



Creating Healthy Schools

1.2 Serving as Healthy Role Models

What is the current policy?

Our school district cares about the health and well-being of staff members and students and understands the influence staff actions have on student behaviors. The Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 mandates strong wellness policies.

Each school is required to create and implement their own School Wellness Policy including a component on Staff Modeling. All staff are expected to model healthy eating, physical activity, and other healthy lifestyle behaviors during the school day, especially on school property and at school-sponsored meetings and events.

Ideas!

How can you get more involved?

The following are several ways you can help improve the health habits of the students that attend our school:

Create a positive food environment

- Promote the healthy food items served in the cafeteria that day.
- Eat only healthy food items in front of students.
- Drink only water or non-fat or low-fat milk in front of students.
- Avoid negative language relating to healthy food items.
- Try new foods and encourage staff and students to try new foods as well.
- Help students understand why certain food items are healthier choices.
- Participate in the school meal program and choose healthy food items.
- Do not use food as a reward for behavior or academics.

Why is staff modeling important?

Given the significant impact on the development of students' health behaviors, all staff have the opportunity to directly impact student health by setting an example of healthy lifestyle behaviors. Research shows that teachers and staff play an important role in children's lives. This is why healthy role modeling by teachers and staff is so important and is a policy in our school district. Children are more likely to follow examples set by those they look up to. Therefore, it is important for teachers and staff to not only be aware of the effect their behavior has on students, but to also model healthy eating and active lifestyles. At left are more recommendations for Staff Modeling.



Today about **1 in 3 children** are **overweight or obese**, and studies show that **overweight children are likely to become overweight and obese adults.**¹

Ideas!

Promote physical activity

- Make physical activity, recess, PE, etc. sound fun!
- Talk about fun exercise activities that you enjoy outside of the classroom.
- Ask students about physical activities they like to do outside of the classroom.
- Avoid negative language relating to physical activity.
- Use physical activity as a reward instead of a punishment.

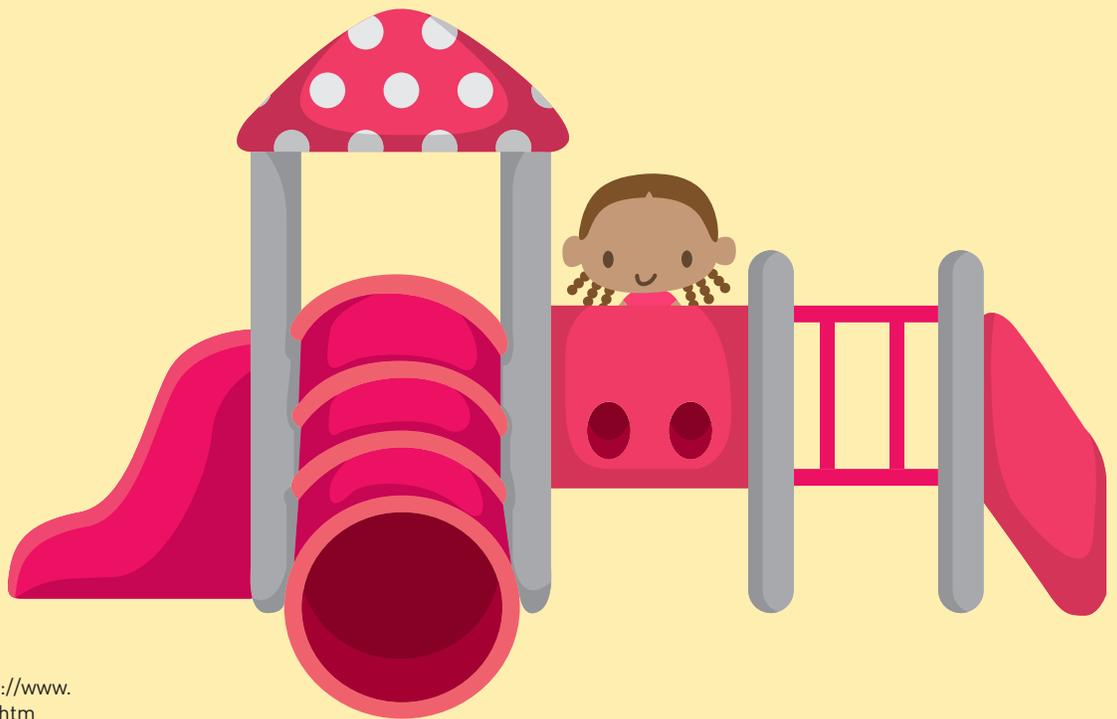
Other healthy behaviors

- Wash your hands before mealtime.
- Use only encouraging, positive words about healthy lifestyles and praise students' efforts in all physical activity opportunities.

Resources:

- Kaiser Permanente, an organization committed to promoting healthy school environments webpage on promoting healthy eating habits. To learn more about modeling healthy behaviors and sustaining behavior change, look here: <http://thrivingschools.kaiserpermanente.org/get-involved/make-change-happen/promote-healthy-eating/>
- MyPlate has resources on nutrition and shows what a healthy plate looks like. More information about MyPlate can be found: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>
- Alliance for a Healthier Generation has a web page dedicated to healthy Role Model behaviors, which includes a variety of great resources. Visit this web page: https://www.healthiergeneration.org/live_healthier/be_a_role_model/

Two other versions of this policy item are available for both administration and family to assist with implementation.



¹ CDC Childhood Obesity Facts: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/obesity/facts.htm>