

Arkansas School-Age "LINKS"

ASU Childhood
Services

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School-Age
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INTRODUCTION

Academic achievement is often associated with the level of talent among teachers, available resources for schools, and governing structures established for school districts. However, health related problems also play a significant role in the academic achievement of children and youth. Some of the greatest health problems affecting youth include poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, obesity, mental health disorders, and substance abuse. Habits formed in childhood and adolescence can have a long-term impact on the health and well being of an individual. Although health programs for youth have traditionally emphasized the roles of parents, teachers, and health care providers, youth service organizations also play a crucial role in the health of children and adolescents. By taking the time to teach youth about the importance of maintaining their health and working with them to develop strategies for accomplishing their health goals, you can help the youth you serve improve their health and academic success. This special edition of LINKS will focus on the role that nutrition, physical activity and healthy living play in fostering youth that are ready to learn as well as ready for life.

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Our Plan to End Childhood Hunger in Arkansas

**Submitted by : Joyce Hardy,
No Kid Hungry Campaign Director
Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance**

More than 49 million Americans, a third of them children, don't have reliable access to the food that they need to lead healthy, active lives. That's nearly 17 million kids struggling with hunger, right here in America. Arkansas is right at the top of the list, with the nation's highest percentage of children who are classified "food insecure."

Our children aren't hungry because we lack food or because of a lack of food and nutrition programs. They are hungry because they lack access to those programs that provide food in Arkansas. The number of Arkansans who rely on food banks is soaring, but less than 30% of

these Arkansans are receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) formerly known as food stamps.

Summer Feeding Programs

Most children look forward to their summer vacation after working hard during the school year. For those who rely on free- and reduced meals, summer can be very difficult because they have no reliable source of food. Studies show that children are at a higher risk for hunger during the summer months.

It doesn't have to be this way. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP or Summer Meals) helps kids who are eligible for free- and reduced-meals continue to have access to healthy meals during the summer. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) funds this program. State agencies administer the program; public and private organizations, including schools, community centers, and faith-based organizations run the local programs.

Besides offering nutritious meals during the summer, these local organizations provide programs that offer the children a safe place to be and engage in academic and recreational activities.

Despite the clear benefits of summer meal programs, they are extremely underutilized. In 2009, only 10.8% of eligible children in Arkansas participated in summer feeding programs. Only 22,993 of the 222,448 children who participated in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) were eating lunches provided by Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sites. This puts Arkansas in the 38th position of summer meal participation.

The shortage of SFSP sites and low participation means that small increases in the overall participation rate will mean dramatic results. For example, in the United States, just over 11% of all eligible kids participate in the program. If the participation rate were to increase to about 16%--an additional 111,487 children would be added. This would mean that the total number of children enrolled would be 223,000. Expanding the number of children participating in the Summer Food Program from 17,494 to 20,118 would be a 15% increase. This would also mean an additional \$447,030 would come to Arkansas communities.

We will increase participation in summer feeding programs by 15%, serving an additional 121,343 meals in 2011 by offering outreach to organizations to ensure that there are enough sites offering summer meals in high-need, underserved communities developing and implementing outreach and marketing plans to

increase awareness about the benefits of the programs among families and communities launching a summer meals hotline and website where people can find out about summer meal sites near them finding and providing start-up grants to organizations wanting to start or expand summer meal programs. working with the Division of Volunteerism to develop a plan for volunteer recruitment for the summer feeding sites.

We will have a person working with DHS's Special Nutrition Division to help summer food sponsors with their reports. This person will also help transition the summer food sites to after-school and weekend feeding sites.

Nutrition Education

We will identify agencies including the Cooperative Extension Program, Potluck's Kids Pantries, and after-school and summer programs that can increase the participation in nutrition programs, including Share Our Strength's Cooking Matters, across the state.



Breakfast in the Classroom

‘Over the past five years, significant new evidence has documented the link between eating breakfast and learning. Recent studies show that skipping breakfast is relatively common among children in the U.S....and is associated with quantifiable negative consequences for academic, cognitive, health and mental health functioning.’

- J. Michael Murphy, EdD, Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School, 2007

We will begin a Breakfast in the Classroom pilot project in the fall so that we can show results of schools in Arkansas that serve breakfast in the classroom. Studies of the effects of breakfast at school include:

- Skipping breakfast and experiencing hunger impair children’s ability to learn.
- Eating breakfast at school helps improve children’s academic performance.
- School breakfast improves student behavior and learning environments.
- Breakfast can improve children’s nutrition.
- Eating breakfast may be a protective factor against childhood obesity.

