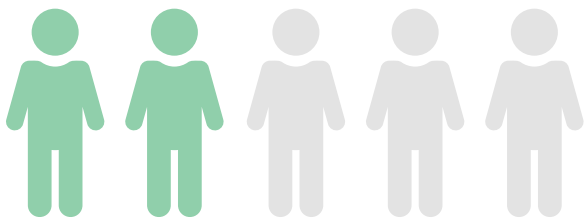


Healthy Palmetto has chosen to prioritize physical activity in schools as one of six priority areas on which to focus our statewide efforts. As the state coalition that collectively addresses healthy eating and active living, Healthy Palmetto is working to unify and mobilize efforts to create equitable opportunities for all South Carolinians to achieve better health.

## OUR PRIORITY

We support the SC FitnessGram initiative and its partners to improve student health by enhancing physical education and creating more opportunities for physical activity before, during, and after school.

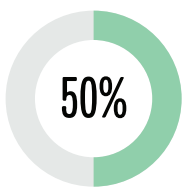
## WHY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN SCHOOLS?



Two of five public school students in South Carolina are overweight or obese.<sup>1</sup>



Annually, the U.S. spends **\$117 billion** in costs related to low physical activity.<sup>2</sup>



**Over 50% of SC students are not meeting minimum standards for heart and lung health.**<sup>1</sup>

The benefits of being physically active include improving concentration and learning, building confidence and social skills, strengthening muscles and bones, maintaining healthy weight, improving cardiorespiratory fitness, boosting immunity, and improving your mental wellbeing. Plus, getting enough physical activity could prevent 1 in 10 premature deaths.

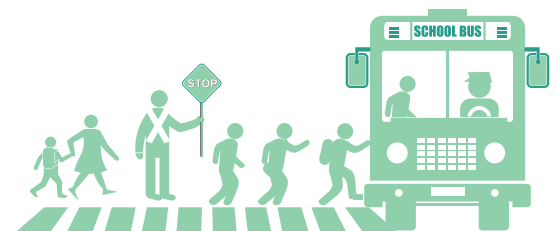
## SC FITNESSGRAM INITIATIVE

SC FitnessGram is a statewide initiative to evaluate and ultimately improve fitness among public school students in South Carolina.

The initiative is working with school districts to implement evidence-based practices to increase the time for and intensity of physical activity, improve the quality of physical education, and develop a culture of health and fitness within schools.

Over 1,000 schools from 90% of South Carolina's school districts are participating in SC FitnessGram, supporting students' health from head to heart by using data and proven practices to increase physical activity.

The initiative collects and analyzes the data of six health-related fitness components administered by physical education teachers to students in grades 5, 8, and high school, and height and weight only in grade 2.



<sup>1</sup>SC Department of Education

<sup>2</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



# HOW CAN YOU HELP?

School district administrators, principals, and educators, you can prioritize student fitness by using state- and local-level data to make decisions that lead to enhanced physical education and increased opportunities for physical activity before, during, and after school. Use data and proven practices to:

- implement a [local wellness policy](#),
- adopt [Open Community Use of School Recreational Areas policy](#) that allows free community access to schools' outdoor recreational facilities during non-school hours,
- include in strategic plans/school improvement plans,
- provide physical activity resources (equipment/professional development) for ALL teachers (not just PE),
- advocate for student fitness and physical education, and
- create a culture of health and wellness.



## Did you know?

*Children today are expected to die five years younger than their parents due to their increased risk of early onset diabetes and hypertension—the first generation to die younger than their parents.*

## OTHER WAYS TO HELP



Take advantage of the **open community use policies** of local school districts by utilizing your neighborhood school's outdoor recreation facilities. Many school districts across South Carolina provide community members with access to safe, convenient, and free places for physical activity.



If your school district hasn't adopted the SC School Board Association's model of Open Community Use of School Recreational Areas policy, **contact your superintendent** and encourage them to do so.



Do you work at the state level? **Use state-level data**, such as cardiorespiratory fitness and weight status, for action planning, strategic planning, decision making, and advocating to prioritize physical activity.



Are you a community health coalition that prioritizes physical activity? **Work with your school district's wellness committee** to support student health. Communities can also create or enhance and promote safe places for physical activity.



Do you make decisions about physical activity opportunities in your community? **Connect with your school district** to create more opportunities for safe physical activity before and after school.

## CONTACT US

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