

KEYSTONE HEALTHY ZONE MAKES SCHOOLS A HEALTHY PLACE

Coalition promotes healthy eating and physical activity across the state

Public Health Problem

- The percentage of overweight youth in Pennsylvania is slightly higher than the national average and childhood overweight is increasing.
- Overweight children have higher rates of type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, bone and joint problems and are more likely to suffer discrimination and low self-esteem.
- Changing school policies related to recess, physical education, after school programs, and meals and snacks helps students achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

Program

- The *Keystone Healthy Zone* Schools Program, supported by Pennsylvania Department of Health, recognizes and rewards schools for making a commitment to healthier food choices and physical activity.
- The free program provides training, resources, technical assistance and mini-grant funding for schools to enable positive change in school policies and the school environment. Action Kits for Change are available to all schools.
- 1133 schools are enrolled & have completed an online assessment of their school.
- The *Keystone* web site gives many examples of specific school activities. At Jeannette McKee Elementary/Middle School, for example, students keep track of their 'walk' across the state on pedometers that track each step walked – in math class they convert steps walked to miles traveled and in social studies class they learn about the state landmarks they'll 'pass' along the way. (Information at: <http://www.panaonline.org/programs/khz/>)

Impact

- Keystone activities help schools meet federally mandated school wellness policy requirements for the 2006 school year.
- Over a single year of the program the number of schools.....
 -creating a School Health Council - *increased 84 percent*.
 -creating policies on foods and beverages - *increased 35 percent*.
 -encouraging students to participate in before-school and after-school physical activity programs - *improved by 30 percent*
 -working to correct hazardous walking conditions within a mile of the school *increased 47 percent*, contributing to safer routes to school.

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