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## PARENT LESSON PLANS: ADVOCATING FOR HEALTHIER SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS



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*A Companion Piece to  
Parents in Action!  
A Guide to Engaging  
Parents in Local  
School Wellness Policy*





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## CALIFORNIA PROJECT LEAN

California Project LEAN (Leaders Encouraging Activity and Nutrition) (CPL), a joint program of the California Department of Public Health and the Public Health Institute, focuses on youth and parent empowerment, policy and environmental change strategies, and community-based solutions. CPL's mission is to increase healthy eating and physical activity to reduce the prevalence of obesity and chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, osteoporosis, and diabetes.

CPL works with state and local physical activity and nutrition leaders and key school and community organizations to conduct programs in communities throughout California. Through an infrastructure of regional coordinators, CPL implements local interventions that increase opportunities for Californians to eat healthfully and be physically active.

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*To purchase or download these lesson plans, contact:*

**California Project LEAN**

**916.552.9907**

**[www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org](http://www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org)**

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## INTRODUCTION

### Who should use these lesson plans?

Stakeholders working with parents in schools, such as:

- School district wellness leads.
- School wellness committee members.
- School district parent involvement coordinators.
- Local community leaders/advocates working to improve childhood physical activity and nutrition environments.
- PTA/PTO leadership.
- Community health workers/promotores de salud.

### Who is the audience for these lesson plans?

- Parents of elementary, middle, and high school students.

### How to use these lessons plans:

These lesson plans complement, and should be used in coordination with, California Project LEAN's toolkit *Parents in Action! Engaging Parents in Local School Wellness Policy (Parents in Action!)*. The lesson plans in this guide can be used as is or be shortened. Parts of each lesson may also be combined to suit your time frame and needs. Facilitators need the *Parents in Action!* toolkit in order to teach these lessons; the parents you are teaching may also

benefit from having copies of the *Parents in Action!* toolkit. If you cannot provide a copy of it to each parent, you may download pages of it from our website ([www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org](http://www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org)) to distribute to parents.

The lesson plans provide a guide for stakeholders who are working with parents. The guide will:

- Educate parents about local school wellness policy.
- Empower parents to become advocates for improved nutrition and physical activity environments in their child's school.

These lesson plans provide background information on the local school wellness policy, the food, beverage, and physical activity environment on school campuses, and the *Parents Taking Action* advocacy process. This information will equip you to work with parents to advocate for the implementation of strong local school wellness policies. The four lessons are a starting point in your advocacy work, and the advocacy process may take time. During the process, you may need to research your problem in detail before taking action, engage new partners, and change your action plan if you are not making progress. Changing the way schools work may be challenging, so remember to celebrate your successes (however small) along the way.





# LESSON I



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Parents and Schools Working  
to Improve Student Health

# Parents and Schools Working to Improve Student Health

## Preparation

Before teaching this class:

- Review the local school wellness policy of the school district you are working with. You will need to refer to the policy to demonstrate what the district says it will do regarding foods and beverages available on campus and physical activity/physical education opportunities for students.
- Make copies of the food and beverage sections of the policy (you may need to summarize these sections to a more simple format for your audience).
- Fill out the meeting schedule.
- Prepare the parent packet.

## Objectives

At the end of this lesson, parents will be able to:

- State the purpose of the local school wellness policy.
- Describe advocacy.
- Describe why parents should advocate for strong local school wellness policies.
- Suggest ways in which they can be involved in the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of local school wellness policies.

## Time

60 - 90 minutes

LESSON 1

# LESSON 1

## Parents and Schools Working to Improve Student Health

### Materials:

1. Name tags and colored markers or pens.
  2. Sign in sheet.
  3. Large flip chart and markers.
  4. Parent packet:
    - ☐ *Parents in Action!* toolkit (optional).
    - ☐ *Foods on Campus Questionnaire* (take-home assignment).\*
    - ☐ Meeting schedule (to be filled out before placing in packet).
    - ☐ Copies of the food and beverage sections of the local school wellness policy (in a simplified version).
- If parents do not have the entire *Parents in Action!* toolkit, they will need copies of the following from it:
- ☐ *What is Policy?* fact sheet (page 37).
  - ☐ *Health and Academics* fact sheet (page 35).
  - ☐ *Parents Taking Action* process (pages 19-25).
5. Extra copies of the *Foods on Campus Questionnaire* for those parents who have more than one child in school (see page 16 in this guide).

**Room Setup:** Individual tables to accommodate 4–5 parents at each.

### Session Overview:

1. Welcome and introductions. (10 minutes)
2. Setting ground rules. (10 minutes)
3. What is the Local School Wellness Policy? (5 minutes)
4. What is advocacy? (5 minutes)
5. Why ask or advocate for improved physical activity and food options in schools? (5 minutes)
6. How can schools support our children's health? (5 minutes)
7. Take a break. (5–10 minutes) OPTIONAL
8. Why is parent involvement in schools important? (5 minutes)
9. Parents Taking Action. (30 minutes)
10. Foods on Campus Questionnaire: Take-home assignment. (1 minute)
11. Conclusion. (1 minute)

\*Download a copy of the *Foods on Campus Questionnaire* from [www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org](http://www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org)



## Activities

### 1. Welcome and Introductions. (10 minutes)

#### Directions:

- Ensure parents have name tags.
- Facilitators should introduce themselves to the group and cover any housekeeping issues.
- Record on the flip chart the reasons parents state they are there or any concerns they have.

**Group Activity:** Partner Introductions; parents will pair up, meet one another and ask one another a few questions; partners will then be asked to introduce one another to the larger group. Parents should take notes.



### 2. Setting Ground Rules. (10 minutes)

#### Directions:

- Record ground rules on flip chart and bring to each meeting. Ensure that everyone is in agreement with the ground rules.



#### Say:

During our meeting today and over the next few weeks, we're going to talk about how parents can get involved in improving the physical activity opportunities and food choices in their children's schools. You will learn about how nutrition and physical activity affect your children's health; the relationship between physical activity, nutrient intake, and student success in school; school policies on these topics; and what parents can do to ensure a healthy school environment. As a group, we'd like to learn more about you and the nutrition and physical activity issues or concerns you have.

#### Say:

Partner with the parent next to you. Ask one another the following questions - one partner will listen and take notes while the other parent speaks, then you will switch roles:

What is your name?

How many children do you have and what grade are they in?

What is one reason you are here today and/or name one concern you have at your child's school that has to do with foods or physical activity.

#### Say:

Before we get started, let's talk about some ground rules—or meeting agreements—that will help our meetings run smoothly and be pleasant for everyone.

#### Questions:

Take a moment to think about the best and worst meetings you have attended.

- What made the good meetings work? What meeting rules could have made the bad meeting a more useful meeting for everyone? (Examples: Cell phones off or on vibrate, start and end meeting on time, respect opinions of others, no side conversations.)

