



School Wellness Implementation Plan

Program Overview

This resource was created to help schools and districts build out an inclusive wellness program by blending wellness with an innovative, research-based, and validated approach. The steps from this process have been matched with the steps required for a quality wellness program to help you build out a program that is truly inclusive of everyone in your school and community. This document will take you step by step through the process while linking directly to the wellness goals a school should have and the committee that needs to be in place at the school. This process is an abbreviated version of the NCHPAD Inclusive Community Implementation Process (NiCIP) which is available to your school upon request should you need to take a deeper dive into the process. To learn more about the evidence-based process, [click here](#).



Preparing for Inclusion



Schools should already have a **school wellness committee** that is responsible for their wellness policies and updates. There should be an identified leader for that committee at both the district and school level. The committee must actively recruit people with and without disabilities, and others who can represent the needs of the disability community. Be sure to educate all committee members about inclusion, accessibility, and health disparities of people with disabilities. If your school does not have an established committee, you can try to locate who is responsible for implementing the school wellness policy or establish a committee yourself.

Assess your school environment to help build out your goals. This should be done with your entire committee, not just one or two people, and individuals with disabilities need to be involved in the assessment process. The assessments should require accessibility reviews of physical activity and healthy eating spaces and programs which also include walking routes and connecting points to the school. The assessment you use on your school environment needs to match the school goals and provide real data to help build out change. There are plenty of school-based assessments that you can find in the toolkit linked below. Be sure to use an assessment that has been validated.

After **assessing** your school environment, use the results to create a checklist of possibilities for building out your action plan. The action plan is a roadmap to help build out inclusion solutions at a later stage during this process.

Steps for Success

- Establish or become a member of the school wellness committee.
- Ensure that people with disabilities are active members of the committee.
- Consider the strength and skills of the committee members.
- Partner with local, state, or national community disability organizations
- Ensure the committee members are knowledgeable about disability, equity and inclusion topics related to access to health and wellness programs.
- Conduct assessments or review existing data to understand the community needs.
- Get buy in from the school's administration, staff, and community.

Building Inclusion Solutions



Invite community members to provide input into the potential plans identified by the needs assessment. The involvement of people with disabilities does not end in the first stage. The inclusion of people with disabilities and/or their representatives throughout the process demonstrates a commitment to make physical activity in the school relevant to students with various disabilities.

Identify any challenges your school may face as well as the support systems you must have to be successful. One way to do this is to find and review the wellness policy. The wellness policy should support the items in your action plan to ensure success. Be sure that the policy includes specific wording throughout the document that involves children and youth with disabilities including goals, objectives, and outcomes to improve health and wellness. Ensure any policies and materials avoid relying on the word “all” as the only indication that children and youth with disabilities are included.

One of the best ways to build out **success** is to create a good marketing and communication plan for your program. To do this, use a variety of accessible methods to conduct outreach and promote your program. Require marketing and educational materials and messages to be inclusive and in accessible formats such as large print, braille or digital. Also, consider language barriers and literacy levels.

Once you have your feedback on potential challenges and support, take the time to address these challenges, and ways to overcome the barriers to reach their overall goals. Once that is complete, you are ready to **revise your action plan**. When revising your action plan, be sure to think about what you can easily do now and what will take more time. This will help build out short-term and long-term goals.

Steps for Success

- Learn about the current school wellness policy and ensure it is up to date.
- Ensure that everyone has equal opportunity to provide their input.
- Establish a fair process to establish consensus.
- Consider solutions that have been successfully implemented in other schools.
- Consider providing opportunities of involvement for non-committee members.

Preparing for Action



Before you implement your plans, you will need to identify how you intend to measure success, growth, and outreach. **The evaluation plan** needs to describe what information and/or data you would like to collect, who will be responsible for collecting that data and how you will collect that information. The evaluation plan should be something that fits your school and does not have to be a formal assessment if it allows you to get the information you need to update your plan.

For some programs, it is best to **pilot test** on a smaller group of individuals. This would allow you to evaluate the marketing materials, community, and school-level support, stakeholder support, and available resources. An example of this could be in your action plan you state that you want to offer an afterschool sports program for students in Grades 3-5. The pilot test would target students in three of the fifth-grade classes.

Once you have completed your pilot test, you should have a plan to address any challenges that arose and then evaluate your process. After that, you are ready to implement your plan. But first, be sure that based on your pilot you have identified all stakeholders and resources needed to make your program successful. Take the time to make sure you have identified what, who, and how as well as ensuring that the evaluation matches the activity.

Steps for Success

- Ensure that the assessments used are appropriate for the goals selected by the committee.
- Research and use already available assessments and data collection tools.
- Create your own assessments if needed.
- Report your findings with the school community to get buy in and to promote a sense of belonging throughout the process.
- Ensure that you have all the resources to implement the plan widely.

Implement Plan, Evaluate, and Sustain



After collaborating with each committee member that is responsible for an action step, it is time to put the action plan into place. Be sure to use your marketing and communication materials, stakeholders, and others to help make the plan **implementation** successful.

After you have **implemented your plan**, you will need to assign individuals to be responsible for ensuring that the plan is being followed, students with disabilities are not being excluded, and identify if the current plan is making a difference. The individuals responsible for executing the plan will work with the wellness committee as they put the plan into action. **Evaluation** should be looking at impact, the number of individuals with disabilities participating, stakeholder involvement, and organizational success in implementing solutions. As you implement your plan and evaluation method, look to identify any potential challenges that came up, benefits that you were not expecting, and anything related to things that your evaluation plan might not have noticed yet.

The committee needs to meet yearly to review, evaluate, and update an action plan to help with **sustaining** the program. The committee will review the results and evaluation data to help build out those plans. Things to consider during this yearly meeting:

- Do you have the capacity to properly address potential growth, or do you need to involve others?
- Are the resources available?

Steps for Success

- Make it a team effort. Assign task based on strengths and skills of the school community.
- Consider conducting ongoing assessments during the implementation phase to identify any obstacles or setbacks.
- Make sure that the benefits of the inclusive solutions implemented by the committee have a long-lasting effect by creating inclusive policy.
- Ensure that students with disabilities are active members of the process in all the stages.

- Do you have the skills needed for your plan or to address challenges? If not, what stakeholder has the skills you need?
- Once you have addressed all these items, it is time to plan for next year and assign individuals to roles. This will help with the **maintenance** of the plan.

Be sure to use [NCHPAD's Discover Inclusive Wellness Toolkit](#) to help navigate each process and build out a plan that will help you implement your school wellness policy while being inclusive and connecting to the community.

Recommended Resources to assist with the NiCIP process:

- [Healthier Generation Thriving Schools Assessment](#)
- [NCHPAD E-Learning](#)
- [CHII On-Site Assessment](#)
- [NiCIP Process](#)
- [CHII Explained](#)
- [NiCIP Display](#)
- [What is GRAIDs](#)
- [NCHPAD Evidence-Based Programs](#)
- [Inclusive Community Health Resource](#)

Be sure to stay connected with NCHPAD for more educational information and accompanying materials on how to successfully implement this process and your plan. If you need more information please contact NCHPAD at email@nchpad.org.

Connect with NCHPAD!



The National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability (NCHPAD) is the nation's premier center in promoting the health and wellness of people with a disability. We connect people with disabilities and providers to health promotion, wellness and disability information, programs, and services.

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NCHPAD is a National Center on Disability supported by Grant/Cooperative Agreement Number NU27DD000022 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).