



Getting Physical Activity into Our Schools

New Mexico Action for Healthy Kids (NMAFHK), in partnership with other groups, works to support schools in implementing the new NM Public Education Department's School Wellness Policy requirements to incorporate physical activity whenever possible into the day (before, during and after school). Increasing physical activity in a child's day is not a substitute for a physical education program. Our children need both! For more information on the difference between physical education and physical activity, go to: <http://www.aahperd.org/NASPE/template.cfm?template=difference.html>.

NMAFHK uses the following criteria for physical activity resource recommendations.

- Easy to use fun activities
- Flexible and practical
- Linked to tasks that will help schools achieve state required Standards & Benchmarks for students, such as language arts, math, science, etc.

Physical Activity Before and After School

How can a school district start a program?

Look to your community. Currently many school districts provide programs through partnerships with local community agencies: • **YMCA-YWCA** • **21st Century** • **Boys & Girls Clubs** • **Campfire Girls** • **Girls, Inc** • **City or County Parks and Recreation** •

Physical Activity During the School Day

What can schools do in the classroom setting with limited equipment resources?

Short (10-30 minute) activities that can be done in the classroom:

- **CATCH** For more information, contact Carol Marr at carol.marr@state.nm.us
- **HIP to be FitSM Train the Trainer:** National Dance Institute of New Mexico www.ndi-nm.org
- **Brain Breaks:** <http://www.emc.cmich.edu/BrainBreaks/default.htm>.
- **Energizers:** <http://www.ncpe4me.com/energizers.html>
- **Minds in Motion:** <http://doe.sd.gov/oess/schoolhealth/mindsinmotion/>

Where can I get more information?

- **www.ActionForHealthyKids.org** Select "Resources to Improve Schools/After School Programs" and while you're there, select the NM Toolkit for Physical Education and Activity or go to http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/filelib/toolsforteam/recom/NM_AFHK_PE_Toolkit_-_FINAL.pdf
- **www.afterschoolalliance.org**

More ways you can encourage physical activity at school

- Provide extracurricular programs like walking clubs, jumping rope, in-line skating
- Sponsor parent-child activity programs at school
- Encourage teachers to provide time for unstructured physical activity during recess
- Encourage walking and biking to and from school
- Provide students and teachers with physical and social environments that encourage and enable physical activity
- Allow access to facilities before and after school hours and during vacation periods
- Encourage and enable school personnel to be active role models by their own participation in physical activity
- Coordinate physical activities with community agencies, allowing use of school facilities to facilitate training programs for volunteer youth coaches
- Provide a listing of community physical activity resources to students and parents

Resources

ReCharge! Energizing After-School Programs is a fun, team-based activity kit for boys and girls grades 3-6 offered at the AFHK website www.ActionForHealthyKids.org

Safe Routes to Schools programs improve the health and well-being of children by enabling and encouraging them to walk and bicycle to school. Get involved at <http://www.nmshtd.state.nm.us/main.asp?secid=15411>