Getting Their Game On: How Schools are Creating Impactful School Wellness Programs

October 13, 2017
Amy Moyer, RD, MPH
Vice President, Field Operations
Who Are We?

AFHK’s vision is a world in which every kid is healthy, active and ready to learn.
Agenda

• Welcome and Introductions
• The Learning Connection
• Introduction to Game On
  • Step 1: Gather Your Team
  • Step 2: Assess & Track Progress
  • Step 3: Create & Implement an Action Plan
  • Step 4: Find Eat Better & Move More Activities
  • Step 5: Engage Families & Community
  • Step 6: Receive Recognition
• A Case Study of Local School Wellness Policy Implementation using Game On
Undernourished children tend to have low energy, are often irritable, and have difficulty concentrating.

*Action for Healthy Kids, “The Role of Sound Nutrition and Physical Activity in Academic Achievement”*
The Learning Connection

Physical Activity Turns on the Brain

After 20 minutes of
Sitting Quietly

After 20 minutes of
Walking

Research/scan compliments of Dr. Chuck Hillman, University of Illinois
What is Game On?

Game On supports America’s schools, their staff, students, and families to incorporate healthy food choices and physical activity into their daily lives and school environment, with the ultimate goal of getting nationally recognized as a health-promoting school.
Game On

Step 1: Gather Your Team

Step 2: Assess & Track Progress

Step 3: Create & Implement an Action Plan

Step 4: Find Activities

Step 5: Engage Families & Community

Step 6: Receive Recognition

Learn • Act • Transform
Where is your School in the Game On Framework?

a. Step 1 – We are building our school health team
b. Step 2 – We have a team and have completed an assessment
c. Step 3/4 – We have a team, completed an assessment and are implementing an action plan
d. Step 5 – We’ve done the above and parents/community are actively engaged on our team and in initiatives
e. Step 6 – We’ve done the above and we are meeting most school wellness best practices. We are ready to get recognized, or we have already been recognized.
f. I have no idea 😊
Game On and the WSCC Model
Accessing Game On

- Navigate to [www.actionforhealthykids.org](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org)
- Click on the Tools for Schools tab
- Click on Game On Program
- Or, go directly to [www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on)
Steps of Game On

• **Step 1:** Gather Your Team
• **Step 2:** Assess & Track Progress
• **Step 3:** Create & Implement an Action Plan
• **Step 4:** Find Activities
• **Step 5:** Engage Families & Community
• **Step 6:** Receive Recognition
What Does Your School Health Team Look Like?

a. My school doesn’t have a team
b. My school has a team on paper, but we don’t meet
c. My school has a team and we meet 1-3 times per year
d. My school has a team and we meet 4 or more times per year
What Does Your School Health Team Look Like?

During the 2016-17 school year:

- 43% of schools met at least 4 times per year
- 85% of schools had an administrator on their school health team
Resistance

Why do people resist change?
Resisting Resistance

- Don’t know enough
- Not a clear case
- Not the right message
- Poor communication
- “It’s not worth my time”
- Fear of failure
- Fear of regret
- Not aligned with culture
- Lack of trust
- Inadequate resources
- Fundamentally disagree

Building Support:

- Build strong relationships
- Communicate + and – aspects of change
- Gather data
- Develop plans
- Create a shared vision
- Maintain high expectations
Step 1: Gather Your Team

How can Game On: Step 1 help?

- Steps to building a strong School Health Team
- AFHK Wellness Policy Tool
- Strategies to make the case for school wellness
- Tips for recruiting team members, including suggested roles for each team member
- Tips for hosting effective meetings and developing a clear vision
Steps of Game On

- **Step 1**: Gather Your Team
- **Step 2**: Assess & Track Progress
- **Step 3**: Create & Implement an Action Plan
- **Step 4**: Find Activities
- **Step 5**: Engage Families & Community
- **Step 6**: Receive Recognition
School Health Index (SHI)

Also a great tool to assess the implementation of your district’s wellness policy!
School Health Index (SHI)

Conduct your wellness assessment annually so you can measure your progress over time.
School Health Index (SHI)

During the 2016-17 school year:

• Total average score: 76%
• Most schools were:
  • Implementing recess (75%)
  • Meeting school nutrition standards for Smart Snacks (73%)
  • Communicating with families about health and wellness initiatives (72%)
School Health Index (SHI)

During the 2016-17 school year:

• Most schools did not:
  • Implement farm-to-school activities (23%)
  • Implement individual physical activity and fitness plans for students (26%)
  • Promote walking and biking to school (29%)
Step 2: Assess & Track Progress

How can Game On: Step 2 help?