- Food Research and Action Center, Breakfast for Learning: Scientific research on the link between children’s nutrition and academic performance, Fall 2010

Share Our Strength Teacher Survey

Share Our Strength released the results of a teacher survey earlier this year. The report showed the picture of hunger in the schools and the affects of hunger on student achievement and health. The report can be found at www.strength.org/teachers.



For more information about the No Hungry Campaign and the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance contact:

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www.arhungeralliance.org.

More Schools in Arkansas Addressing Student Health

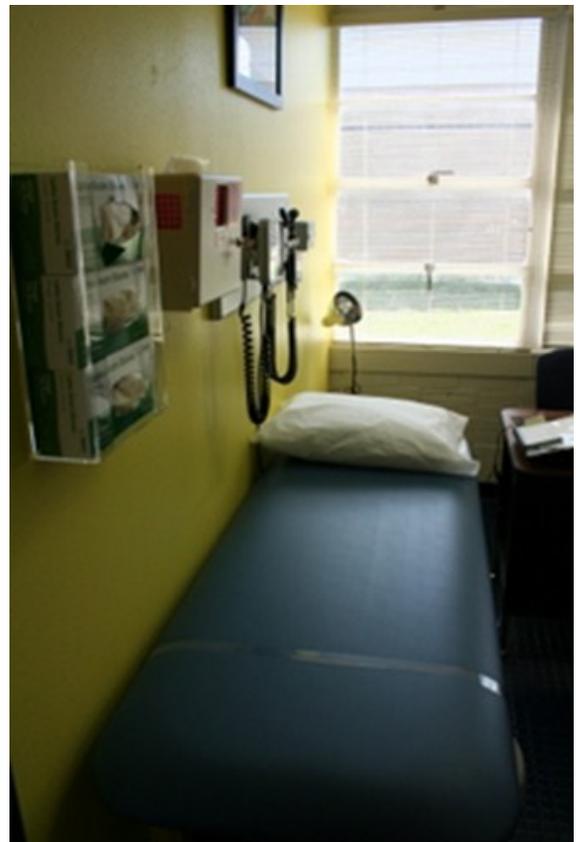
**Submitted by: Elisabeth Wright-Burak,
Director of Health Policy and
Legislative Affairs, Arkansas
Advocates for Children & Families**

Through the Coordinated School Health initiative, dozens of districts have addressed the health of their students in collaborative ways, meeting the unique needs of each community. Afterschool and summer programs are great partners in these efforts to improve student health in these efforts.

Last year, thanks to the increased tobacco tax revenue, the state funded eight new school-based wellness centers take this model to the next level and provide health services on school campuses. The eight new CSH School Wellness Centers are located in the following districts:

- Dollarway (Robert F. Morehead Middle School)
- Fayetteville (The Owl Creek School)
- Gurdon (Gurdon High School)
- Harrison (Eagle Heights Elementary School)
- Lavaca (Lavaca Middle School)
- Lincoln (Lincoln Elementary)
- Paragould (Paragould High School)
- Springdale (Jones Elementary)

More wellness center grants will be announced by the Arkansas Department of Education soon. We encourage afterschool programs to partner with coordinated school health and school wellness center leaders to take advantage of new opportunities and leverage resources. For more information, visit <http://www.arkansascsh.org/>. You may also read a recent report on school health efforts from Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families at <http://www.aradvocates.org/school-based-health-centers-show-promise/>

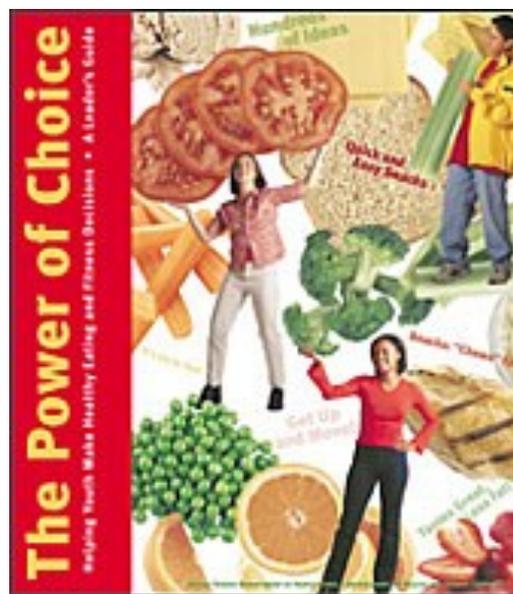


Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Healthy Living Resources for Afterschool Programs



