



DURANGO SCHOOL
DISTRICT 9-R
HEALTHY SCHOOLS

School Health Advisory Council Vision:

The SHAC envisions a standardized, consistent health system throughout the 9-R School District. This system promotes home, school and community involvement to educate and ensure life-long healthy habits for our youth.

**Healthy students
learn better!**

Durango School District 9-R Wellness Action Plan

District Health Team/Wellness
June 2006

201 E. 12th St. / Durango, CO 81301 / 970-247-5411
www.durangoschools.org

This action plan is a dynamic document that refers to *EL-3.32 Treatment of Students, Parents, and Community*. The District will incorporate regulations reflecting the eight components of coordinated school health.

<http://health.durangoschools.org/index.php>

Durango School District 9-R Wellness Action Plan Contact List

Administrative Leader- Michael Brennan, Director of Human Resources and District Health
247-5411, ext. 1439, mbrennan@durango.k12.co.us

General Information Leader- Jaynee Fontecchio-Spradling, District Health Coordinator
247-5411, ext. 1417, jfontecchio-spradling@durango.k12.co.us

Food Service Leader- Kim Cotta, Durango 9-R Parent and Student Nutrition Director
247-5411, ext. 1436, kcotta@durango.k12.co.us

Other School Nutrition Issues Leader- (e.g. Classroom parties, student hydration, fund-raising, vending and other non-food service related issues)- Barbara Shukis, District Nurse
247-5411, ext. 1462, bshukis@durango.k12.co.us

Physical Activity Leader- Cynthia Erickson, Durango 9-R Parent and Animas Valley/Fort Lewis Mesa Physical Education Teacher
247-0124, ext. 226 or 588-3331, ext. 203, cerickson@durango.k12.co.us

Curriculum Leader- Jenny Pritchard, Durango 9-R Parent and District Health Education Coordinator
247-5411, ext. 1457, jpritchard@durango.k12.co.us

Parent/Community Involvement Leaders:

Liza Tregillus, Durango 9-R Parent and San Juan Basin Health Department
247-5702, ext. 205, liza@sjbhd.org

Wendy Rice, R.D. Facilitator, Community Member and Colorado State University Cooperative Extension Office
247-4355, RICEW@co.laplata.co.us

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Why is there so much emphasis on wellness?

- A healthy diet is connected to a student's ability to learn effectively and achieve high standards in school.
- Fresh, seasonal, sustainably grown foods are a primary and recommended source of nutrition for growing children.
- Almost 9 million children and adolescents in the United States are overweight.
- The prevalence of overweight among children aged 6 to 11 years has more than doubled in the past 20 years, increasing from 7 percent in 1980 to 16 percent in 2002.
- Overweight among adolescents aged 12 to 19 years has tripled in the same time period, rising from 5 percent to 18 percent. Native American, Hispanic, and African American children and adolescents have even higher rates. Thirty nine percent of Colorado's children ages 1-14 years old are overweight or at risk for becoming overweight. 10 percent of Colorado children are considered underweight.
- Overweight children and teens are more likely to become overweight or obese adults.
- The consequences of overweight and obesity may include type 2 diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, some types of cancer, and Gallbladder disease.

According to the Center for Disease Control, the estimated cost of treating obesity related medical problems in Colorado from 1998-2000 was \$874 million dollars. This level of spending cannot be sustained without serious financial implications.

Poor eating habits are of serious concern for many other reasons:

- Young people who do not get enough calcium are at greater risk for later development of osteoporosis.
- It is estimated that as many as 7 to 8 percent of females in the United States suffer from anorexia nervosa and/or bulimia nervosa in their lifetimes. These two eating disorders can cause many severe complications and have the highest mortality rates for any psychiatric disorder.
- Poor eating habits can contribute to dental caries, which remains a major cause of school absences.

The great news is that all of these health problems are preventable with proper diet and adequate physical activity! That's why having the knowledge and skills to practice a healthful lifestyle are so important!

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What are American children eating today?

Good nutrition during the school years is vitally important for helping children grow strong, succeed in school and establish healthy habits for a lifetime. Sadly, the current eating habits of many American children are falling short of the mark.

- More than 60 percent of children and adolescents in the United States eat too much fat and saturated fat and not enough fruits and vegetables.
- Only 39 percent of children eat enough fiber (found in fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and legumes such as lentils, chick peas, and black beans).
- 85 percent of American females do not consume enough calcium. During the past 25 years, consumption of milk, the largest source of calcium, decreased 36 percent among adolescent females.
- At the same time, average daily soft drink consumption doubled among adolescent girls, increasing from 6 to 11 ounces, and almost tripled among adolescent boys, from 7 to 19 ounces.