# LESSON 1

## 3. What is the Local School Wellness Policy? (5 minutes)

### Directions:

- Refer group to fact sheet *What is Policy?* (Page 37 in the **Parents in Action!** toolkit.)
- Refer to one section of the policy as an example for the group.

### Question:

What is policy? (*Wait for responses.*)

### Say:

- A policy is a written rule or set of rules that people must follow.
- Policies have the power to influence how you and others act.
- Policies can be set by government, schools, organizations, and other groups.
- School board members are responsible for adopting school policy and schools must implement the policy.

### Say:

One policy in schools is the local school wellness policy. All schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program were required to develop a local school wellness policy by the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year. This policy required districts to set standards for:

- Nutrition education.
- Physical activity.
- All foods and beverages available on campus.
- School-based activities designed to promote student wellness.

It also required that districts include parents, students, and community members in developing the policy. Copies of the policy can be found on the school website, in the school office, district office, or at the school. An example of one thing our policy says about [physical activity, food, physical education] is ... (*refer to the local school wellness policy here*).

### Questions:

Over the last year or two, have you noticed any changes in the foods and beverages available at your children's schools? Have you seen any changes in the amount of physical activity or physical education your children get at school? (*Wait for responses.*)

### Say:

If you have noticed changes in your child's schools, it may be a result of the local school wellness policy. These policies vary widely from one district to the next; some require schools to make changes and others may only recommend changes.



Our hope is that policies require changes. If they require good changes, we may begin to assist with implementation; if they do not, we may decide to ask for stronger policies and work with schools to revise and implement stronger policies. Later, we will look at our local school wellness policy to see what it states our schools will do regarding physical activity and foods and beverages on campus.

#### 4. What is Advocacy? (5 minutes)

##### Directions:

- See page 7 in the *Parents in Action!* toolkit.
- Record responses on a piece of flip chart paper titled "Advocacy."

##### Question:

When I say the word advocacy, what comes to mind? (*Wait for responses.*)

##### Say:

Simply put, "advocacy" is an "ask." Advocacy is asking for something and making it happen through actions and efforts. "Advocates" speak on behalf of a group about an issue that affects people's lives. The result of successful advocacy is a change in a practice or policy. An example of state laws that were passed because of advocates are the seat belt and child safety seat laws. We can advocate for policy or changes to practices in schools, at work, in our communities, and at the state or national level.

##### Question:

Has anyone advocated or asked for policy or practice changes in your neighborhoods, schools, or communities?

(*Facilitate discussion.*)

##### Say:

Today we are going to talk about how parents can play the role of advocate in their child's school and how parents can advocate for improved nutrition and physical activity opportunities for their children. With the local school wellness policy, parents can speak on behalf of students to implement and improve nutrition and physical activity practices and policies. Parent actions can result in schools changing their policies and practices around nutrition and physical activity, resulting in improved student health.



# LESSON 1

## 5. Why ask or advocate for improved physical activity and food options in schools? (5 minutes)

### Directions:

- Record parents' thoughts on three separate pieces of flip chart paper with the following titles:
  - Why is this generation less healthy?
  - What is the role of schools in preventing obesity?
  - How does eating well and exercising benefit students?

### Say:

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, known as the CDC, has noted that “the current generation of children may be the first to have a shorter life span than their parents.”

### Questions:

As parents, what do you think about this statement? What could be the reason for this? (*Wait for responses.*)

### Say:

Many children across the country are overweight and physically unfit. This puts them at risk at an early age for health problems that only affected adults in the past—problems such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and joint problems.

### Question:

What role can schools play in preventing overweight and obesity? (*Wait for responses.*)

### Say:

Schools are the ideal environment to help establish life long healthy habits in children. Our children spend much of their time at school and many eat lunch and sometimes breakfast at school.

### Question:

Raise your hand if you think that nutrition and physical activity affect how well children do in school. (*Wait for responses.*)

### Say:

If you raised your hand, you're correct. Think about how you feel when you're hungry or not getting enough activity.

### Question:

How do you think good eating and exercise habits benefit student success in school? (*Wait for responses.*)

Well-nourished, physically fit students:

- Are more prepared to learn.
- Have increased concentration.
- Have improved test scores and do better in school.
- Are more likely to go to school.
- Disrupt the class less.
- Have a more positive attitude toward school.
- Get sick less often.





## 6. How can schools support our children's health? (5 minutes)



### Say:

In California, schools with strong physical activity programs had better scores in math, reading, and writing than schools with fewer physical activity programs.

### Say:

The school setting can influence our children's eating and physical activity behaviors:

- Children spend the majority of their time in school. The quality of school meals varies and there are often other foods available outside of the school meals that are unhealthy.
- Districts may be limited in the number of physical education teachers available, leading to large classes. In elementary schools, the responsibility for meeting physical education requirements may fall to the classroom teacher who may be challenged to find the time or may not have the necessary skills.
- Schools play a critical role in:
  - Promoting student health.
  - Encouraging physical activity.
  - Helping students maintain a healthy weight and healthy lifestyle behaviors.
- The local school wellness policy is important for our children because it sets standards for the food and physical activity environment in their schools.

## 7. Take a 5-10 minute break.

## OPTIONAL

## 8. Why is parent involvement in schools important? (5 minutes)

### Directions:

- Refer parents to the *Health and Academics* fact sheet (page 35 in the *Parents In Action!* toolkit).



### Say:

As mentioned, parents can be very important partners with schools to ensure a healthy environment. This fact sheet summarizes what we've learned about the link between parent involvement, healthy behaviors, and student success in school. Years of research show that when parents are involved in their children's schools, children do better in school. When parents are involved, children tend to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores and enroll in more advanced programs.
- Be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits.

- Attend school regularly.
- Have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school.
- Graduate and go on to earn advanced degrees.

Being involved in your school district's local school wellness policy is an excellent opportunity for you to support the health, well-being, and academic success of your own children and all children in the school. Your local school wellness policy is important for our children because it sets standards for the food and physical activity environment in their schools.

## 9. Parents Taking Action. (30 minutes)

### Directions:

- Refer parents to the *Health and Academics* fact sheet (page 35 in the **Parents In Action!** toolkit).
- Write the four Parents Taking Action steps on flip chart paper or on dry erase board (see page 18 in the **Parents In Action!** toolkit; you will need this for every session).
- Utilize the **Parents in Action!** toolkit and briefly review each step in the process (see page 18 in the toolkit).
- Group Activity: Refer parents to copies of the food and beverage sections of the local school wellness policy. Have parents work at their tables in groups of 4-5 to read the food and beverage

### Say:

As parents, we are all involved in our children's school and education, from volunteering in the classroom to chaperoning field trips and school dances, and helping our children with homework.

### Question:

Please share with us some of the ways you have been involved?

