administrators, financial concerns, time constraints, etc. Brainstorm potential solutions and consider having students role play how they would approach challenging conversations.
- Implement your action plan, and have fun!
- After completing projects, allow some time for reflection during a meeting. What went well? What could have gone better?

Tips



As the facilitator, get to know the group. Each person comes with their own set of talents. Help students understand their unique contributions and how to build off each other's strengths to accomplish the group's goals.



Make sure you have student members representing a variety of grade levels so that when students graduate, you'll have remaining members familiar with the group's goals.



Be clear about roles and expectations. Do you want the



Provide skill-building opportunities for students

student members to initiate projects with their peers or advocate health and wellness issues with the school board? Create clear expectations with the student(s) you invite.

beyond the school health team meetings. Shape leadership, ownership, and presentation skills by encouraging students to present at school board meetings or leading health and wellness initiatives.



Engage volunteers to serve as leaders/mentors for the students or to present to the group on an area of expertise (such as a registered dietitian). Local college students studying nutrition or health fields may want to volunteer.

Additional Resources

[Building a Wellness/Health Team \(Action for Healthy Kids\)](#)

Related Activities

Intramural Programs & Activity Clubs

Intramural programs and activity clubs allow students to experience a variety of physical activity and games that will contribute to an active and healthy lifestyle without

Physical Activity Leaders (PAL) Club

The Physical Activity Leaders (PAL) club is an opportunity for older students to work with younger students on various physical

the competitiveness that comes with traditional team sports.

activities and enhance their leadership skills.