“**Media-Smart Youth: Eat, Think, and Be Active!**” is an interactive afterschool education program for young people ages 11 to 13. It was created by The Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), part of the National Institutes of Health within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to empower young people to think critically about media and make thoughtful decisions about nutrition and physical activity. For more information visit <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/msy/>

“**The Power of Choice**” was developed by HHS' Food and Drug Administration and USDA's Food and Nutrition Service. It is intended for after-school program leaders working with young adolescents. Everything you need to know is in the Leaders' Guide, including most activity materials. It's full of quick, simple things to do with kids; many activities take little or no pre-planning. A CD containing 10 interactive sessions based on six posters is also available. Included in the Leader's Guide are a recipe booklet, parent letter, and Nutrition Facts cards. To access these materials visit http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/power_of_choice.html

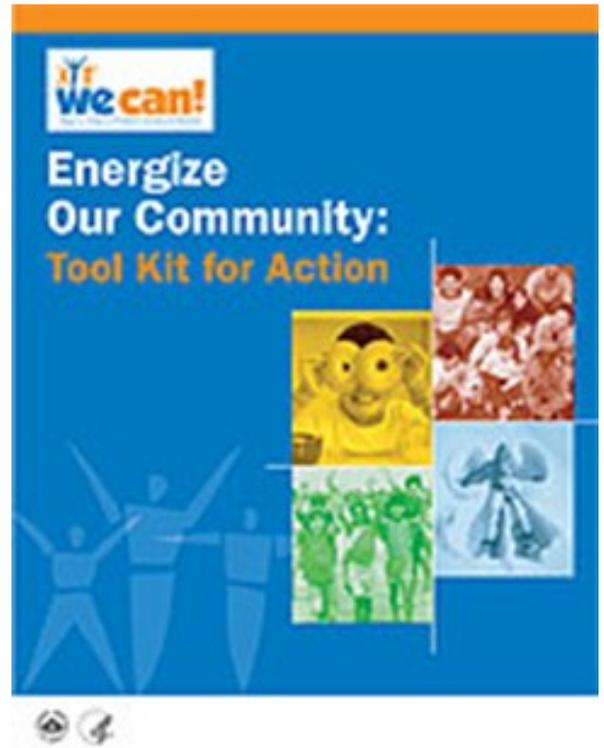


PBS Teacher Source: Health and Fitness Lessons and Activities for Kids Ages 5-18

FREE Lesson plans and online activities found on PBS Online with original activities and professional development opportunities . For more information visit <http://www.pbs.org/teachers>

We Can! (Ways to Enhance Children Activity and Nutrition) - Energize Our Community: Toolkit for Action

This toolkit gives community planners a one-stop shop of planning tools, reproducible materials, and curricula with dynamic activities for parents to encourage a healthy weight in their family. The toolkit offers a 6-course curricula for parents on energy balance, nutrition activities to increase access and availability of healthy foods, increase physical activity, and reduce screen time. Community groups, health departments, park and recreation agencies can conduct local outreach and programming for parents, youth, and the community at large with the helpful tip sheets and assessment tools for working with local media, partners, and conducting community events to support the We Can! program.



Kidnetic

This interactive website features healthy recipes, fun games, information about how your body works and information for parents

<http://www.kidnetic.com/>

Run for Good Grants—Saucony Run for Good Foundation

The Saucony Run For Good Foundation has been created to help reverse the alarming trend in childhood obesity. As a company by runners, and for runners, Saucony understands the benefits of running extend way beyond strong legs and healthy hearts; research shows running can also help children do better in school, manage stress, and reduce childhood obesity. The Saucony Run For Good Foundation, a grant program to encourage active and healthy lifestyles in children, is now accepting applications.

Award Amount: \$10,000

Deadline: December 13, 2011

For more information visit <http://www.sauconyrunforgood.com/>

Finish Line Youth Foundation Grants—The Finish Line Youth Foundation

The Finish Line Youth Foundation supports youth programs that are effective and inclusive, funding opportunities for participation in youth programs that place an importance on youth development and an active lifestyle. Grants generally range from \$1,000 to \$5,000, although the Foundation may occasionally make significant, larger grants to maximize funding impact in its interest areas. Applications will be accepted on a quarterly basis.