### Say:

Today we are going to talk about how parents can play the role of advocate in their child's school and how parents can advocate for improved nutrition and physical activity opportunities for their children. The advocacy process is the same, regardless of whether you are asking for changes to your neighborhood, school, work place, or more broadly, the state or nation. The process we are going to review now is one we will refer to throughout all of the classes and one that you can use when you are working in your schools.

### Say:

There are four steps in the Parents Taking Action advocacy process:

1. Pick a Problem and Find a Solution.
2. Identify the Policy Players.
3. Build Your Action Plan.
4. Evaluate How Your Group Is Doing.

Let's briefly review each step so that we are all familiar with the process.

pieces of the local school wellness policy and briefly summarize what the policy says about the foods served and sold.\*

- Lead parents through the process for a sample “problem” (fundraising); write comments for each step on flip chart.
- Refer parents to *Fundraising in Schools* fact sheet (page 55 in **Parents in Action!** toolkit).

\* If you are working with more than one district, you can have each group work on a different policy.



## 10. Foods on Campus Questionnaire: Take-home assignment. (5 minutes)

### Directions:

- Hand out the *Foods on Campus Questionnaire* (see page 16 in this guide).



### Say:

In order to pick a problem and work on solutions, we first need to know what schools should be doing. The local school wellness policy will tell us this. We need to find out what schools say they will do in the policy and find out what is really happening in order to determine what problems and solutions we should work on. We are going to review a section of our local school wellness policy and briefly summarize what it says about the foods and beverages served and sold on campus. In your groups, take a few minutes to look at this section of the policy and jot down some of the key points. (Allow 10 minutes for groups to review policy.)

### Question:

What does the policy say regarding foods/beverages served and sold on campus? (If there are multiple groups and policies have someone from each district state what their policy says about foods/beverages).

### Say:

Let's go through the Parent's Taking Action process using an example.

### Questions:

If our “problem” is that fundraising by school groups both on- and off-campus is not healthy, what are some possible solutions?

What solution(s) could we work on?

What are some action steps that we would need to take?

### Say:

Next week we'll talk about the foods available to our children on campus. To help our discussion, please use this survey to talk with your children about the foods available on campus. We'll give you enough copies to use with each of your children. Bring the surveys with you next week and we'll use the information you have collected during our discussion.

### Say:

To complete the questionnaire, you'll need a copy of the school menu. If you don't already have one, ask your child to bring one home, visit the school office and request a copy, or go to the school's website so that you and your child can review it together.

# LESSON 1

## II. Conclusion. (1 minute)

### Say:

Over the next few weeks we'll be learning more about the food and physical activity environment in schools and about the Parents Taking Action advocacy process. Understanding what is required in the policy and what actually happens in schools is important before trying to tackle an issue. As we move through the next few weeks, we'll continue to refine our issues and possible solutions and gather other information so we can develop a plan of action.

### Say:

We will have a minimum of four meetings, as shown on the schedule in your packet. However, as the group generates ideas for issues we'd like to work on, we can make plans to continue meeting.

Our next meeting will be on (date): \_\_\_\_\_ at (time): \_\_\_\_\_.





## Meeting Schedule

Meeting Leader/Promotora: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Meeting details:

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Day: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

### Sessions:

### Date:

1) How Can Schools Support Our Children's Health? \_\_\_\_\_

2) Foods on Campus \_\_\_\_\_

3) Physical Activity and Physical Activity \_\_\_\_\_

4) Parents Taking Action \_\_\_\_\_

### Timeline:

**Say:** Each meeting will take about 60-90 minutes.

### Homework:

You will be asked to do a short homework assignment for two of the sessions. The information you gather will help us all get the most out of this experience and learn the most from our children and one another.

*Instructions: Parents please ask your children the questions below.*

### School Breakfast

Does your school serve breakfast? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what kinds of foods are served for breakfast?

- |                                      |                                       |                                   |  |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Muffins     | <input type="checkbox"/> Eggs         | <input type="checkbox"/> Burritos | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweet rolls         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bagels      | <input type="checkbox"/> Pancakes     | <input type="checkbox"/> Cereal   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sausages            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pop Tarts®  | <input type="checkbox"/> French toast | <input type="checkbox"/> Juices   | <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit or vegetables |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |                                       |                                   |  |

When is breakfast served at your school?

- ☐ Before school ☐ At recess (second chance) ☐ In the classroom ☐ On the bus to school

Do you eat breakfast at school? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what do you like or dislike about the school breakfast? \_\_\_\_\_

### School Lunch

What kind of foods does your school serve for lunch?

- |   |  |                                     |  |                                 |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hamburgers       | <input type="checkbox"/> Spaghetti/pasta | <input type="checkbox"/> Potatoes   | <input type="checkbox"/> Burritos/tacos      | <input type="checkbox"/> Pizza  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sandwiches/wraps | <input type="checkbox"/> Rice bowls      | <input type="checkbox"/> Nachos     | <input type="checkbox"/> Salad bar           | <input type="checkbox"/> Salads |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chicken nuggets  | <input type="checkbox"/> French fries    | <input type="checkbox"/> Soup/chili | <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit or vegetables |                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____      |  |                                     |  |                                 |

Do you eat the school lunch? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

If yes, what do you like or dislike about the school lunch? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have enough time to get lunch, eat, and visit with friends? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How long do you usually stand in line to get lunch? \_\_\_\_\_

### Other Foods

What other foods and beverages are available at your school?

- |                                      |   |                                |  |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chips       | <input type="checkbox"/> Nuts and seeds       | <input type="checkbox"/> Milk  | <input type="checkbox"/> Water         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crackers    | <input type="checkbox"/> Cheese               | <input type="checkbox"/> Sodas | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports Drinks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cookies     | <input type="checkbox"/> Pastries/sweet rolls | <input type="checkbox"/> Juice |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Candy       | <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit and vegetables |                                |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |   |                                |  |

# LESSON 2



## Foods and Beverages on Campus

# Foods and Beverages on Campus

## LESSON 2

### Preparation

Before teaching this class:

- Review the local school wellness policy of the school district you are working with. You will need to refer to the policy to demonstrate what the district says it will do regarding the foods and beverages available on campus.
- Prepare the parent packet.
- Post the flip chart sheet from the first session that lists the Parents Taking Action process
- Post the flip chart sheet from the first session titled "What does the Policy say about foods/beverages?"
- Have the nutrition language from the local school wellness policy in a simplified version available.

### Objectives

At the end of this lesson, parents will be able to:

- Describe the programs that provide food and beverages to students on campus and how the offerings impact student choices.
- Understand California's Nutrition Standards and local nutrition standards.
- Discuss the challenges of providing healthy food on campus.

