

WANT YOUR KIDS TO BE  
HEALTHIER AT SCHOOL?



RAISE  
YOUR  
HAND



Robert Wood Johnson  
Foundation



TAKING ACTION TO PREVENT OBESITY

## Healthy, Active Kids Perform Better in School.

The fact is, healthy, active students learn better, perform better academically and experience fewer behavioral problems. That means higher test scores and better grades. Needless to say, schools play a critical role in building overall wellness. This is where Local Wellness Policies (LWPs) can help to ensure that kids are receiving and learning healthy eating and physical activity habits that can last a lifetime.

**Schools should be places that support the health and wellness of all children – no matter where they live, what school they attend, or what grade they are in.**

But in too many school districts, LWPs remain fragmented, underdeveloped and lack sufficient implementation plans. That's why the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) finalized regulations to create a framework and guidelines for written LWPs. Together, with members of our community and school administrators, we can create a school environment that promotes students' health, well-being, and ability to learn.

### Raise Your Hand.

Here's why we are so passionate about ensuring that robust LWPs are not only created, but also effectively implemented, and why you should be too!

- Most children spend the majority of their waking hours and eat up to half their daily calories at school.
- With more than 50% of students in the United States qualifying for free and reduced lunch, lunch is often the most nutritious meal of the child's day.
- More than one in three children is at increased risk for developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and cancer later in life.
- The majority of public school students are exposed to food and beverage marketing in school. The most heavily marketed food and beverages in schools are unhealthy, including candy, snack food, fast food and sugary drinks.
- As of the 2013-14 school year, less than 50% of LWPs included language for all required LWP components (e.g., nutrition education, physical activity, physical education, school meals, school snacks and beverages, and implementation and evaluation plans).
- Chronic diseases have a greater impact on communities of color, and longstanding racial inequities and socio-economic challenges leave many schools without the resources to provide children with healthy food and access to regular physical activity. But students at these schools shouldn't be at greater risk because of where they live.
- Ultimately, when children receive proper nutrition, and get more time for physical education, they do better physically, mentally, and emotionally. That's good for everyone – kids, schools, local communities, and our country.

So, what can you do to help effectively implement a LWP in your school district? Tell decision makers in your community to implement a wellness policy that is customized to suit your community's unique needs, and make sure your neighbors and friends raise their hands to support this issue too.

Just visit [www.voicesforhealthykids.org/schoolwellness](http://www.voicesforhealthykids.org/schoolwellness) to spread the word.