• Outlines why it’s helpful to complete an assessment
• Links to AFHK’s School Portal, where you can complete AFHK’s modified School Health Index
• Provides a step-by-step guide for how to complete the AFHK’s online School Health Index
Step 2: Assess & Track Progress

When you complete AFHK’s School Health Index, you get reports summarizing your results.
Step 2: Assess & Track Progress
## Step 3: Create & Implement an Action Plan

### MARY LYON SCHOOL - ACTION PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>End Date</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Measure of Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Host Annual Health Fair</td>
<td>04/10/2017</td>
<td></td>
<td>Health fair listed on school calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement procedures to ensure that physical activity is not withheld or used as punishment.</td>
<td>05/31/2016</td>
<td></td>
<td>Policy language and implementation plan for withholding or used as punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate wellness efforts to multiple audiences (e.g. students, parents, community members).</td>
<td>05/31/2016</td>
<td></td>
<td>Copies of communications to students, parents and community members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Add a custom action] [Share/Complete All Actions] [Add Pending Actions]
Step 3: Create & Implement an Action Plan

How can Game On: Step 3 help?

• Outlines why it’s helpful to complete an action plan
• Provides steps for how to customize your online action plan (in AFHK’s school portal)
• Links to a list of National Health Observances to help you plan activities/initiatives around key national initiatives
Steps of Game On

• **Step 1:** Gather Your Team
• **Step 2:** Assess & Track Progress
• **Step 3:** Create & Implement an Action Plan
• **Step 4:** Find Activities
• **Step 5:** Engage Families & Community
• **Step 6:** Receive Recognition
Step 4: Find Activities

• Provides more than 80 Eat Better and Move More activity ideas!
• Organize by school room for easy searching
• Activities include:
  • Overview
  • Take Action
  • Tips
  • Engaging Volunteers
  • Additional Resources
Eat Better Activity Examples

Healthy & Active Parties
Healthy Fundraising
Family Fun Days
Breakfast in the Classroom
Nutrition Promotion
Nutrition Education
Host a Taste Test
Offer Healthy Snacks
Healthy & Active Non-Food Rewards
Second Chance Breakfast
Morning Eat Better Announcements
Smart Snacks Standards
School Garden
Grab n Go Breakfast
Health & Wellness Fair

Step 4: Find Activities - http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges
Move More Activity Examples

- Playground Circuit Challenges
- Recess Before Lunch
- Activity Clubs
- Recess at Home
- Brain Breaks, Instant Recess & Energizers
- Outdoor Active Recess
- Active Learning Opportunities
- Fitness Classes
- Active Indoor Recess
- Songs & Stories with Movement
- Walking School Bus
- Bike Racks
- Get Your Groove On
- Walking Programs
- Open Gym

Step 4: Find Activities - [http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges)
Ideas for Action

- Healthy Fundraisers
- Offer Healthy Snacks
- Smart Snacks Standards
- Nutrition Education & Promotion
- Healthy & Active Parties (and events)
- Healthy & Active Non-Food Rewards
- Classroom Energizers
- Active Recess
- Before and After-School Clubs
- Walk and Bike-to-School Programs
- Healthy & Active Celebrations, Fundraisers and Family Events
Steps of Game On

• **Step 1:** Gather Your Team
• **Step 2:** Assess & Track Progress
• **Step 3:** Create & Implement an Action Plan
• **Step 4:** Find Activities
• **Step 5:** Engage Families & Community
• **Step 6:** Receive Recognition
Engaging Volunteers

• Where do you currently use volunteers?
• What can volunteers do for you? What value can they bring?
• Why do you think people volunteer?

“Volunteers are partners working together for improving America’s future.”
- Richard Daley
Step 5: Engage Families and Community

How can Game On: Step 5 help?

- Strategies for engaging parents in school wellness initiatives, including Parents for Healthy Kids
- Tips for engaging community organizations and members
- Resources to host an Every Kid Healthy Week event

www.ParentsforHealthyKids.org
Steps of Game On

- **Step 1:** Gather Your Team
- **Step 2:** Assess & Track Progress
- **Step 3:** Create & Implement an Action Plan
- **Step 4:** Find Activities
- **Step 5:** Engage Families & Community
- **Step 6:** Receive Recognition
What is HUSSC: SL?

