

# Prevention Action Steps for Schools & Local School Boards

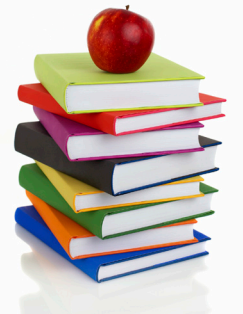
## Prevention for the Health of North Carolina

[http://www.nciom.org/projects/prevention/prevention\\_report.shtml](http://www.nciom.org/projects/prevention/prevention_report.shtml)

Students learn and perform better when they are mentally and physically healthy. Schools have a unique opportunity to promote health among students since young people spend a significant amount of time in school. The healthy behaviors learned and practiced in youth are carried into adulthood. Schools can support healthy behaviors through a coordinated school health approach that addresses education, food options, activities, and policies. Healthy student behaviors are linked to educational achievement, which leads to better health outcomes. By following the Prevention Action Steps below, you can help students lead healthier and more productive lives.

### Help students eat smart and move more.

- ✓ Implement healthy child nutrition standards in all elementary, middle, and high schools, and ensure that all foods and beverages sold or offered in school are healthy, including those in the cafeteria, all vending machines, and school stores.
- ✓ Ensure students receive high-quality physical education.
- ✓ Create joint-use agreements between school recreational facilities and parks to provide all community members with more places to be active. Encourage and facilitate walking and biking to school using the Safe Routes to School program.



### Keep schools and students tobacco-free.

- ✓ Actively enforce 100% tobacco-free policies on school grounds and at school events.
- ✓ Promote the NC Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) for students and staff and encourage current tobacco users to call for help in quitting.

### Ensure that students receive reproductive health and safety education.

- ✓ Institute an opt-out consent process for reproductive health and safety education.

### Help students be alcohol and drug free.

- ✓ Implement a comprehensive substance abuse prevention plan that includes early intervention and offer evidence-based substance abuse prevention courses as part of the Healthful Living curricula.

### Promote mental health and well-being.

- ✓ Review current mental health prevention services and policies to ensure they are effective and appropriate for your student population. Offer Healthful Living curricula proven to be effective in improving students' emotional well-being.

### Support health data collection to ensure validity of statewide estimates.

- ✓ Participate in the Youth Risk Behavioral Survey and School Health Profiles Survey if selected.

### Keep the school environment safe for your students.

- ✓ Use the US EPA's Tools for Schools Program to assess and address environmental contaminants in your school.

### Provide support to address socioeconomic barriers that prevent children from succeeding in school.

- ✓ Enroll low-income children in the free and reduced-price meals programs, and link them to other public programs such as Medicaid, NC Health Choice, and the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (otherwise known as SNAP and formerly known as "food stamps").

## Increase the graduation rate.

- ✓ Support a school environment that promotes school connectedness, improves student attendance, and decreases truancy.
- ✓ Explore and implement customized learning options for students.

## Use evidence-based health education curricula.

- ✓ Use the Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (HECAT) and Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (PECAT) to assess current curricula.
- ✓ Implement evidence-based curricula for Healthful Living courses when available.

## Make creating a healthy school environment a community priority.

- ✓ Involve teachers, staff, parents, and community members in a coordinated school health approach to create a healthy school environment.



### STATE RESOURCES

#### Coordinated School Health Approach, NC Youth Risk Behaviors, NC School Profiles

- NC Healthy Schools Partnership. <http://www.nchealthyschools.org>

#### Tobacco

- NC Tobacco-free Schools. <http://www.nctobaccofreeschools.com>
- NC Quitline. 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669). <http://www.quitlinenc.org>

#### Nutrition and Physical Activity

- NC DPI Child Nutrition Services. <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/childnutrition>
- Eat Smart, Move More North Carolina. <http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com>
- North Carolina Action for Healthy Kids. <http://www.ncactionforhealthykids.org>
- North Carolina Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance. <http://www.ncaahperd.org>
- National Association for Sport and Physical Education. <http://www.naspe.org>

#### General School Resources

- North Carolina Healthy School's Coordinated School Health Partnership. <http://www.nchealthyschools.org>
- North Carolina State Board of Education. North Carolina State Board of Education. <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/stateboard/hrstudents>

### NATIONAL RESOURCES

#### Community Prevention Strategies

- CDC Guide to Community Preventive Services. <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/index.html>

#### Youth Risk Behaviors

- CDC Adolescent Health Registries of Programs Effective in Reducing Youth Risk Behaviors. <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/AdolescentHealth/registries.htm>

#### Mental Health and Substance Abuse

- Department of Health and Human Services National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices. <http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/find.asp>
- US Department of Justice's Model Programs Guide. <http://www2.dsgonline.com/mpg>

#### Education and Drop-Out Prevention

- US Department of Education's What Works Clearing House. <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc>
- US Department of Education's Drop Out Prevention Guide. [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/dp\\_pg\\_090308.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/dp_pg_090308.pdf)
- US Department of Justice's Model Programs Guide. <http://www2.dsgonline.com/mpg>

#### Environmental Health

- US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Tools for Schools (TfS) Program. <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools>

#### Physical Activity

- Safe Routes to School. <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org>
- Action for Healthy Kids. <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org>

#### HECAT and PECAT

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/DTrain/FAQ.htm>

The above Action Steps were excerpted from recommendations in *Prevention for the Health of North Carolina: Prevention Action Plan*, a collaborative project of the North Carolina Institute of Medicine and the North Carolina Division of Public Health, and have been modified for specific audiences.

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