### Time

60 - 90 minutes



## Foods and Beverages on Campus

### Materials:

1. Name tags and colored markers or pens.
2. Sign in sheet.
3. Large flip chart and markers.
4. Parent packet:
  - ☐ **Parents in Action!** toolkit (optional).
  - ☐ Copies of the nutrition sections of the local school wellness policy (in a simplified version).
  - ☐ *Physical Activity on Campus Questionnaire* (take-home assignment).\*

If parents do not have the entire **Parents in Action!** toolkit, they will need copies of the following from it:

  - ☐ *School Breakfast and School Lunch* fact sheets (pages 51 and 53).
  - ☐ *California's Nutrition Standards* fact sheet (page 45).
  - ☐ *The School Environment* fact sheet (page 39).
  - ☐ *Brainstorming* worksheet (page 19).
  - ☐ *Parents Taking Action* process (pages 19-25).
5. Extra copies of the *Physical Activity on Campus Questionnaire* for those parents who have more than one child in school (see page 27 in this guide).

**Room Setup:** Individual tables to accommodate 4–5 parents at each.

### Session Overview:

1. Welcome, introductions, and brief review of last session. (10 minutes)
2. Purpose of this session. (1 minute)
3. Sharing our experiences. (20 minutes)
4. What is the school breakfast and lunch program? (5 minutes)
5. Take a break. (5-10 minutes)
6. Competitive foods and California's Nutrition Standards. (10 minutes)
7. Other foods and beverages in the school setting. (5 minutes)
8. Parents Taking Action. (25-30 minutes)
9. Conclusion. (1 minute)

\*Download a copy of the *Physical Activity on Campus Questionnaire* from [www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org](http://www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org)

## Activities

### I. Welcome, introductions and brief review of last session. (10 minutes)

#### Directions:

- Ensure parents have name tags.
- Facilitators should introduce themselves to the group and cover any housekeeping issues.
- Welcome the group back to the second meeting and introduce any newcomers to the group.
- Post meeting ground rules from session I.
- Review previous lesson.

#### Say:

Let's quickly introduce ourselves again this week by stating our first names.

Also, let's review the ground rules and add any new rules that you think would be useful.

#### Say:

Let's start with a quick review of our last meeting. We talked about:

- The requirement for local school wellness policies.
- How effective policies can promote student health and academic achievement.
- How schools can support our children's health through these policies.
- How parents can help schools implement and strengthen their policies.

#### Say:

When children are well-fed, physically active and healthy, they are more prepared to learn. Along with the home, school is an ideal place for students to learn about and practice healthy habits.

#### Question:

What are the academic benefits for students when their parents are actively involved in their schools? (*Wait for responses.*)

#### Children:

- Earn better grades and achieve higher test scores.
- Participate in higher level academic programs.
- Are more likely to attend school regularly.
- Develop better social skills.
- Are more likely to graduate and go on to college.

Local school wellness policies provide a tool for parents to support better student health and success in school.

#### Say:

We also talked about the four steps in the Parents Taking Action advocacy process:



## LESSON 2

1. Pick a Problem and Find a Solution.

2. Identify the Policy Players.

3. Build Your Action Plan.

4. Evaluate How Your Group is Doing.

### 2. Purpose of this session. (1 minute)

**Say:**

Today we will talk about the different foods and beverages on campus and how we would go about changing these.

There are three places where foods are most commonly sold or provided on campus:

- The federally-funded National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs – governed by Federal standards.
- Foods sold outside of these programs, also known as competitive foods – governed by State standards (these include foods sold as fundraisers during the school day).
- Foods and beverages provided to students through classroom or school celebrations and provided through other opportunities on campus.

Today we will pick a possible solution to a food/beverage concern and complete Step 1 - Pick a Problem and Find a Solution and Step 2 – Identify the Policy Players from the Parents Taking Action advocacy process.



### 3. Sharing our Experiences. (20 minutes)

**Directions:**

- Meet in groups of 4-6 people.
- Have small groups of parents discuss findings from questionnaires.
- After 10 minutes, have each group take 2-3 minutes to share their major findings.

**Say:**

Last week you took home surveys with questions to ask your children about the foods and beverages available at school. Let's take about 10 minutes in small groups to share what you learned. Also, if you were able to join your child for a school meal, be sure to add your own thoughts.

**Questions** (for after group time):

- What does your child think about the meal programs?
- Where do they get foods and beverages outside the meal programs?
- What good things are happening?
- Does the school have a breakfast program? If not, would you like to see this added?



- Add title to flip chart "What is currently happening around foods/beverages?"
- List feedback on the flip chart.

- Do students eat the breakfast and lunch meals, or do they get their food elsewhere?
- What do students like about school breakfast and/or lunch?
- What do students dislike? How could it be better?
- How much time do students have for lunch? Is this enough time to get food, eat, and visit with friends?

From our review of the policy last week, what does the policy say the school should be doing? Based on the survey with your children, what is happening? We will use this information to decide what we want changed a little later in the session.

**Say:**

For the next part of our meeting we'll talk about the various programs that can provide foods to students on campus.

## 4. What is the School Breakfast/Lunch Program? (5 minutes)

**Directions:**

- Refer parents to *School Breakfast* and *School Lunch* fact sheets (pages 51 and 53 in the **Parents in Action!** toolkit).
- Facilitate discussion about what the ideal is for school lunch/breakfast and what is actually happening.

**Say:**

The School Breakfast and School Lunch Programs:

- Help schools provide affordable meals to students.
- Provide students with the calories, vitamins, and minerals they need to grow and learn, while limiting fat and sugar.
- Offer meals free or at a reduced price to students who qualify, based on family size and income. All students are eligible to participate, regardless of income.
- Must meet specific federal dietary standards to be reimbursed by the government.
- Offer parents a convenient and affordable way to provide a meal for their children at school.

**Say:**

Having a healthy breakfast benefits student achievement and health. Students who eat breakfast:

- Do better in school, both academically and psychologically.
- Score higher on standardized tests.
- Miss fewer days of school.
- Have better concentration.
- Participate more in class.





## 5. Take a break (5-10 minutes)

## 6. Competitive Foods and California's Nutrition Standards. (10 minutes)

### Directions:

- Refer parents to the *California's Nutrition Standards* fact sheet (page 45 in the *Parents in Action!* toolkit).
- Consider having some examples of competitive foods that are sold in your schools (such as potato chips, candy bars, granola bars – you may need to go to a school and buy some of these items or make note of examples you know are sold on your campus and share these with your parents). Try to provide some visuals for the type of foods that are sold on campus.

- Eat less fat and snack less throughout the day.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Are less likely to be overweight.

### Say:

Let's look over the school breakfast and lunch fact sheets. (Refer parents to "What is the Ideal?" sections on these.)

### Question:

Are any of these things happening at your child's school?

## OPTIONAL

### Say:

Another way that students can get food on campus is from "competitive" foods that are not sold as a part of the breakfast and lunch program.

