

ARIZONA Healthy Youth

TEACHERS · PARENTS · ADMINISTRATORS · COMMUNITY MEMBERS · ARIZONA



Be part of a School Health Advisory Council in your community today!

Become a part of a
SCHOOL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL
at your community's school

TEACHERS

Help Students Learn Better

PRINCIPALS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Improve Your School's Performance

PARENTS

Support Your Child's Health and Education

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Improve Your Community's Health

ARIZONA

Invest in the Future of Arizona and
the Health of Arizona's Children

"Schools by themselves cannot solve the nation's most serious health and social problems. However, schools have a critical role to play in partnership with community agencies and organizations to improve the health and well being of young people. ...[A School Health Advisory Council] brings together school administrators, teachers, other staff, students, families, and community members to assess health needs; set priorities; and plan, implement, and evaluate school health activities."

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

HOW CAN I HELP TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF ARIZONA'S STUDENTS?

As people become more aware of and concerned about the health problems of children and youth, they naturally turn to their schools for solutions. However, the most troubling problems cannot be solved by schools alone. Experience has shown that when schools involve parents and other partners from the community, the responsibility is shared and many difficult problems can be successfully addressed.

This booklet is designed as a short guide to help you become more involved in your schools and communities.

TO GET STARTED:

1. Watch the "Arizona Champions for Change: School Health Advisory Councils" video.
2. Review the contents of this guide.
3. Schedule time to talk with your school's principal or superintendent and show the video. Talk about the benefits of a School Health Advisory Council and the connection between health and academics; provide handouts (located on the Tools and Resources disk).
4. Talk to parents, teachers and other school and community members about starting a SHAC; recruit members.
5. Have a meeting and get started!



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

- Margaret Mead

WHY IS HEALTH IMPORTANT FOR ARIZONA SCHOOLS?

The academic success of Arizona's youth is strongly linked with their health. Active, happy, healthy and well-nourished youth are more likely to attend school, be engaged and ready to learn. Yet, an overwhelming number of students come to school with numerous health problems.

Issues such as hunger, physical and emotional abuse, and chronic disease can lead to poor school performance. Health-risk behaviors such as substance use, violence, and physical inactivity are consistently linked to academic failure and often affect students' school attendance, grades, test scores, and ability to pay attention in class. In turn, academic success is related to the overall well being of youth and can impact their health as adults.

ARIZONA STUDENTS NEED YOUR HELP!

- Arizona has the 15th highest childhood obesity rate in the nation. Nearly one-third of students are overweight or obese.
- More than 70% of Arizona's children do not get 20 minutes of daily physical activity.
- Arizona has the sixth highest rate of teenage births in the nation.
- Suicide is the third leading cause of death for adolescents in Arizona.
- Nearly one in four of Arizona's youth do not have enough to eat due to lack of money and other resources.

School Health Advisory Councils are a way to help turn these numbers around and help schools and communities improve the health and boost the future success of Arizona's children.

WHAT IS A SHAC?

A School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), sometimes called a “School Health Team” or “Wellness Council,” is a group of individuals who represent both the school and the community. This group acts collectively to provide advice on aspects of the school health policies and programs. SHACs can advise a local education agency (district) or an individual school site (elementary, middle, or high school).

WHAT DOES A SHAC DO?

A SHAC can have a variety of roles, depending on how it is used by the school or school district. Members of a SHAC work together to give advice and support to all parts of school health programs and policies. This includes addressing the eight components of coordinated school health that include:

- health education
- physical education
- health services
- mental health and social services
- nutrition services
- healthy and safe environment
- family and community involvement
- staff wellness



WHO SHOULD BE ON A SHAC?

Your SHAC members should be representative of your community. Membership should be as broad and diverse as possible and include students and parents.

HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE IN A SHAC?

- First, find out if your school already has a School Health Advisory Council or other health-focused work group. If so, contact one of the group members and attend a meeting.
- If your school does not have a SHAC or other school health work group, you can start one. Here are some ideas to get started:
 1. Get administrative support: Encourage your district superintendent or school principal to create a School Health Advisory Council.
 2. Identify a coordinator for the council: The coordinator may be school staff appointed by the administrator or a community member (it could be you). It can also be a shared role.
 3. Recruit and invite members.
 4. Plan and conduct a meeting.

More information and tools to help you with this process are located on the Tools and Resources disk.

“Schools should take action to promote a healthy environment for their students, faculty and staff. One way to do this is to create a school health advisory council to assess the school’s health status, make relevant policy recommendations and keep tabs on health-related issues. The council should include students, parents, teachers, administrators, other school staff and community representatives.”

- Let’s Move!

SCHOOL HEALTH INDEX

One of the first steps for your SHAC will be to assess your school's health-related policies and programs. The School Health Index (SHI) is a self-assessment and planning tool that will allow your SHAC to discover what your school is already doing to support student health and to identify areas of improvement.

After you complete the self-assessment process, you will be asked to identify recommended actions your school can take to improve its performance in areas that received low scores. You will then be guided through a simple process for prioritizing the various recommendations.

You can either complete the SHI online at www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/shi or download copies from the Tools and Resources disk.



LOCAL WELLNESS POLICY

One way to make improvements to your school and ensure a commitment to student health is to be part of the process to create a new policy or revise an existing policy.

You will want to review and discuss your school's local wellness policy. Local wellness policies give schools the opportunity to support and meet the specific needs of their students and community.

To meet the federal requirements of the local wellness policy, school districts must set goals for:

- nutrition education
- physical activity
- campus food provision
- other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness

They must also include the following stakeholders to be part of the process:

- parents
- students
- school food representatives
- school board
- school administrators
- the public



ARE YOU READY?

Are you ready to start a School Health Advisory Council at your community's school?

The booklet and its contents will help you work with others to improve school health and academics to support healthy, happy, active and well-nourished youth.

DISK CONTENTS

1. Arizona Champions for Change: School Health Advisory Council Video DVD

This short video will demonstrate the benefits of School Health Advisory Councils – two versions:

- 4:17 minute full video
- 1:01 trailer

2. Tools and Resources for School Health Advisory Councils Disk

- Promoting Healthy Youth, Schools, and Communities:
A Guide to Community-School Health Councils
- sample meeting agendas, worksheets and planning guides
- fact sheets and other information to make your case
- and more

Use the SHAC DVD and this booklet at your next school board meeting, PTA or PTO meeting, parent-teacher nights, family nights, in-service days, student council meetings, staff meetings, community events and more. Inspire others in your school and community to participate in a School Health Advisory Council and be part of the movement to make healthy schools a priority. Healthy students learn better!

REFERENCES

National Survey For Children's Health

Centers For Disease Control And Prevention

American Cancer Society



www.azdhs.gov



www.ade.az.gov



www.healthologyaz.com

Arizona Department of Health Services

Bureau of Nutrition and Physical Activity

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Whether you are a parent, teacher, principal, community organization, student, business, health professional or community member, you can play an integral part in improving the health of your community's children by participating in a School Health Advisory Council.

THIS BOOKLET WILL SHOW YOU HOW!

Included in this booklet are two disks that will educate you about a School Health Advisory Council (SHAC). One disk is a DVD with a four-minute video briefly explaining, and getting viewers excited about implementing a SHAC. The other disk has reference material including the full SHAC guide, fact sheets, and other school health resources.



www.azdhs.gov



www.ade.az.gov



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