

STEPS TO GET ON YOUR SCHOOL WELLNESS TEAM (SWT):

SWTs are a place where key stakeholders in a school community come together to build opportunities for health and wellness. Representatives from all the areas in the “Whole School, Whole Child, Whole Community” model should be included (i.e. parents, students, teachers, counselors, food service staff, nurse, building engineer, and community partners).



1. Contact your school principal or assistant principal to find out who the school wellness team chair is.
2. Contact the school wellness team chair and indicate that you would like to join the SWT. Ask for information about the next scheduled meeting (date, time, and location).
3. Follow up a few days before the date that the meeting is scheduled to confirm that it is still being held.
4. Attend the meeting and share your ideas!

Having Trouble? We have some additional suggestions!

- If you are not able to connect with the school principal or assistant principal-
 - a) Parents can reach out to their parent facilitator and see if they can assist you
 - b) Parents, students, and other school stakeholders can contact the District Wellness Coordinator, Dr. Sue Baldwin (SBaldwin@buffaloschools.org), and request information and assistance if nobody at the school can assist you
- If you are able to reach the SWT chairperson but they report that a meeting is not scheduled, ask if they will be doing so soon. Ask them to add you to the contact list for meeting planning and announcements.
- If you receive information about meeting dates, but they are at times that you feel do not work for you/your stakeholder group (i.e. a certain time may work well for some, but may be difficult for cafeteria staff, or parents, etc.), ask the SWT chairperson if they would be willing to hold the meetings at alternating times, to ensure that all members could at least make it to some of them.

*Parents and students are critical members of SWTs, but may need special considerations in meeting formats, times, etc. to be meaningfully included. There is not a formal limit on parent/student participation on SWTs, and some of the most successful teams have parent and/or student co-chairs working closely with staff. If you are still unable to join the team, contact the school principal or assistant principal to discuss the issue. If this is unsuccessful, contact Dr. Sue Baldwin and ask for assistance.

Why is School Health Important?

The health of young people is strongly linked to their academic success.

Schools cannot achieve their primary mission of education if students and staff are not healthy.

Health-related factors (hunger, illness, abuse, trauma), can lead to poor school performance and can affect students' school attendance, grades, test scores, and ability to pay attention in class.

You can easily start asking questions and gathering information about...

- What is the content and quality of food students are being served?
- How much physical activity are students getting a day?
- Are there safety issues inside of the school or in the surrounding neighborhood?
- What are the rates of asthma, obesity, mental health issues, or other health indicators amongst students in the school?
- Are different components of health integrated within the school (i.e. medical services versus food/nutrition services versus student support services)?
- Are there other current or potential health issues, i.e. idling buses or other traffic creating air pollution?

Brainstorm ideas with fellow SWT members...

What can we do on your own?

e.g. engage in healthy behaviors/be a role model for others

What can we do with some help?

e.g. get a school garden started, make changes to the school menu

What is it someone else's job to do?

e.g. get District-wide policies changed and/or programs implemented

RESOURCES:

Check out our facebook page "School Health and Wellness Collaborative" for updated resources and information

GO TO THE BUFFALO PUBLIC SCHOOLS HEALTH RELATED SERVICES PAGE FOR INFORMATION ON WELLNESS EVENTS AND TRAININGS, DISTRICT LEVEL COMMITTEES, ETC. <http://www.buffaloschools.org/HealthRelatedServices.cfm>

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