

A Snapshot of 2014 – 2015 National Trends in Healthy Eating and Active Living Policy

The categories in the table below are based on the 2014 Grantmakers in Health Report, *Foundation Strategies to Promote Healthy Eating and Active Living*. The policies listed were chosen as trends based on ChangeLab Solutions’ experience as a technical assistance provider to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Childhood Obesity Prevention Initiative, the American Heart Association’s Voices for Healthy Kids Initiative and the Center for Disease Control’s Community Transformation Grants Initiative as well as to numerous state and local health departments nationwide. This list is a snapshot of promising state and local policies; it is not intended to serve a comprehensive review of all obesity prevention policies. The policies listed are supported by an evidence base.

1. Improve Access to Healthy Foods in Schools

POLICIES	State (S) or Local (L)	Accepted (A) or Emerging (E) Practice	EXAMPLES	RESOURCES
Update wellness policies to promote and extend nutrition standards and reduce junk food marketing.	L	A	Washington DC: DC Public Schools updated their policy in 2012 and it includes strong provisions, including provisions to reduce junk food marketing and teach students about food marketing.	<i>National Association of School Boards of Health (NASBE) policy database</i>
Help schools transition to nutrition standards by providing additional funding and technical assistance for implementing healthier standards.	S, L	A	Greenville, SC: To support implementation of the new “smart snacks in school” program, LiveWell Greenville in partnership with the American Association of School Administrators provides TA on school nutrition standards in addition to support offered by the USDA. Funding for this initiative provided by RWJF.	<i>The Alliance for a Healthier Generation</i>
Support farm-to-school and school garden programs.	S, L	A	Wisconsin: Using a 2014 USDA grant, the Bayfield Regional Food Producers Cooperative is working with local school districts to enhance the growing capacity of school gardens during WI’s short growing season.	<i>National Farm to School Program</i>
Support schools that want to reduce junk food advertising on school grounds with additional funding for technical assistance and advertisement removal.	S, L	E	Maine: The state passed a law in 2007 prohibiting junk food advertising on school grounds. This restriction is now in proposed federal regulations.	<i>ChangeLab Solutions: Restricting Food and Beverage Advertising in Schools</i>

2. Expand Opportunities for Physical Activity in Schools

POLICIES	State (S) or Local (L)	Accepted (A) or Emerging (E) Practice	EXAMPLES	RESOURCES
Support efforts to strengthen and enforce PE standards in schools.	S	A	<p>Illinois: In August 2014, Illinois passed two bills to improve PE in the state, including introducing fitness assessments to track fitness levels and using these assessments as an opportunity for student learning and goal setting.</p> <p>Chicago Public Schools updated their wellness policy in 2010 and it includes a number of strong provisions including specific provisions about PE.</p>	<p><i>State and District Policy Influences on District-Wide Elementary and Middle School Physical Education Practices</i></p>
Promote physical activity before and after the school day through Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) policies and programs.	S, L	A	<p>Minnesota: In 2013, a concerted campaign led to increased funding for SRTS programs at the state and local level in Minnesota. American Heart Association – MN Affiliate.</p>	<p><i>Safe Routes to School National Partnership: Local Policy Guide 2011</i></p>
Prioritize funding to support students' physical activity by providing a dedicated PE teacher.	L	E	<p>There are many local education foundations that provide funding for PE teachers and PE equipment. Public funding continues to be cut.</p>	<p><i>The California Endowment's report: Physical Education Matters</i></p>
Facilitate active recess at school through mandatory or voluntary policy.	L	E	<p>Rochester, NY: The Rochester Public School District serves as a model. <i>Mandatory Daily Recess Guide</i>, New York Academy of Medicine.</p>	<p><i>Playworks</i></p>