### Say:

- These are a la carte items (main and side dishes), snacks, and beverages that students can buy outside of the school breakfast and lunch program in the cafeteria, vending machines, snack bars, concession stands, and school stores.
- In California, there are State laws that set standards for what foods and beverages can be sold. The intent of the law was to eliminate the least healthy choices. For example, instead of regular chips, baked chips may be allowable in middle/high school.
- The standards are different for elementary and middle/high schools.
- Districts and schools may also set their own standards that are stricter than state law.
- There are many rules that govern competitive food sales on campus; we will focus on those currently in place. Schools must ensure that the competitive foods they provide meet the standards, and many schools need help to do so.
- If you want to know more about the standards, you may look on California Project LEAN's website at [www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org](http://www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org).

- Add class responses on appropriate flip charts "What is currently happening around foods/beverages?"



## 7. Other Foods and Beverages in the School Setting. (5 minutes)

### Directions:

- Refer parents to *The School Environment* fact sheet (page 39 in the *Parents in Action!* toolkit).
- List responses to questions on white board or flip chart paper.

### Say:

Let's look over the California's Nutrition Standards fact sheet together.

### Question:

What did you learn from your children about competitive foods?

### Say:

We've talked about the breakfast and lunch program and competitive foods.

### Question:

Can you think of other ways that students might get foods and beverages on campus?

*If not mentioned, ideas might include:*

- Classroom parties.
- School events such as fairs, assemblies, or sporting events.
- Rewards for good behavior or doing well in class.
- Fundraising events.
- Food and beverages sold by teachers or students or by street vendors (black-market sales).

### Question:

Do the following have to meet California's standards?

1. Foods offered during class time. (*Wait for responses.*)

These foods do not have to meet the standards, however:

- Food should not be used to reward good behavior or academic performance.
- Foods and beverages for parties and celebrations should support the school's healthful messages.

2. Food Sales/Fundraising. (*Wait for responses.*)

- These must meet the State's Nutrition Standards if they are sold during the day and/or be non-food in nature. (This includes foods and beverages sold outside of the school meal program from vending machines, school stores, and the cafeteria or from student or parent organizations.)



3. Black-market sales and street vendors. (*Wait for responses.*)

These foods do not have to meet the standards and include foods sold by:

- Teachers, parents, or students who may be selling foods and beverages on campus outside of the school day.
- Street vendors, who may locate their carts and trucks near school campuses, selling to students at lunch (on open campuses) and before and after school. In some districts or cities local regulations govern how close they can be to campus.

**Say:**

The School Environment fact sheet tells us about the types of programs and activities that impact what our children eat at school.

- Students may be tempted to purchase the foods we've been discussing, especially if lunch lines are long and these are easier to access.
- Using unhealthy foods as reward or black-market sales by role models such as teachers and parents sends the message that these foods are acceptable.
- If nutrition education classes are teaching about making healthy choices, but schools are selling sodas and high fat, high sugar snacks, students may think that making healthy choices is not really important.

## 8. Parents Taking Action. (25–30 minutes)

**Directions:**

- Get feedback from parents about what they would like to see changed – record feedback on “Things we would like to change regarding foods and beverages” flip chart paper.

**Say:**

Based on our earlier conversation and the review of the fact sheets, we know “What the policy says” and “What is currently happening.” Now, we want to think about “Things we would like to change.” Based on what we know should or could be happening to ensure healthy food and beverage choices, what would you like to see changed? (*Allow 5-10 minutes for parents to generate ideas.*)

**Say:**

Which of these ideas is the most important to us? Step 1 in the Parent's Taking Action process is to Pick a Problem and Find A Solution. As a group, let's decide on one food problem that we

- Have the larger group determine via vote what problem they want to work on.
- Provide each table with a *Brainstorming* worksheet (see page 19 in the ***Parents in Action!*** toolkit).
- Have small groups work together to brainstorm possible solutions to the top one – two problems.
- Allow 10-15 minutes for the small group discussion.
- Record possible solutions generated by small groups on flip chart.
- Lead discussion with larger group to prioritize the solution and determine one solution as a larger group.
- Refer parents to the “*Identify the Policy Players*” worksheet (page 21 in the ***Parents in Action!*** toolkit).
- Record policy players on a flip chart and make comments next to people regarding what they might need to know and/or whether they are likely to support or oppose your efforts.



would like to work on. When I read a problem we have listed, raise your hand if you think it is something that is important to you. You may vote for more than one problem.

## Say:

Now, let's work in small groups to brainstorm possible solutions to the problem. Consider the following questions when thinking about possible problems and solutions:

- What will be different if we succeed?
- Which idea will help the most people?
- Which idea will make a lot of people healthier?
- Which idea has the best chance of working?
- Which idea will be the cheapest?
- Which idea can be done the quickest?
- Which idea do we like the best?
- Which idea will we have the most fun doing?

## Question:

As a larger group, which problem and solution do we want to work on?

## Say:

Raise your hand for the problem and solution you feel is most important to work on.

## Question:

Step 2 is to identify the policy players. Who might help us create change and who might we have to win over to our side?

## Say:

For example, if we wanted to bring the School Breakfast Program to our school, we would need to talk to the school principal and the district food service director. We also might want to talk to other parents to generate interest in the issue. For the problem and solution we have picked, let's develop a list of people who may have a stake in the issue. When you know who the players are, it will also be important to make note of whether they might support or oppose your potential solution.

## LESSON 2

### 9. Conclusion. (1 minute)

#### Directions:

- Hand out: *Physical Activity on Campus Questionnaire* (see next page).



#### Say:

Once we have determined our possible solution and the policy players that we need to communicate with, the next step is to build an action plan. We will talk about action planning in our next session.

#### Say:

Please look at the fact sheets for more ideas about how to be active in supporting healthier foods and beverages at your school. Feel free to share with other parents from your children's schools.

#### Say:

At our next meeting we'll be talking about physical activity and physical education on your child's campus. To get a better idea of the physical activity and physical education opportunities on campus, please ask each of your children the questions on the survey and bring your answers to our session next week.

**Next Meeting:** Our next meeting will be \_\_\_\_\_.

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ON CAMPUS QUESTIONNAIRE

### LESSON 2

*Instructions: Parents please ask your children the questions below.*

How do most students get to and from school? ☐ Walk ☐ Bike ☐ Car ☐ Bus

Do students feel safe walking to and from school? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, why do they feel it is not safe? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What kinds of physical activities can you do on campus before and after school? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is there playground equipment that you can use before and after school? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you get recess every day? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you get physical activity breaks during the day at school? ☐ Yes ☐ No

#### **Physical Education (PE)**

How many days each week do you have PE class? \_\_\_\_\_

How long (how many minutes) is the PE class? \_\_\_\_\_

About how many students are in the PE class? ☐ 20 ☐ 40 ☐ 60 or more

Is the PE class taught by a PE teacher or the classroom teacher?