- Between 18 and 20 percent of calories consumed by children and adolescents come from added sugars. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans express concern that consuming excess calories from foods high in added sugars may contribute to weight gain or lower consumption of other foods.
- Poor eating habits may prevent American children from reaching their full potential. For example, research suggests that skipping breakfast can affect children's intellectual performance. Studies have also shown that students who participated in a school breakfast program were more likely to improve their school grades, classroom behavior, and psychological well-being than their peers who did not participate in the program.

Schools alone cannot solve the nutritional problems of children. It will take the combined efforts of families, schools, communities, government agencies, health providers, the food industry, and the media to make significant progress. Schools, however, do have especially critical roles to play. **Both the U.S. Congress and the Colorado legislature recognized the important role of schools when they passed the laws discussed on the following page.**

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What is the law about wellness in our schools?

Federal Law

Public Law 108-265 reauthorized federal child nutrition programs, which includes the *National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*. Section 204 of this law requires that not later than the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, local educational agencies participating in the school meal programs must establish a local *school wellness policy* that, at a minimum:

1. Includes nutrition guidelines for all foods available on the school campus during the school day;
2. Provides an assurance that guidelines for school meals are not less restrictive than those set by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture;
3. Includes goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness in a manner that the local educational agency determines appropriate;
4. Establishes a plan for measuring implementation of the local wellness policy; and
5. Involves parents, students and representatives of the “school food authority” (i.e. school nutrition program), the school board, school administration and the public in development of the local wellness policy.

State Law

The 2005 Colorado state legislature passed SB05-81. It addresses Colorado’s growing problem of childhood overweight and obesity by giving local control to all Colorado school districts to design, implement and adhere to their own nutrition integrity policy.

Specifically, SB05-81 encourages school districts to adopt policies that ensure that every student has access to:

- Healthful food choices in appropriate portion sizes
- Healthful meals in the school cafeteria with adequate time to eat
- Healthful items in vending machines pursuant to SB04-103, the healthy vending bill passed last year
- Healthful items for fundraisers, classroom parties, and rewards in school
- Fresh produce from our own Colorado farms, when practical
- Access to an adequate amount of drinking water throughout the day
- Access to age-appropriate physical activity
- Finally access to age-appropriate and culturally sensitive instruction designed to teach lifelong healthy eating habits and a healthy level of physical activity.

School Districts are encouraged to adopt a local wellness policy as provided for in the *Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004*. This act says that each school district participating in a program authorized by *the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act of the Children’s Nutrition Act of 1966* shall adopt a local wellness policy by June 30, 2006 that includes much of the above.

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What is Durango doing to help schools meet the requirement?

Members of the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and the District Health Team (DHT) began working in April of 2004 to develop a district action plan model that:

- Builds upon the best wellness policies from across our state and the nation;
- Reflects input from experts in the fields of food service, nutrition education, physical education, and health;
- Considers feedback from the many groups impacted by the wellness action plan; and
- Provides for consensus, flexibility and local control.

Next steps are as follows:

Jan-May, 2005.....DHT and partners will provide educational information and seek input on the Durango wellness action plan from school personnel, students, parents and the community.

Ongoing.....DHT and partners will provide technical assistance to district personnel to support their efforts to adopt and/or adapt the Durango School District 9R wellness action plan to their school level needs.

July 2006.....All schools will have a wellness action plan in place using the **basic level of this document as a minimum requirement**. This action plan will be incorporated into each school's 2006-2007 school program.

Ongoing.....The DHT will review, revise and expand the wellness policy to include additional components of wellness including but not limited to mental health, physical health, family and community health, and staff health.

2006-2007.....The DHT will begin to establish a plan for measuring the impact and implementation fo the wellness policy.

The entire approach is designed to support schools' efforts to create a healthier environment for students and staff based on highly credible action guidelines, flexibility and local school needs.

How is the action plan structured?

Understanding the action plan is the first step to using it. The expectation is that all Durango schools will work toward exemplary status. **In 2006-07 school year Durango schools will meet all objectives at the basic level.**

The model guidelines are divided into three parts:

- Nutrition
- Nutrition Education
- Physical Activity

Within each part, there are three levels:

- The **BASIC** level meets all requirements of current federal and state laws and regulations and begins the movement toward more healthful guidelines.
- The **ADVANCED** level incorporates all guidelines for the basic level plus more healthful guidelines.
- The **EXEMPLARY** level incorporates all guidelines for the Basic and Advanced levels plus more healthful guidelines.

How are schools to use the action plan?

The action plan serves as the foundation for establishing a flexible school plan based on credible information. There are several steps involved to adopt the basic level action plan:

- Organize a school health team.
- Assess the existing situation.
- Communicate with your District Health Team members.
- Review the Durango 9-R wellness action plan.
- For each of the three parts of the wellness action plan select the items and levels to include.
- Learn much more about how to successfully implement a school wellness policy. Go to www.durangoschools.org or <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/> or <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/pp/COPAN/COPAN.html> for further information.