Award Amount: \$1,000 - \$5,000

Deadline: Rolling

For more information visit : <http://www.finishline.com/store/youthfoundation/guidelines.jsp>

Champ - A Champion Fur Kids Grant - Build-A-Bear Workshop

The Build-A-Bear Workshop Bear Hugs Foundation provides direct support for children in the areas of health and wellness. The Foundation's goal is to provide grants to help many programs that are working hard to make the world a healthier and happier place for kids. For 2011, children's health and wellness grant applications will be accepted March to October and will be reviewed on a rolling basis. For more information visit: <http://www.buildabear.com/shopping/contents/content.jsp?catId=400002&id=700010>

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Giving Tree Grants - Arkansas Community Foundation

Through the signature Giving Tree Grant Program, Arkansas Community Foundation supports a broad range of projects with the potential for statewide impact and programs serving immediate local needs. Any 501c3 public charity, public school, hospital or government agency in the counties where they are making grants is eligible to apply. Typically grants are in the \$500 to \$5,000 range. Some statewide grants from the ARCF central office may approach \$10,000. Check the Foundation website for current opportunities.

Award Amount: \$500-\$5,000

Deadline: August 15, 2011

For more information visit:

<http://www.arcf.org/Grants/GrantProcessGuidelines/GivingTreeGrants/tabid/195/Default.aspx>

Walmart Store and Sam's Club Giving Program - The Wal-Mart Foundation

The Wal-Mart Foundation supports programs and initiatives addressing education, workforce development, economic sustainability, and health and wellness. For health and wellness in particular, the Foundation looks to improve access to healthcare, promote healthy lifestyles and behaviors, and reduce disparities. Organizations that meet the eligibility requirements for these programs can request an application at their local Wal-Mart Store or Sam's Club.

Award Amount: \$1,000 - \$5,000

Deadline: Rolling

For more information visit: <http://walmartstores.com/CommunityGiving/8916.aspx>



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The Baseball Tomorrow Fund - Major League Baseball

The Baseball Tomorrow Fund is a joint initiative between Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association designed to promote and enhance the growth of youth participation in baseball and softball. Grants are intended to finance a new program, expand or improve an existing program, undertake a new collaborative effort, or obtain facilities or equipment necessary for youth baseball or softball programs.

Award Amount: \$39,000 Average

Deadline: Rolling (Letter of Inquiry Required)

For more information visit: http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/official_info/community/btf.jsp

Youth Football Fund Grants - NFL Players, Clubs and Coaches

Formal YFF grant programs exist as an important grassroots youth football development strategy. Each program includes its own set of eligibility criteria and requirements. In many cases, these programs focus on NFL clubs and current and former NFL players to help advance and support youth and high school football initiatives nationwide. Please visit the website to read about each of these different grant programs: NFL Players, NFL Clubs, NFL Coaches, Fields & Equipment, Educational/Health & Safety, and USA Football.

Award Amount: Award amounts vary

Deadline: Please check funder website for current deadlines for each grant program.

For more information visit: <https://www.nflyff.org/pages/grant-programs/>

Lowes Toolbox for Education - Lowes Charitable and Educational Foundation

Lowes Charitable and Educational Foundation knows how hard you work for your kids and your community and we're dedicated to helping your parent-teacher group achieve even more for your school. Apply for our Toolbox for Education Grant now and build on your already impressive parent group success with Lowes. The Fall 2011 grant cycle will open mid-July and close October 14, 2011.

Award Amount: \$5,000; Deadline: October 14, 2011

For more information visit: <http://www.toolboxforeducation.com/>

Launched in the summer of 2010, the Arkansas Youth Development Institute is a collection of online professional development offerings designed with the afterschool educator in mind. The institute is designed to provide free, easily accessible, and quality trainings on the core knowledge needed when working with children and youth. Each course takes approximately one to 2 hours to complete and participants can pick and choose which classes they want to take in whatever order that best helps them meet their professional goals. One YDI course, Health and Academic Achievement, specifically addresses the topics covered in this special edition, and would be a valuable addition to anyone wanting to delve deeper into understanding the connection between health and academic achievement.

The Health and Academic Achievement course is designed so that students will:

- Understand health issues impacting youth;

- Understand academic issues impacting youth;
- Understand the link between health and academic achievement; and
- Understand how youth-serving organizations can impact the health of youth.

All Arkansas YDI Courses are registered with the TAPP Registry and electronic certificates of completion are sent to students who complete all course requirements.

To register for an Arkansas YDI course visit www.aosn.org and click on the “Youth Development Institute” tab.

We thank you for considering including the Arkansas Youth Development Institute as part of your professional development plan!