☐ PE teacher ☐ Classroom teacher ☐ Don't know

How active are you during PE class?

☐ Moving most of the time ☐ Moving about half the time

☐ Spend most of the time standing around

Is there enough equipment for all students in the PE class? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know

Is the equipment in good condition? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What kinds of activities do you have in your PE class? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





# LESSON 3



Photo by Tim Wagner for HEAC



Photo by Tim Wagner for HEAC

## Physical Activity on Campus

# Physical Activity on Campus

## Preparation

Before teaching this class:

- Review the local school wellness policy of the school district you are working with. You will need to refer to the policy to demonstrate what the district says it will do regarding physical activity and physical education on campus.
- Prepare the parent packet.
- Post the flip chart sheet from the first session that lists the Parent's Taking Action process.
- Have the physical education and physical activity language from the local school wellness policy in a simplified version available.

## Objectives

At the end of this lesson, parents will be able to:

- State the benefits of daily physical activity.
- Differentiate between physical activity and physical education.
- Identify what prevents a student from being physically active.

## Time

60 - 90 minutes

LESSON 3

## Physical Activity on Campus

### Materials:

1. Name tags and colored markers or pens.
2. Sign in sheet.
3. Large flip chart and markers.
4. Parent packet:
  - ☐ *Parents in Action!* Toolkit (optional).
  - ☐ Copies of the physical activity/physical education sections of the local school wellness policy (in a simplified version).

If parents do not have the entire ***Parents in Action!*** toolkit, they will need copies of the following from it:

- ☐ *Physical Activity* fact sheet (page 47).
- ☐ *Physical Education* fact sheet (page 49).
- ☐ *Parents Taking Action* process (pages 19-25).

**Room Setup:** Individual tables to accommodate 4–5 parents at each.

### Session Overview:

1. Welcome, introductions, and brief review of last session. (10 minutes)
2. Purpose of this session. (1 minute)
3. Sharing our experiences. (20 minutes)
4. What are the benefits of physical activity? (5 minutes)
5. Physical activity in schools. (5 minutes)
6. Physical education in schools. (5 minutes)
7. Physical activity break. (5 minutes)
8. Parent's Taking Action. (30 minutes)
9. Conclusion. (5 minutes)



## Activities

### I. Welcome, introductions and brief review of last session. (10 minutes)

#### Directions:

- Ensure parents have name tags.
- Facilitators should introduce themselves to the group and cover any housekeeping issues.
- Welcome the group back and introduce any newcomers.
- Post ground rules from previous session.
- Review previous lesson.



### 2. Purpose of this Session. (1 minute)



#### Say:

Let's quickly introduce ourselves again this week by stating our first names.

Also, let's review the ground rules and add any new rules that you think would be useful.

#### Say:

Let's start with a quick review of our last meeting. We talked about the different foods and drinks available to students on campus. These are available to students from three sources:

- The federally-funded National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs – these must follow federal nutrition standards.
- Competitive or a la carte foods (main and side dishes), snacks, and beverages that students can buy in the cafeteria, vending machines, snack bars, concession stands, and school stores. In California, these must meet State nutrition standards.
- Foods and beverages provided at classroom or school celebrations, at school events, or during class. These are not governed by any nutrition standards.

#### Say:

We also talked about the four steps in the Parents Taking Action advocacy process:

1. Pick a Problem and Find a Solution.
2. Identify the Policy Players.
3. Build Your Action Plan.
4. Evaluate How Your Group is Doing.

#### Question:

Does anyone have any questions about this information?

#### Say:

Today, we will focus on physical activity and physical education or PE.

- We will discuss the importance of daily physical activity and we will talk about some of the health and learning benefits of being physically active.
- Next, we will discuss the difference between physical activity and PE.

## 3. Sharing our Experiences. (20 minutes)

### Directions:

- Have parents work in groups at their tables to discuss the findings from their interviews with their children and to review the physical activity/physical education sections of the local school wellness policy.
- Record parents' answers on flip chart paper titled "What is currently happening around physical education and physical activity?"
- Refer parents to the physical education and physical activity sections of their local school wellness policy.
- Record parents' answers on flip chart paper titled "What does the policy say about physical education and physical activity?"



- Then, we will talk about the barriers that keep children from getting enough physical activity in school.
- Finally, we will complete steps 1 and 2 in the *Parents Taking Action* process for a physical activity issue.

### Say:

Before we start, I would like to say that physical activity and physical education are related words, but have different meanings. Physical activity is any type of muscle movement and includes walking or biking to school, playing sports, or playing in the back yard or park with friends. On the other hand, physical education is formal academic instruction and is taught by a teacher. We will talk more about physical activity and PE later today.

### Say:

At the last session, I gave you several questions to ask your children on physical activity and PE at school. In your groups, talk about what your kids told you about physical activity and physical education in their schools. (*Allow about 10 minutes.*)

### Question:

What is happening at your child's school regarding physical activity and physical education?

### Say:

Now that we know what is happening in our schools, let's take a few minutes to review the physical activity and physical education components of our local school wellness policy. Take about 10 minutes to review the physical activity and physical education pieces of the policy. (*Allow time for groups to look at the policy.*)

### Questions:

What does the policy say that schools should be doing? Based on the survey with your children, is this happening?

### Say:

We will come back to this information once we have talked a bit more about physical activity in schools.



#### 4. What are the Benefits of Physical Activity? (5 minutes)

**Say:**

Experts recommend that young people (ages 6–19) get at least 60 minutes of physical activity on most, and preferably all, days of the week.

**Question:**

What is physical activity? (*Allow a few minutes for feedback.*)

- Physical activity is any purposeful body movement.
- Physical activity can be done in many places like at home, school, or work.
- It can be part of your transportation (for example, riding a bike to the store or to work) or free time activities (such as walking around your neighborhood or playing at your neighborhood park).

**Questions:**

***Can you finish the following sentences?***

1. When it comes to school, children who are more physically active (*allow time for responses*):

- Are more prepared to learn.
- Have increased concentration and improved test scores.
- Attend school more often.
- Show a more positive attitude toward school.

2. When it comes to health, children who engage regularly in physical activity (*allow time for responses*):

- Get sick less often.
- Are more likely to be at a healthy weight and have less body fat.
- Build healthy bones, muscles, and joints.
- Have an improved self image/confidence.
- Show improved social and emotional development.

**Say:**

Most children are not getting enough physical activity:

- Over 75 percent of children are physically active for less than half of the recommended 60 minutes per day.
- Daily physical activity decreases with age, especially among girls.
- There are many barriers to children getting enough physical activity in school.



