

School Impact Report: Physical Activity & Nutrition



Studies show kids who are physically active demonstrate improved fitness and brain function and perform better in school. Exposing kids to healthy foods — through taste tests, school gardens, healthy classroom celebrations, farm to school programs and more — encourages kids to try new foods and make healthier choices on their own. When incorporated into the school day, physical activity, physical education classes and nutrition education enhance academic instruction and lead to healthier school environments¹. It's what we call the Learning Connection.

1 BILLION PHYSICAL ACTIVITY MINUTES ADDED TO THE SCHOOL DAY!

AFHK is helping schools make health an educational priority. Thanks to our partners, including ALDI, CSX Transportation, GoGo squeeZ and Saputo*, AFHK has awarded more than **1,400 Game On Grants** to help schools in **35 states** increase access to physical activity, nutritious foods and nutrition education for more than **620,000 students**. Grants are used for physical education equipment, indoor and outdoor recess, playgrounds and play spaces, classroom brain breaks, and before/after-school programs that help students exceed the recommended 30 minutes of daily physical activity in school and reach the total recommendation of **60 minutes of physical activity per day**². Through these efforts, AFHK partner schools have added more than 1 billion new minutes of physical activity to date. Grants also expand access to healthy foods, improve knowledge and behaviors around exercise and nutrition and engage families in activities that reinforce healthy habits at home.



IMPACT OF GAME ON GRANTS*

\$1.6 million

Granted to schools

17

New minutes of physical activity added/day, on average

1,423 Grants Awarded

1,143

Schools

56

Minutes of physical activity at school achieved daily, on average

86%

Students reported school made it easier to eat more fruits & veggies

48%

Parents reported increase in physical activity at home

622,521

Students impacted

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BEST PRACTICES

1. Develop a formal school-level plan to ensure your school is offering physical activity across the school day.
2. Advocate for a district-wide policy to ensure physical education minutes by grade are outlined to encourage the move towards daily PE.
3. Ensure your district school wellness policy includes required recess and develops a formal plan for indoor recess during inclement weather.
4. Offer training and resources for classroom teachers on the importance of daily brain breaks/energizers for classroom management and increased engagement.
5. Implement the top physical activity strategies used by AFHK-funded schools: invest in physical activity equipment, ensure indoor and outdoor recess are active, practice classroom movement breaks, and perform fitness testing.



Better test performance¹



Improved ability to organize thoughts and make decisions³



Increased awareness around importance of physical activity⁴



Increased concentration and attention⁵



Reduction in inattention and moodiness⁶

*Data from a 3-year aggregate of school years (2013-2016), unless otherwise noted. Additional funding sponsors include: Cargill, Children's Hospital & Medical Center in Omaha, NE, and Tyson.

Every kid healthy, active and ready to learn

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School Impact Report: Game On Success Stories

Farm to School to Home

Inland Leaders Charter School, Yucaipa, CA

School nurse Terah Gordon and the school health team wanted to incorporate fresh produce and nutrition education into classrooms at Inland Leaders. A Game On grant funded by ALDI helped them to partner with Old Grove Farm in Redlands and have fresh fruits and vegetables delivered monthly for taste testings with students. The school also educates students about nutrition in the school garden, and the food service director reports that 75% of students access the salad bar daily.



All the Right Moves

Little Fort Elementary School, Waukegan, IL

School nurse Mary Colver noticed students at Little Fort were not receiving the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Furthermore, 55% of students were overweight or obese. Mary worked with school leadership to create a Get Up and Move morning music and dance program to get kids moving for five extra minutes at the start of each day and help them focus before class. With the help of two AFHK grants made possible by CSX Transportation and CVS Caremark, the school also implemented classroom brain breaks, a before-school exercise club and a half-mile school walking path, resulting in nearly all students exceeding the daily recommendation of 30 minutes of physical activity per day while in school.



Physical Activity Powers Positive Behavior

Thomas Jefferson Elementary School, Redmond, MI

Teachers at Thomas Jefferson Elementary are using physical activity to prevent physical aggression. Using a Game On grant funded by GoGo squeeZ, the school created Power Hour to add 40 minutes of physical activity before the school day and purchased additional equipment to keep kids active during recess and classroom activity breaks. Teachers and parents have noticed changes in student behavior, and Office Discipline Referrals have declined. Parent and teacher, Emillie Frisk said, "I've noticed a huge positive difference in the behavior of my son when he attends Power Hour. His classroom teacher says he is more focused as well."



"Exercise is so important to stimulating the brain. Now, we start each day with exercise, and when I see the students fidgeting, we exercise or take a brain break."

— Cynthia Wolski, Teacher, Belmont-Cragin Elementary School, Chicago, IL

"The Game On grant has further infused our commitment to creating a healthier generation. As a PE Teacher, I absolutely love seeing our classroom teachers carrying over into their classrooms the importance of being active and exercising!"

— Jim Kralovec, PE Teacher, Stambaugh Elementary School, Iron River, MI

"The grant has allowed our school to purchase physical education equipment that accommodates my students' special needs and allows them to exercise while having fun."

— Stephanie Dial, Assistant Principal, Saraland Middle School, Saraland, AL

"Morning Mile is not only helping them to stay fit, it is also keeping them mentally sharp and active in the classroom."

— Cheryl Savage, PE Teacher and Parent, Windy Ridge School, Orlando, FL

Learn more about **Game On** at
ActionforHealthyKids.org/GameOn.

1. Donnelly JE, Lambourne K. Classroom-based Physical Activity, Cognition, and Academic Achievement; Prev Med 2011; 52 Suppl 1:536.
2. "How Much Physical Activity Do Children Need?" www.cdc.gov. June 4, 2015. <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/children/>.
3. Davis CL et al., "Exercise improves executive function and achievement and alters brain activation in overweight children: A randomized, controlled trial," Health Psychology 2011; 30(1): 91-98.
4. Action for Healthy Kids. 2014-2015 CSX Funded Schools Report.
5. Monogr Soc Res Child Dev. 2014 Dec;79(4). doi: 10.1111/mono.12127.
6. Betsy Hoza et al., "A Randomized Trial Examining the Effects of Aerobic Physical Activity on Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder Symptoms in Young Children." Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology 43, no. 4 (2015): 655-67. doi:10.1007/s10802-014-9929-y.