



Health Is Academic

OFFICE OF HEALTHY SCHOOLS
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Coordinated School Health Office of Child Nutrition
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Safe, Fit, Healthy, & Ready to Succeed

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Healthy & Safe School Environments

Providing Mississippi's children with a safe, healthy and inviting learning environment is one of the top priorities for the Mississippi Department of Education. In recent years, legislation has been approved offering healthier and more nutritious foods in our schools as well as physical education requirements to ensure that students receive the proper amount of activity in their school day. Building on the goal to make students healthier is the need for students to be safe. Federal and state legislation enacted through Gun Free School Act of 1994 and the Mississippi School Safety Act of 2001, which promotes a safe learning environment. Research shows that academic performance is impacted positively if students are safer, healthier, more physically-fit. We have made great strides in improving student learning. One of these keys to success is safe and healthy school environments.

A Healthy School Environment doesn't only apply to the buildings where classes are taught. It is the surrounding grounds and security measures as well. To ensure a healthy school environment, certain issues should be addressed including air quality, noise, and physical and biological agents. There must be a buy-in at all levels of the district, as well as a community-bridging administration and teachers with the support of parents to impact student learning and academic success.



A concern in many districts is air quality and the number of students diagnosed with asthma. Hindrances of asthma have steadily increased epidemic levels in children with missed days of classroom instruction and limited physical activity. The Centers for Disease Control has identified 6 strategies that are part of the Healthy School Environment's **8 Components of a Coordinated School Health Program**. To review these 6 strategies as well as other information to improve your schools physical environment visit the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/Asthma/strategies.htm>.

Improving a student's learning environment directly impacts academic success. The Mississippi Department of Education's Office of Healthy Schools continues to support school districts as we strive to ensure that students are safe, fit, healthy, and ready to succeed.



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Tooth Decay Did you Know!



Tooth decay is a disease that causes an estimated loss of 51 million school hours per year. Fluoride is a naturally-occurring mineral found in almost all water that binds to tooth enamel, making it harder for acids to cause tooth decay.

Many communities in Mississippi have inadequate amounts of fluoride in their drinking water but a weekly fluoride mouth rinse can help prevent tooth decay in those areas.

The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) is offering a free fluoride mouth rinse program for children in grades one through five. In 2006, an estimated 24,099 children received this benefit. Today, over 154 schools in Mississippi are participating in the program. We thank you for your support in the effort to fight dental disease. To find out if your school qualifies or to download program forms (NEW forms are now available), contact MSDH Office of Oral Health at 601-576-7500 or visit us on the web at www.HealthyMS.com/dental. These forms are also available on the OHS website www.healthyschoolsms.org

State Data Resource Website

In early spring of this year Mississippi school districts completed their annual online SmartTrack Survey. SmartTrack, a web-based assessment survey administered to 6 to 11 graders provides data on various issues related to student risk behavior. The 2007 School Year Data is now available to participating districts and will be accessible through the *Snapshots* website.

Snapshots, www.snapshots.ms.gov, an online warehouse of state and national data, is supported through a collaborative effort with the Office of Healthy Schools, USDOE and the Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH). The data covers a variety of factors that contribute to the overall school discipline environment.

Later this year, DMH is planning to award 15 grants in award amounts up to \$100,000.00. DMH Certified Prevention Programs are eligible to apply. The focus of the grant will be to combat under-aged drinking in 11-to 21-year-olds in high risk areas of the state.

For more information, contact Catherine Claiborne at MDMH 601-359-1288 and to view the 2007 School Year Smarttrack data visit the OHS website www.Healthyschoolsms.org/health_education/mpdip.htm



Mississippi's Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program is in full swing! Mississippi is one of the first states to operate the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP). Twenty-five schools in the state received funds to promote the consumption of fresh or dried fruit and fresh vegetables to students. These twenty-five schools served a combined total of approximately 13,000 elementary, middle and high school students. The program has successfully exposed these students to not only familiar fruits and vegetables such as apples, oranges, raw broccoli, and carrot/celery sticks, but it has also introduced them to new and exotic fruits and vegetables such as green pea pods, ugli fruit, star fruit, etc. Nutrition education materials are provided and used in the classroom with lesson plans and activities to reinforce the learning process. Through this exposure, it has been reported that students ask parents to buy more fruits and vegetables to consume at home. Now that's progress!

Decide to Succeed: An Orientation for New Managers is scheduled for June 16-20, at Madison Central High School in Madison, MS. This a required manager certification course designed to provide an overview of Child Nutrition Programs for new school foodservice managers employed with the school districts. Registration information has been mailed to all the districts. For further information, call the Division of Training at 601-354-7016.

The State Conference for Public School Foodservice Organizations will be held July 7-9, at Hinds Community College-Rankin Campus, in Pearl, MS. The conference is for school foodservice administrators who operate Child Nutrition Programs across the state, providing updates on program changes, as well as discuss current issues and trends for the upcoming school year. Provision II & III schools and their districts will attend the July 7 session while all program participants will attend the July 8-9 general sessions. Registration information for this conference has been mailed to all districts. For further information, contact the Division of Training at 601-354-7016.