## LESSON 3

### 5. Physical Activity in Schools. (5 minutes)

#### Directions:

- Refer parents to *Physical Activity* fact sheet (page 47 in the ***Parents in Action!*** toolkit).
- Discuss how students can get physical activity at school outside of physical education.



### 6. Physical Education in Schools. (5 minutes)

#### Directions:

- Refer parents to *Physical Education* fact sheet (page 49 in the ***Parents in Action!*** toolkit).
- Record parents' responses regarding barriers to getting physical education and physical activity on flip chart paper (list under physical activity or physical education column).

#### Say:

In order for kids to get the recommended 60 minutes of activity every day, schools must provide some time for physical activity during the school day. This may be through physical education or through other opportunities before, during, or after the school day.

#### Say:

When we talk about physical activity in schools, we are referring to both physical education in the classroom and other physical activity opportunities in or around schools.

#### Question:

What is physical education? (*Allow a few minutes for answers*)

#### Say:

Physical education is planned instruction, delivered in grades kindergarten through 12 that builds skills and knowledge in movement, fitness, health, and teamwork. Physical education also provides time for students to be physically active. Physical activity, while a part of physical education, is more general and refers to any body movement.

California requires that children get a minimum amount of physical education :

- In elementary schools it is 200 minutes of physical education per ten days.
- In middle and high schools it is 400 minutes of physical education per ten days.

#### Question:

Are your children getting this much physical education?



## 7. Physical Activity Break (5 minutes)

## 8. Parents Taking Action. (30 minutes)

### Directions:

- Record feedback on flip chart paper titled "What we would like to see changed around physical education/physical activity?"
- You will lead the group through steps 1 and 2 from the Parents Taking Action process in the **Parents in Action!** toolkit for physical education/physical activity problems.
- Tally parent votes for each problem you list from the flip chart. Circle the final problem that had the most votes.

### Say:

Even in schools where students get the minimum required amount of physical education, students must be active outside of their physical education class in order to get 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Many schools do not offer physical education that meets the minutes set by the State and even when schools do offer physical education, kids are often not physically active for much of the class.

### Question:

After talking to your children and reviewing the fact sheets, what are some of the challenges to getting physical activity at your child's school? Please include ideas that your children shared.

## OPTIONAL

### Say:

Based on our earlier conversation, we know what good things are happening in our schools around physical education and physical activity, what the wellness policy says about physical education and physical activity, and what is really happening in our schools. Now we want to talk about what we would like to see changed.

### Question:

What would you like to see changed around physical education or physical activity in your child's school? *(Allow time for group to provide feedback.)*

### Say:

Let's move on and talk about what problems we think are the most important to change. We are going to go through the Parent's Taking Action process and think about how we can improve physical activity/physical education in our schools.

### Say:

Step one is to Pick a Problem and Find A Solution. As a group, let's decide on one physical activity or one physical education problem that we would like to work on. When I read a problem we have listed, raise your hand if you think it is something that is important to you. You may vote for more than one problem.

## LESSON 3

- Refer parents to the *Pick a Problem and Find a Solution* (page 19 in the **Parents in Action!** toolkit) brainstorming worksheet; lead parents through brainstorming.
- Record possible solutions on flip chart.
- Lead discussion on prioritizing the solution.
- Tally the parent votes for each solution on the flip chart. Circle the final solution.
- Refer parents to the *Identify the Policy Players* (page 21 in the **Parents in Action!** toolkit) worksheet and the *Working with Schools* (page 38 in the **Parents in Action!** toolkit) fact sheet.
- Record policy players on a flip chart and make comments next to people regarding what they might need to know and/or whether they are likely to support or oppose your efforts.



### Question:

What are some possible solutions to this problem? Think both big and small as during this process, no ideas are bad or wrong.

### Say:

Now that we have a bunch of ideas on how to solve our problem, let's decide which problem and solution will work the best for us. Here are some guidelines for picking the best problem and solution:

- What will be different if we succeed?
- Which idea will help the most people?
- Which idea will make a lot of people healthier?
- Which idea has the best chance of working?
- Which idea will be the cheapest?
- Which idea can be done the quickest?
- Which idea do we like the best?
- Which idea will we have the most fun doing?

### Say:

Please consider these questions when voting. As I read out the possible solutions you have listed, please raise your hand for the one you think we should work on.

### Say:

The next step is to determine who the policy players are. The *Working with Schools* fact sheet tells us about the players within schools. Other players who may impact our efforts include cafeteria managers, parents, parent organizations, students, coaches, maintenance staff, and community members.

### Questions:

Who might help us in creating change, and who might we have to win over to our side?

Will they support or oppose our solutions?

9. Conclusion.  
(5 minutes)

**Say:**

The next step after this is to develop an action plan. We will talk about action plans next week. We will not have any homework today.

**Question:**

How can we encourage our children to be more physically active in and out of school? (*Wait for responses.*)

- Encourage students to walk or bike to school.
- Encourage students to be active in PE class and engage in fun sports with their friends or competitive sports after school.
- Set a positive example for your children by making physical activity part of your daily routine.
- Play with your children and take them to places where it is safe for them to be active.
- Provide your children with equipment (ball, hula hoop) or games to help them be physically active.
- Limit the time your children watch television or play video games to no more than two hours per day.







# LESSON 4



Parents Taking Action  
in Schools

# Parents Taking Action in Schools

## LESSON 4

### Preparation

Before facilitating this class:

- Post the flip chart paper from lesson one on the wall that has the Parents Taking Action four-step process on it.
- Post the flip charts from lessons two and three that have the nutrition and physical activity problem, possible solutions, and policy players information on them.
- Fill out parent handout that summarizes the Food/Beverage and Physical Activity/Physical Education problems and potential solutions from weeks two and three.
- Prepare the parent packets.

### Objectives

At the end of this lesson, parents will be able to:

- State why it is important for parents to take action in local school wellness policies.
- Describe the Parents Taking Action process.

### Time

60 - 90 minutes

# Parents Taking Action in Schools

### Materials:

1. Name tags and colored markers or pens.
2. Sign in sheet.
3. Large flip chart and markers.
4. Parent packet:

- ☐ **Parents in Action!** toolkit (optional).
- ☐ Summary of Food/Beverage and Physical Activity/Physical Education Problems and Potential Solutions (from weeks two and three).

If parents do not have the entire **Parents in Action!** toolkit, they will need copies of the following from the toolkit:

- ☐ *Parents Taking Action* process (pages 19-25).
- ☐ Sample letters and phone scripts, and tips on presentations, surveys, and working with the media (Appendix B).

**Room Setup:** Individual tables to accommodate 4–5 parents at each.

### Session Overview:

1. Welcome. (5 minutes)
2. Why is it important for parents to take action in schools? (5 minutes)
3. Review of last two sessions. (Foods and Beverages on Campus and Physical Activity/Physical Education). (10 minutes)
4. Build an Action Plan. (30 minutes)
5. Evaluate How Your Group is Doing? (5 minutes)
6. Conclusion and Celebration. (15-20 minutes)
7. Evaluation (optional).

