



### Summary of Community Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation

The Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF) recommends school-based interventions that combine meal or fruit and vegetable snack interventions with physical activity interventions to improve health among elementary school students through grade six.

This recommendation was released with [three other reviews](#) for school-based intervention approaches that combine dietary interventions with physical activity interventions.



### Major Findings

The CPSTF recommendation is based on a systematic review of 21 studies published through July 2017.

- The number of students who are overweight or have obesity in the school population decreased by a median of 2 percentage points.
- Students' time spent in physical activity increased 22 minutes per day.
- Students consumed 12% more fruits and vegetables per day, and the number of times students ate fruits and vegetables per day increased by 3%.

### What are interventions to increase healthy eating and physical activity in schools?

These school-based interventions aim to improve health by combining meal or fruit and vegetable snack interventions and physical activity interventions. The interventions are designed to provide healthier foods and beverages while limiting less healthy foods, and make physical activity easier to engage in.

Meal or fruit and vegetable interventions must include at least one of the following:

- o Policies that require school meals meet specific nutritional requirements
- o Programs that provide fruits and vegetables to students during lunch or snack time

Physical activity interventions must include at least one of the following:

- o Physical education classes
- o School policies or practices that provide opportunities for physical activity during the school day

Interventions may also include one or more of the following:

- o Healthy food and beverage marketing strategies
- o Educational programs
- o Addition of small-scale equipment to promote physical activity
- o Staff involvement
- o Family and community engagement

## Facts about Dietary Behaviors 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.<sup>1,2</sup>
- 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.<sup>3</sup> This gives schools a chance to offer students nutritious foods and beverages and opportunities for physical activity.



### Learn More

#### Summary of Evidence and CPSTF Finding

[www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/obesity-prevention-control-meal-fruit-vegetable-snack-interventions-combined-physical-activity-interventions-schools](http://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/obesity-prevention-control-meal-fruit-vegetable-snack-interventions-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](http://www.thecommunityguide.org/content/overview-school-based-intervention-approaches-prevent-control-obesity)

#### CDC, Healthy Schools

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

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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>.

<sup>3</sup> 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](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](http://www.thecommunityguide.org).