- Voluntary four-year certification initiative recognizing excellence in school nutrition and physical activity
- Consistent with school meal pattern requirements
- 4 award levels
  - Bronze
  - Silver
  - Gold
  - Gold Award of Distinction
Step 6: Receive Recognition

How can Game On: Step 6 help?

- Features national recognition programs, including the HealthierUS School Challenge: Smarter Lunchrooms initiative
- Provides resources including:
  - Sample HUSSC:SL application
  - Tip sheets
  - Mini-webinars
  - Checklists
  - Roles for your School Health Team
Game On Chicago: A Case Study of Local School Wellness Policy Implementation Using Game On
Background

- Data analyzed during 16-17 school year
- 20 schools*
- Goal: Use Game On to implement district wellness policies
  - Local School Wellness Policy
  - Healthy Snack & Beverage Policy
  - Physical Education Policy

*19 schools at end of program
Methods – School Selection

- Overweight/obesity rates
- Free/Reduced percentage
- Absence of health/wellness partners
Methods – Program Implementation

Implement Game On as 3-Year Model

**Year 1: School Wellness Infrastructure**
- Game On: Steps 1-4 (Team, Assess, Action Plan, Activities)

**Year 2: Parent and Community Engagement**
- Continue Game On: Steps 1-4
- Step 5: Engage Families and Community

**Year 3: Sustainable School Wellness Initiatives**
- Continue Game On: Steps 1-5
- Step 6: Receive Recognition
GAME ON ACTION FOR HEALTHY KIDS

Three-Year Model for Success

STEP 1
Gather Your Team
Schools create or expand a dedicated wellness team including at least five members among teachers, administrators, parents, students and/or community members. Team members help to drive the school's wellness initiatives and monitor changes in the environment and impacts on the students.

STEP 2
Assess and Track Progress
Schools complete the AFHK-modified School Health Index to assess their wellness environments and guide the team in determining priorities and developing goals.

STEP 3
Create and Implement an Action Plan
Schools create school-level action plans and utilize them to adapt their districts' (federally-mandated) local school wellness policies into actionable work at the school-building level.

STEP 4
Find Activities
Schools select activities designed to improve school and child health. Areas of focus vary based on each school’s specific needs and include Eat Better and Move More activities and other resources from AFHK.

STEP 5
Engage Families and Community
Schools partner with parents, volunteers and community organizations on school wellness initiatives to promote consistent messages and ensure sustainability. This includes hosting a community wellness celebration during national Every Kid Healthy Week to build awareness for health and wellness at their schools.

STEP 6
Receive Recognition
Schools make progress toward recognition under HUSSCSC — the USDA's HealthierUS School Challenge: Smarter Lunchrooms (or a similarly robust recognition program). No matter where they enter on the wellness continuum, schools should typically be able to achieve an award level within three years of implementing the Game On program.

YEAR 1
Building School Wellness Infrastructure
January 2013—June 2014

YEAR 2
Engaging Parents and Community
September 2014—June 2015

YEAR 3
Sustaining School Wellness Initiatives
September 2015—June 2016

Chicago: Putting Policy into Practice
Success Story

Before
• 60 min PE/week
• Unhealthy celebrations/rewards
• No team/infrastructure

After
• Regular health events
• Dedicated health teacher
• Parent engagement
• Healthy celebrations/rewards policy
• Strong community engagement
• Recognized as Healthy CPS School
Results (Steps 1 – 4)

- Active school health teams increased (16% – 100%) (1)
- 100% of schools completed annual assessment of policy implementation and action plan (2, 3)
- 69 percent of students knew that they should be getting 60 minutes or more of daily physical activity (4)
- The percentage of students who knew MyPlate contained five food groups increased by 215 percent. (4)
Results (Steps 5 – 6)

- School health teams with a parent member increased (32% - 89%) (5)
- 74% of schools became recognized through the HealthierUS School Challenge: Smarter Lunchrooms initiative. (6)
- 74% of schools met all district wellness policy requirements by the end of Year 3 (6)
Indirect Results

Overall, participating schools improved from the 68th to the 78th percentile in reading (compared to district growth to the 72nd percentile) and from the 49th to 56th percentile in math (which mirrored the district’s percentage growth).
Key Learnings

- Game On may be an effective three-year model for school-level policy implementation
- Enlist a diverse school wellness team
- Meet parents where they are
- Engage community partners who are critical
- Help schools overcome barriers to engagement
School Programs ◆ Tools and Resources ◆ Expert Partners
Volunteer Opportunities ◆ School Grants

www.ActionforHealthyKids.org