

PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING TOOL: LESSONS FROM WELLNESS TEAMS

Working to Achieve the Healthy CPS Healthy Environments Badge



HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

What is the “Healthy Environments” Badge?

The Healthy Environments Badge is an indicator that schools are fostering environments that support the health and wellness of their students.

What is this Handout?

This handout includes basic information about the Healthy Environments badge, key resources to help schools in achieving this Badge, and recommendations from Wellness Teams who have been working to achieve this Badge.

Did you know?

- Research shows that recess is an important factor in **improving children’s academic performance** in school.¹
- School gardens allow children to **experience the process of food production and improve their diet** - even in urban environments.²
- Celebrating children’s accomplishments with non-food related activities is one way to promote the development of healthy eating habits.³

WHAT DO SCHOOLS NEED TO EARN THE HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS BADGE?

- ★ The school’s Emergency Management Plan has been expanded to include medical emergencies via the OSHW Medical Emergency Preparedness Plan.
 - Resource: [Medical Emergency Preparedness Plan Google Form](#)
- ★ The school provides opportunities for daily physical activity during the school day to all students in addition to recess and PE.
- ★ Teachers do not withhold physical activity as punishment (including recess or PE).
- ★ All K-8 students are provided with at least 20 minutes of daily recess (PE does not count as recess).
- ★ If your school is growing edible food, you must be Eat What You Grow Certified.
- ★ The school does not fundraise with food during the school day (defined as 12 a.m. until 30 min after the final bell).
- ★ Food is not served or sold in competition with school meals (includes fundraisers, school stores, and celebrations).
- ★ The school focuses on celebrating with fun rather than food during the school day (12 a.m. to 30 min after the final bell).
- ★ Teachers do not use food as a reward.

TIPS FOR WELLNESS TEAMS IN ACHIEVING THE HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS BADGE



TRAINING

- 1 Supplement physical activity across curricular content areas.** Build in brain breaks such as 20 jumping jacks or yoga poses between lessons, or add exercise and movement into math, phonics, and science lessons.
- 2 Supplement physical activity through collaboration.** Collaborate with outside organizations and resources to improve physical activity and recess, including organizations like [Urban Initiatives](#), [GoNoodle](#), [PlayWorks](#), and [ChicagoRun](#).
- 3 Host fitness events and activities outside of school hours.** Ideas include Family Fitness night or fitness challenges, such as student versus staff basketball or volleyball games.



COMMUNITY & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

- 4 Use diverse communication strategies in sharing the Healthy Celebrations and School Foods Policies.** Target these to all members of the school community, by collaborating with the LSC, all families/ caregivers, and students.
- 5 Create community partnerships.** Working with groups such as [Small Bites](#) and [Common Threads](#) can integrate opportunities for healthy eating, cooking, and nutrition education for students and families both during and after school.



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

- 6 Engage students through leadership.** Work with your school's student groups to help them understand, improve, and normalize the school health policies and alternatives.
- 7 Introduce creative reward alternatives.** Plan activities such as pop-up recess to motivate student engagement, celebrate achievements, and reduce food incentives.
- 8 Take advantage of existing CPS resources.** Utilize OSHW resources, like garden technical assistance support and the Celebration Catering menu.



Have you used these Healthy CPS Resources?

Healthy CPS website resources:

- [Healthy CPS Checklist](#)
- [Wellness Team Guidance](#)
- [COVID Wellness Team Guidance](#)
- [Healthy Environments Landing Page](#)
- [Healthy CPS Preparation Guide](#)
- [Why Healthy CPS?](#)
- Healthy CPS Hotline: 773-553-KIDS (5437)

Healthy Environments Supports:

- [School Food](#)
- [Hannah's Movement Minutes Newsletter](#)
- [Healthy Celebrations](#)
- [Recess](#)
- [Student & Family Engagement](#)
- [Farm to School](#)
- [Healthy Fundraising](#)
- [Physical Activity](#)
- [School Gardens](#)
- [Healthy Rewards](#)
- [LGBTQ+ Supportive Environments](#)
- Garden and School Food Specialists serve as content experts related to this badge.
- More than 400 Chicago Public Schools have a school garden and are eligible to complete the Eat What You Grow program which certifies schools to safely harvest and serve school garden produce. Please contact OSHW@cps.edu about starting a school garden or Eat What You Grow Training.

Where did this information come from?

Virtual discussion groups with eleven Wellness Teams were conducted in spring of 2020 by researchers at the Policy, Practice, and Prevention Research Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago who is partnering with CPS' Office of Student Health and Wellness to support implementation of Healthy CPS strategies. A total of 45 individuals participated in the groups, including principals, assistant principals, classroom teachers, PE/Health teachers, counselors, nurses, and other support staff members. Discussions lasted approximately 60 minutes and were recorded and transcribed. Transcripts were analyzed and key themes associated with each of the four badges were identified.

References

1. Brez C, Sheets V. Classroom benefits of recess. *Learning Environments Research*. 2017;20(3):433-445. doi:[10.1007/s10984-017-9237-x](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10984-017-9237-x).
2. Fischer LK, Brinkmeyer D, Karle SJ, et al. Biodiverse edible schools: Linking healthy food, school gardens and local urban biodiversity. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*. 2019;40:35-43. doi:[10.1016/j.ufug.2018.02.015](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ufug.2018.02.015).
3. Jansen PW, Derks IPM, Mou Y, et al. Associations of parents' use of food as reward with children's eating behaviour and BMI in a population-based cohort. *Pediatric Obesity*. 2020;15(11):e12662. doi:[10.1111/ijpo.12662](https://doi.org/10.1111/ijpo.12662)
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [2019] Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data. Available at: www.cdc.gov/yrebs. Accessed on December 9, 2020.

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