



The CPSTF Encourages More Research for Three School-Based Intervention Approaches to Prevent Obesity:

The CPSTF finds insufficient evidence for three school-based intervention approaches that combine dietary interventions with physical activity interventions. This does NOT mean the intervention approaches are ineffective; it means there is not enough evidence available to understand which of these approaches work. These findings are based on systematic reviews of available evidence.

These reviews were released along with a related review recommending [school-based interventions that combine meal or fruit and vegetable snack interventions with physical activity interventions](#).



Interventions included in the reviews combined at least one dietary and one physical activity component.

Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Intervention Approaches	Intervention Components
Supporting Healthier Snack Foods and Beverages Sold or Offered Combined with Physical Activity Interventions in Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Policies that require foods and beverages sold outside school meals meet nutritional requirements o Celebration rules that encourage healthy foods and beverages during classroom events o Rules that encourage nonfood items as alternative rewards o Physical education classes o Policies or practices that allow opportunities for physical activity during the school day
Multicomponent Interventions Combined with a Physical Activity Intervention in Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Policies that require school meals and foods and beverages sold outside of meals meet specific nutritional requirements o Fruit and vegetable programs during lunch or snack o Celebration rules that encourage healthy foods and beverages during classroom events o Rules that encourage nonfood items as alternative rewards o Physical education classes or policies that allow opportunities for physical activity during the school day
Increasing Water Access Combined with Physical Activity Interventions in Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Procedures that ensure water fountains are clean and maintained o Availability of water fountains o Policies that allow water bottles in class o Policies that allow opportunities for physical activity during the school day o Physical education classes o Large-scale environmental changes (e.g. renovating a school playground)

Evidence Gaps

Additional research and evaluation are needed to answer the following questions and fill existing gaps in the evidence base.

- o Are these combined interventions effective?
- o Are programs implemented at some system levels (i.e., Federal, state, district, school, classroom) more effective than others?
- o Do these interventions lead to other benefits (e.g., academic achievement) or potential harms (e.g., body dissatisfaction or overexertion from physical activity)?
- o How effective are these interventions across different populations, including students with disabilities?

Facts about Dietary Behavior and Physical Activity

- Consuming a healthy diet and participating in regular physical activity can build stronger bones and muscles, help control weight, and reduce the risk of developing health conditions such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and osteoporosis.^{1,2}
- Most U.S. children aged 5 to 18 years attend school for an average of six to seven hours a day during the school year.³ This gives schools a chance to offer students nutritious foods and beverages and opportunities for physical activity.



Learn More

Summaries of Evidence and CPSTF Findings

www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/obesity-prevention-control-supporting-healthier-snack-foods-beverages-sold-offered-combined-physical-activity-interventions-schools

www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/obesity-prevention-control-multicomponent-interventions-combined-physical-activity-intervention-schools

thecommunityguide.org/findings/obesity-prevention-control-increasing-water-access-combined-physical-activity-interventions-schools

Overview: School-Based Intervention Approaches to Prevent and Control Obesity

www.thecommunityguide.org/content/overview-school-based-intervention-approaches-prevent-control-obesity

CDC, Healthy Schools

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/index.htm>

¹ 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee. 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee Scientific Report. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2018.

² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. 8th Edition. December 2015. Available at <http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines>.

³ National Center for Education Statistics. 2007–08. Schools and Staffing Survey. Average number of hours in the school day and average number of days in the school year for public schools, by state: 2007–08. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/tables/sass0708_035_s1s.asp.

Established in 1996 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF) is an independent, nonfederal panel of public health and prevention experts whose members are appointed by the director of CDC. The CPSTF provides information for a wide range of decision makers on programs, services, and other interventions aimed at improving population health. Although CDC provides administrative, scientific, and technical support for the CPSTF, the recommendations developed are those of the CPSTF and do not undergo review or approval by CDC. Find more information at www.thecommunityguide.org.