Asthma

is one of the top priorities for the OHS because one in eight children in Mississippi has the chronic disease, and it is the number one reason for school absenteeism.

Asthma is a common childhood disease that causes the airways of the lungs to tighten and swell. Symptoms include shortness of breath, wheezing, coughing and chest tightness. Though there is no cure for asthma, it can be controlled through proper medications and management techniques.

There are 10 ways to manage asthma in the school environment:

- Provide school-based asthma education programs.
- Obtain a student asthma action plan.
- Develop an asthma management plan in your school (include school policies on inhaler and other medication usage, and emergency procedures for school).
- Eliminate secondhand smoke exposure.
- Clean up mold and control moisture (fix moisture problems and thoroughly dry wet areas within 24 to 48 hours to prevent mold growth and clean up hard, moldy surfaces with water and detergent, then dry thoroughly).
- Control cockroach allergens (use integrated pest management practices).
- Control animal allergens (remove all animals from the school, if possible. If not possible, locate animals away from sensitive students and ventilation systems).
- Reduce dust mite exposure (make sure the school is dusted and vacuumed thoroughly and regularly).

The Lung Association also offers a variety of asthma programs and services for students, coaches and staff. For more information about asthma or asthma programs, contact the American Lung Association of Mississippi at 601-206-5810 or visit www.alams.org.

“Health In Action” Set to Go Live!

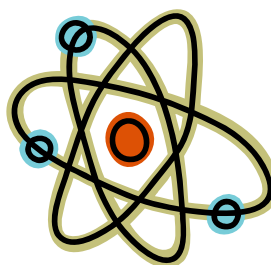
Teachers across the state will soon have a new resource for health education and physical education/activity-based lesson plans when the Health In Action website goes live! After many hours of writing, editing, and field testing, the Health In Action resource will be available June 2.

Health In Action is a collection of web-based lesson plans written by highly qualified educators from across the state. The lesson plans are linked to web-based resources, classroom materials and videos that any teacher can use. These plans can be implemented in the classroom, gym or on the school playground and are grade level appropriate for K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12 grades.

The lesson plans are based on State and National standards for health and physical education and provide opportunities to link health and physical education with core academic subjects. Many of the plans are activity-based to get students engaged in learning that is fun!

The need for Health In Action came about when the Mississippi Healthy Students Act was passed in Spring 2007. This legislation requires 45 minutes of Health Education and 150 minutes of physical education/activity-based instruction for grades K-8 per week as well as ½ Carnegie Unit requirement of physical education for high school graduation. Health in Action will assist teachers, schools and districts in implementing requirements in the Mississippi Healthy Students Act and will provide a way to assist schools to have quality health and physical education programs.

Visit the Healthy Schools website www.healthyschools.ms.org for more information.



Energy Independence Security Act of 2007

With continued focus on the environment and renewable resources, the U.S. Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 has passed new goals for healthy, high-performing schools. This Act authorized the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop model guidelines for environmental health in schools. Additionally, the Act recommends the use of the EPA's *Tools for Schools IAQ* and *HealthySEAT* programs to address these issues. Information about these programs can be accessed at www.epa.gov/schools/healthyseat/index.html as well as www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/toolkit.html. In fall 2005, the Office of Safe and Orderly Schools - Division of School Buildings collaborated with the Education Design Institute at Mississippi State University to develop design guidelines for healthy, high-performing schools. The outcome was the *Mississippi School Design Guidelines*, accessible on the web at www.edi.msstate.edu/MSDGL/guidelines.php. The guidelines contain information at ensuring safe and environmentally healthy K-12 school facilities to foster a positive learning atmosphere.



The 2008 Simplified Summer Feeding Program (SSFP)

will begin when school ends. This program provides free meals to children during the summer months (May-August) at eligible sites. Please encourage children in your district to take advantage of the opportunity to obtain a nourishing meal in their community. For further information, please contact the Office of Child Nutrition, Division of Technical Assistance at 601-354-7014.

Success Stories Nutrition Integrity Grant

“There is lots of happiness here in the NO FRY ZONE at W. L. Smith Elementary. We have had the opportunity to experiment with our new toy, the Alto Sham Combi Oven. We have served fried chicken (not fried but the kids thought it was).”
Peggy James – Petal School District

Road to Life - Cancer Prevention for Kids Resource

Looking for a fresh, new resource for teaching elementary students about cancer? Road to Life –



Cancer Prevention for Kids may be just what you need. This free and easy-to-use elementary health education resource is geared towards 3rd – 5th graders and can be found at <http://www.roadoflife.org>. The goal of this program is to eradicate preventable cancers and diseases of excess by educating children about fitness, nutrition and tobacco-use decisions they can make to lead to healthier lives.

This classroom resource consists of 31 expert-reviewed lesson plans that focus on general health, nutrition, physical activity and tobacco prevention. The resource can be integrated into core academic subject areas (math, English language arts, social studies and science) and is aligned with National Health Education Standards for grades 3-5.

In addition to Classroom Program, Road to Life - Cancer Prevention for Kids, also has a Camp Program, an after-school program, a family program and a professional development series available for teachers, community and church groups.

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