3) Expand Opportunities for Physical Activity in Communities

POLICIES	State (S) or Local (L)	Accepted (A) or Emerging (E) Practice	EXAMPLES	RESOURCES
Increase access to recreational facilities through shared or joint use of school property for community use.	L	A	Seattle, WA: Since the 1920s, the Seattle School District and the City of Seattle have pooled their resources to ensure recreational facilities for students and community members.	<i>ChangeLab Solutions' Shared Use Resources</i>
Implement complete streets strategies.	L	A	Alameda County, CA: The Alameda County Transportation Commission has developed a best practices guide for incorporating complete streets principles in a city or county transportation plan based on its experience doing so.	<i>Smart Growth America's Complete Streets Coalition</i>
Increase access to recreational facilities through shared or joint use of faith-based institutions' property for community use.	L	E	North Carolina: Through its Healthy Places North Carolina initiative, the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust is investing \$100 million dollars in rural counties , including grants to several churches to build much needed community parks.	<i>ChangeLab Solutions' fact sheet: Congregation to Community</i>
Create flexible play space through open streets (cyclovias).	L	E	Padukah, KY: The small city of Padukah, Kentucky , closes down one of its main streets on a monthly basis in the spring and summer to promote biking, walking, and other physical activity.	<i>The Open Streets Project</i>

4) Improve Access to Healthy Foods in Community

POLICIES	State (S) or Local (L)	Accepted (A) or Emerging (E) Practice	EXAMPLES	RESOURCES
Updating land use policies to ensure they support healthy food access goals.	L	A	Philadelphia, PA: In 2011, the city of Philadelphia updated its entire zoning code, incorporating provisions such as density bonuses (which allow developers to build taller buildings or buildings with additional floor area than otherwise would be allowed by right) for including fresh food markets in mixed-use developments. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Municipal Code § 14-603(7).	<i>ChangeLab Solutions' guide: Licensing & Zoning for Public Health</i>
Support Healthy Food Financing Initiatives.	S	A	Detroit, MI: The Green Grocer Project has helped create competitive, sustainable grocery offerings in Detroit while improving fresh food offerings for residents. The Green Grocer Project was launched with a \$500,000 seed grant from The Kresge Foundation.	<i>CDC: State Initiatives Supporting Healthy Food Retail</i> <i>The Food Trust</i>
Champion healthy procurement and vending policies.	S, L	A	Chicago, IL: Chicago has instituted a 100% healthier snack initiative in all of its vending machines.	<i>Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI)</i>
Promote SNAP uptake at farmers' markets.	S, L	E	Vermont: In 2010, Vermont appropriated \$35,000 to help finance the costs of electronic benefit machines and related expenses at farmers' markets among other things. Vermont House Bill 192 (2009) .	<i>USDA's webpage on Farmers' Markets and SNAP</i>
Facilitate efforts to improve offerings at corner stores using policy.	L	E	Minneapolis, MN: In 2008, Minneapolis became the first city in the nation to use licensing to prescribe nutritional standards for food stores. Its Staple Foods Ordinance requires most small food stores and grocery stores to stock a minimum number of healthy "staple foods". Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, Title 10, Ch 203	<i>ChangeLab Solutions' toolkit: Health on the Shelf</i>
Support taxes on sugary drinks.	S, L	E	Vermont, Berkeley, CA and San Francisco, CA are all considering taxes on sugary drinks.	<i>The Rudd Center at Yale</i>

5) Reduce the Marketing and Sale of Unhealthy Foods to Children

POLICIES	State (S) or Local (L)	Accepted (A) or Emerging (E) Practice	EXAMPLES	RESOURCES
Place restrictions on formula company “goody bags” in hospitals.	S, L	A	Voluntary programs are well-established in a number of states including New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island but there are no state or local laws that place restrictions on formula give-aways.	<i>Top Hospitals’ Formula for Success: No Marketing of Infant Formula, Public Citizen</i>
Support warning labels on sodas.	S	E	California: In 2014, the California legislature considered SB 1000 , which would have required warning labels on sugary drinks indicating that sugary drinks have been linked to serious health conditions.	<i>California Center for Public Health Advocacy (CCPHA)</i>
Establish standards for children’s meals in restaurants.	S, L	E	New York, NY: Pending legislation in New York City would require fast food restaurants to meet certain nutritional requirements for children’s meals. Los Angeles, CA: LA has instituted a successful evidence-based voluntary program: ChooseHealthLA .	<i>ChangeLab Solutions’ Model Healthy Children’s Meals Ordinance</i>

ChangeLab Solutions is a nonprofit organization that provides legal information on matters relating to public health.

The legal information in this document does not constitute legal advice or legal representation.

For legal advice, readers should consult a lawyer in their state.

Support for this document was provided by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

© 2014 ChangeLab Solutions