Creating Healthy Schools

Modeling Healthy Behaviors

By being a healthy family, you set an example for your child, which supports healthy habits that they will carry throughout their lives. At our school, we want to support those healthy habits and expect all staff to model healthy eating, physical activity, and other healthy lifestyle behaviors during the school day, on school property, and during school sponsored meetings and events. As a family, you, too, can play an important role in creating healthy lifestyle habits among children.

Schools are required to write School Wellness Policies. Our School Wellness Policies, help students learn and practice healthy behaviors while at school. That's why school administrators, staff, teachers and families are working together to support these policies.

Why is it important to model healthy behaviors?

Creating a positive setting at home that supports the healthy behavior your child learns while at school will create long lasting health benefits for your child. As a parent, it is very important to set the good example by making healthy food choices, being physically active, and providing your child with positive surroundings to help them grow and develop into healthy adults. Children are more likely to pick healthy foods to eat and be physically active if their parents, family members, and teachers are doing the same. Children are more likely to follow examples set by those they look up to, so being a positive role model is very important. At right are some ideas for ways to create a healthier home.

How can I get more involved?

The following are a few ways to create a healthy environment at home:

Mealtime and snacks

- Encourage your child to try new foods.
- Eat healthy food items with every meal and snack.
- Eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day.
- Drink water, nonfat or low fat milk, and avoid sugar sweetened drinks.
- Avoid talking negatively about healthy food choices.
- Do not use food as a reward for your child's actions.
- Establish set times for meals and snacks.
- Eat healthy portion sizes, and practice portion control.
- Limit unhealthy snacks and treats.
- Do not force your child to clean their plate if they are full.
- Eat together as a family.

Exercise and physical activity

- Make exercise and playtime fun!
- Exercise as a family.
- Talk about your child's favorite sport or other physical activity.
- Help your child to be physically active for an hour or more each day.
- Avoid talking negatively about exercise.
- Use exercise as a reward instead of a punishment.
- Encourage your child to join a sports team or try a new physical activity.

Other Resources:

- The Center for Disease Control and Prevention has created a webpage giving parents ideas to help children maintain a healthy weight. More information available here: **http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/children/**

- MyPlate has resources on nutrition and shows what a healthy plate looks like. More information about MyPlate can be found: **http://www.choosemyplate.gov/**

- A federal program, Let's Move! has resources about ideas for physical activity and healthy eating: **https://letsmove.obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/**

- Alliance for a Healthier Generation has a web page dedicated to healthy Role Model behaviors, which includes a variety of great resources. To visit this web page: **https://www.healthiergeneration.org/live_healthier/be_a_role_model/**

Other healthy behaviors

- Involve the whole family in physical activity or healthy eating.

- Wash your hands before meal and snack time.

- Tell your child when she/he has done something well.

- Do not let your child eat while watching television.

- Limit the time your child spends watching television, playing video games, or using a computer to less than two hours each day.

- Focus on being healthy, not weight.

- Volunteer with sports activities before and after school with your child.

- Make sure your child is getting enough sleep.

I'm interested in learning more!

Who do I contact?

Principal: _____

PTO President: _____

School Wellness Coordinator: _____

District Wellness Coordinator: _____

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