

## Nutrition, Physical Exercise, and Obesity: What's Happening at Your School?

The Center for Health and Health Care in Schools gathered information from front-line school professionals on what is happening concerning nutrition, physical exercise, and obesity prevention at their local schools. Results from the first 1,000 surveys completed on the *healthinschools.org* web site are summarized here. The surveys were filled out between October 2003 and mid-January 2004. Additional analysis will be posted soon.

### 1. Please tell us who you are:

( n=1,000)

56.8%	School nurse
14.1%	Teacher
10.9%	School administrator
10.7%	Other
6.4%	School-based health center staff member
1.1%	Counselor

### 2. I practice:

( n=1,000)

58.7%	Full-time in one school
19.4%	Other
15.8%	Part-time in 2 – 3 schools
6.1%	Part-time in 4 or more schools

### 3. I am located in:

( n=1,000)

42.8%	Elementary school
16.2%	Middle/Jr. high school
15.6%	High school
10.8%	K – 12
9.1%	Other
5.5%	K – 8

### 4. My school(s) is (are) located in:

( n=1,000)

37.6%	A suburban area
32.9%	A rural area
29.5%	An urban area



*Using a scale of 1 – 10, 1 = “Yes, a lot,” and 10 = “No, not much,” the following answers reflect percentages of those responding in each category.*

**5. Is obesity a concern in your school community?** (n=995)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
13.27	10.85	14.97	11.56	11.96	8.64	6.93	11.16	5.63	5.13

**6. Are efforts being made in your school to improve the nutritional quality of meals and snacks available to students?** (n=994)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
7.55	7.04	9.86	13.58	12.68	7.95	6.84	11.57	10.76	12.17

**7. Do school staff support efforts to improve nutritional quality of meals and snacks, for example, reduce fat and/or caloric content or replace sugared drinks with water or 100% juices?** (n=989)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
7.38	8.70	12.74	12.03	12.03	9.71	6.98	10.72	10.52	9.20

**8. Do parents support efforts to improve nutritional quality of meals and snacks, for example, reduce fat and/or caloric content or replace sugared drinks with water or 100% juices?** (n=987)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
3.85	4.66	9.73	11.15	18.03	12.67	8.82	14.18	10.54	6.38

**9. The following activities were implemented as appropriate school responses to the growing obesity problem among children during the [\(2002 – 2003\)](#) school year.** (n=734)

*Increased physical activity*

31.34%	Increase in sports teams, intramural activities
29.56%	Changed PE curriculum
29.16%	Promoting walking/biking to school
10.76%	Increased PE time
6.81%	Increased recess time



*Improved nutrition*

<u>47.96%</u>	Changed lunch menu/choices
<u>31.61%</u>	Reduced access to vending machines
<u>28.75%</u>	Changed vending machine selections
<u>9.13%</u>	Changed food/drinks sold at school events or door-to-door
<u>7.22%</u>	Removal of vending machines
<u>4.91%</u>	Longer lunch periods

**10. The following activities were implemented as appropriate school responses to the growing obesity problem among children during the [\(2003-2004\)](#) school year. (n=637)**

*Increased physical activity*

<u>34.69%</u>	Promoting walking/biking to school
<u>31.08%</u>	Changed PE curriculum
<u>23.08%</u>	Increase in sports teams, intramural activities
<u>13.19%</u>	Increased recess time
<u>12.40%</u>	Increased PE time

*Improved nutrition*

<u>46.78%</u>	Changed lunch menu/choices
<u>30.14%</u>	Changed vending machine selections
<u>29.67%</u>	Reduced access to vending machines
<u>13.66%</u>	Changed food/drinks sold at school events or door-to-door
<u>8.01%</u>	Removal of vending machines
<u>5.02%</u>	Longer lunch periods

**11. What are the biggest barriers at your school to promoting physical activity and improving nutritional choices?** For example, money, time, vendor contracts, teacher contracts, school administration attitudes, parent attitudes, student attitudes. Please list your top three barriers.

**Top Five Barriers to Change Listed by Sample of Survey Respondents**

(N = 100, Responses could name an unlimited number of barriers)

<u>41</u>	Money
<u>33</u>	Parent attitudes & behavior
<u>29</u>	Time constraints
<u>25</u>	Vending machines
<u>22</u>	Student attitudes



**12. Prevention work: How much of your work time is allocated to these or similar prevention activities?** (n=995)

For example: Classroom presentations or exercises that promote an understanding of healthy eating behaviors and the importance of physical activity; individual or group counseling, and activities that may involve cooking for nutrition, learning new physical activities, and special projects related to these topics.

<u>65.4</u>	1 – 20%
<u>17.56</u>	21 – 40%
<u>5.85</u>	41 – 60%
<u>4.62</u>	61 – 80%
<u>6.57</u>	81 – 100%

Thank you again for your support and interest.

A more detailed narrative will be available very soon on [www.healthinschools.org](http://www.healthinschools.org).  
Please check back for updates.

