

NATIONAL COLLABORATION FOR YOUTH

An Affinity Group of the
National Human Services Assembly

Policy Recommendations for Position Statement on Healthy Weight, Nutrition, and Physical Activity

1. Support efforts to expand research and data collection; develop and disseminate best practices; and provide training to adults on strategies to prevent and reduce childhood obesity and other eating disorders. These efforts should be family, community- and school-based and take into account different cultural, developmental, and socio-economic factors.
2. Increase funding for programs and activities that seek to prevent and reduce childhood obesity through physical fitness and nutrition education such as the Carol White Physical Education Program, the Steps to a Healthier US program, and Team Nutrition.
3. Invest in efforts to provide young people with more safe places to exercise and play and the staff required to maximize their use by increasing funding for parks, recreation facilities, camps and programs such as the 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Community Development Block Grant, Child Care and Development Block Grant, and Safe and Drug-Free Schools. These efforts should focus on young people, especially low-income, urban and rural youth, who currently lack access to public parks, pools, gyms, and other staffed facilities where they can be physically active in a safe environment.
4. Increase funding and streamline administrative reporting for afterschool and summer nutrition, nutrition education, food preparation, and gardening programs as components of community nutrition and anti-hunger strategies. These efforts should include changes in federal legislation to:
 - expand Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk Afterschool Suppers to all states and allow schools to provide suppers through the National School Lunch Program;
 - add all states to the Simplified Summer Food Program;
 - increase the reimbursement rate for the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Snacks and the Summer Food Service Program; and
 - provide automatic eligibility for afterschool programs receiving federal dollars through other programs such as the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, juvenile justice delinquency prevention grants, and other federal youth-serving initiatives.
5. Support policies and practices to ensure equal opportunities for boys and girls to participate in athletics, including a strong, effective Title IX. Participating in athletics, both community-based and interscholastic, provides young people with opportunities to be physically active, learn skills, and form lifelong habits of exercise and good health.
6. Support comprehensive eating disorder and obesity prevention and reduction efforts that address the mental health and emotional well-being of children as an important component of a healthy

child, including activities that enhance self-esteem and provide skills that help children and adolescents successfully manage and reduce stress.

7. Support efforts of youth service providers, school districts, school boards, and others during non-school hours to ensure that students have access to healthy food. These efforts should strive to limit the availability and promotion of non-nutritious foods in vending machines and support their replacement with foods such as dried fruits and nuts, milk, soy, water and whole juice drinks.
8. Ensure that local wellness policies adopted by school districts set forth goals for nutrition education, physical activity, nutrition standards and other school-based activities designed to promote lifelong wellness for students in grades K-12. The policy should allow for school-, community-, and faith-based providers to participate, and encompass programs both during and after school hours. The local wellness policy plan should involve parents, caregivers, students, representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, and the public in development, implementation, monitoring and review of the policies.
9. Support media literacy activities that explore the role of the media in influencing body-image and teach adults and youth and their families how to navigate those messages to make balanced, healthy choices about diet and exercise.
10. Support efforts and programs, such as Learn and Serve America, that encourage young people to be active partners in educating themselves, their peers and their families in advocating for environmental and policy changes that would lead to healthier lifestyles like service-learning experiences, action research projects, and community organizing strategies related to nutrition and physical activity.