

TAKE

ACTION FOR HEALTHY KIDS

# Reversing the Childhood Health Crisis

In the increasingly complex world in which children are raised today, Americans overwhelmingly agree that they face more challenges than ever to their physical and emotional health and well-being.<sup>1</sup> In fact, according to UNICEF, the U.S. ranks 37th globally in children's well-being<sup>2</sup> and last out of 21 industrialized countries in child health and safety<sup>3</sup>.

As an organization working at the intersection and forefront of children's health and education since 2002, Action for Healthy Kids has seen the positive outcomes of educators, families and communities working together to create schools and communities that support children in leading healthy, happy and productive lives, both in and out of school. But statistics tell us clearly: We're facing a childhood health crisis.



**Young people feel more burdened than ever** by pressure from others, including parents.<sup>4</sup>

1 in 5 children ages 3–17 (about 15 million) are **diagnosed with a mental, emotional or behavioral disorder**.<sup>5</sup>

Children get an average of **7+ hours of screen time** daily.<sup>6</sup>

**1 in 5 high school students reported using e-cigarettes** in the past month (2018).<sup>7</sup>



One in three children are **overweight or obese**.<sup>8</sup>



Overweight and obesity are associated with **lower math and reading scores**.<sup>9</sup>

Only 24% of kids age 6 to 17 get **recommended 60 minutes** of physical activity each day.<sup>10</sup>



1 in 4 young adults are **not fit to serve** in the military.<sup>11</sup>

21% rate of **increase of type 2 diabetes** in 10- to 19-year-olds (highest rate is among Black children).<sup>12</sup>



**Cardiometabolic risk factors**, including fatty liver, is detectable

in preschoolers at the onset of overweight or obesity.<sup>13</sup>

1 in 5 students ages 12–18 **are bullied**.<sup>14</sup>

**U.S. ranks 37th in world** for child well-being.<sup>15</sup>



**U.S ranks 19th** in the World Happiness Report.<sup>16</sup>

**Latino children have highest obesity rate** amongst children (25.8%); **Black children have second highest** obesity rate amongst children (22%).<sup>17</sup>

Youth in **low to middle income families are nearly twice as likely to have obesity** compared to their peers in highest-income families.<sup>18</sup>



According to a survey by Action for Healthy Kids, a majority of adults agree, **parents are the number one influence in a child's life**. They also agree that schools, in addition to parents and caregivers, can have an impact on the challenges facing kids today. Yet, only 30% of parents feel very confident in their children's decision to make healthy decisions — regardless of the age of their child (under age 18).<sup>1</sup>

When schools are equipped to create healthy, safe and supportive learning environments, students are better prepared to succeed and thrive, in school and beyond. And **when parents and caregivers are engaged with their children at school, kids demonstrate better grades, healthier behaviors, and better social skills**<sup>20</sup> and are less likely to engage in risky behaviors, like smoking.<sup>21</sup> School health activities are also more successful when parents are involved.<sup>22</sup>

**Let's take action together to reverse the childhood health crisis.**

Visit [actionforhealthykids.org/take-action](http://actionforhealthykids.org/take-action) to learn more.



Every kid healthy, active and ready to learn

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