## Activities

### 1. Welcome. (5 minutes)

#### Directions:

- Ensure parents have name tags.
- Post ground rules from previous session.
- Facilitators should introduce themselves to the group and cover any housekeeping issues.



#### Say:

Thank you for coming to our fourth and final session on involving parents in the implementation of local school wellness policy. Let's quickly introduce ourselves again this week by stating our first names. Also, let's review the ground rules for our meeting again.

### 2. Why is it important for Parents to Take Action in Schools? (5 minutes)

#### Say:

During our first session, we talked about why it is important for parents to take action in their children's school to promote better health.

#### Question:

What are some reasons that parent involvement in schools is important? (*Wait for responses.*)

#### Say:

The school setting has a strong influence on our children's behavior:

- Youth spend the majority of their waking hours in school.
- Food choices in schools are often unhealthy and physical activity opportunities are limited.
- Nearly 40 percent of California students are unfit and rates are rising every year.
- Schools play a critical role in promoting student health, preventing childhood obesity, and encouraging physical activity.
- Schools can provide students with the opportunity to practice healthy behaviors that they can adopt for life.



## LESSON 4

### 3. Review of last two sessions (*School Foods and Physical Activity/Physical Education problems, possible solutions, and policy players*). (10 minutes)

#### Directions:

- Hand out Summary of Food/Beverage and Physical Activity/Physical Education Problems (see page 44 of this guide).

#### Say:

Parent involvement in schools improves school and student outcomes. When parents are involved in their children's schools, children are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores and enroll in more advanced academic programs.
- Be promoted to the next grade, pass their classes, and earn credits.
- Attend school regularly.
- Have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school.
- Graduate and go on to earn advanced degrees.

#### Say:

Getting parents involved in local school wellness policy implementation is important to ensure that quality nutrition and physical activity programs are put into action in our children's schools.

#### Say:

In the past two sessions we have talked about foods and beverages on campus and physical activity and physical education problems that we want to work on as a group. We also talked about the four-step Parents Taking Action process:

1. Pick a Problem and Find a Solution.
2. Identify the Policy Players.
3. Build Your Action Plan.
4. Evaluate How Your Group is Doing.

#### Say:

We decided to work on one problem in each of these areas. After we voted on the problem to work on, we talked about solutions. You came up with a number of good, creative solutions. We voted as a group and came up with one solution for a food and/or beverage problem and one solution for a physical activity and/or physical education problem. We also identified the policy players we would need to work with on these possible solutions.

**Say:**

Since this is our last session together, let's take our possible solutions and go through the last two steps in the *Parents Taking Action* process with them.

**Say:**

One of the handouts you have has the school food and/or beverage problem and the physical activity/physical education problem we decided to work on.

**Say:**

We also identified the Policy Players for each of these issues. (Refer to *flip charts/worksheets that have this information on them from the last two sessions.*)





## LESSON 4 ○

### Summary: Food/Beverage and Physical Activity/Physical Education Problems and Potential Solutions.

Food/Beverage Problem: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What the Policy says about this: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Potential Solution: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Physical Activity and/or Physical Education Problem: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What the Policy says about this: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Potential Solution: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\*Download a copy of this form from [www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org](http://www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org)

#### 4. Build an Action Plan. (30 minutes)

##### Directions:

- Refer parents to the sample action plan in the toolkit.
- Hand out *Building an Action Plan* worksheet (page 24 in the **Parents in Action!** toolkit).
- Read the problem and solution from the sample action plan worksheet and the two steps involved in reaching the solution.
- Split the group into two and have each group work on building an action plan (one group for the nutrition issue, the other for the physical education or physical activity issue).
- Refer parents to resources in Appendix B of the **Parents in Action!** toolkit for sample letters and phone scripts, and for tips on presentations, surveys, and working with the media.
- Write the action items from the two groups' action plans on flip chart paper. (*Discuss as a group.*)



##### Say:

Now it's time to make an action plan. For the action plan, you need to figure out what needs to be done, who will do it, and when it should be done. Some steps that may be required in your action plan include:

- Writing letters.
- Making phone calls.
- Delivering presentations.
- Working with the media.
- Doing surveys with students, parents, and staff.

##### Say:

Let's look at the sample action plan together.

##### Say:

We are going to create action plans for our school food and/or beverage solution and for our physical activity and/or physical education solution. We will discuss and compare each action plan in a few minutes. Divide into two groups, one working on the food and/or beverage issues; the other working on the physical activity and/or physical education issue. Take 15-20 minutes to create the action plans.

##### Question:

What do your action plans say? (*Allow each group to share their action plans.*)

## LESSON 4

### 5. Evaluate How Your Group is Doing. (5 minutes)

#### Directions:

- Refer parents to Step 4 – *Evaluate How Your Group is Doing* (page 25 in the *Parents in Action!* toolkit).



#### Say:

The last step in the Parents Taking Action process is to evaluate how you are doing. After completing items in the action plan, you will need to periodically review the successes, progress, and challenges. Celebrate small achievements and keep in mind that change may take time.

### 6. Conclusion and Celebration. (15-20 minutes)

#### Directions:

- If possible, serve healthy refreshments and offer parents certificates of completion for their participation in this series.

#### Say:

Great job making your action plans today! You have completed an important step in preparing yourselves for engagement in our schools.

When you return to your schools as parent advocates, important steps to remember are:

#### A. The Parents Taking Action steps:

1. Pick a Problem and Find a Solution.
2. Identify the Policy Players.
3. Build Your Action Plan.
4. Evaluate How Your Group is Doing.

B. Refer to your districts' local school wellness policy in your work – it will help guide your work and allow you to assess what food, nutrition, and physical activity efforts your school needs to work on.

C. Use the tools and resources in the *Parent's in Action!* toolkit.

D. Be patient – change can take time.

Thank you for coming to our last session today! It has been great working with you and I hope that you have enjoyed working with each other.



### 7. Evaluation (5 minutes)

#### Directions:

- Have parents fill out evaluation forms (see sample on next page).

## EVALUATION\*

Please take a few minutes to give us your feedback on these trainings. Your feedback will help us improve future trainings.

1. Please circle the number that represents your satisfaction with the quality of each training activity.

	POOR	FAIR	AVERAGE	GOOD	EXCELLENT
Take Home Activities and Sharing Results	1	2	3	4	5
Review of Local School Wellness Policy	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Parent's Taking Action!</i> Advocacy Process	1	2	3	4	5

2. Please draw an image that represents the most useful or helpful part about the trainings.

In a few words, describe why this was useful/helpful. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What did you like about the training? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What would you suggest that we change or improve (if anything)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\*Download a copy of this form from [www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org](http://www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org)