



Statewide Partnerships for Student Health

Minnesota Department of Education

As the nation's leading organization working with schools and communities to improve kids' health, the Alliance for a Healthier Generation (Healthier Generation) helps schools and youth-serving organizations implement policies and practices that meet federal requirements and further their health and wellness goals.

With its proven track-record of guiding state and local agencies toward successful implementation of community health change through its evidence-based Healthy Schools Program and Healthy Out-of-School Time Initiative, Healthier Generation provides guidance, professional development, training, tools, resources and data to complement state and local efforts through these two programs.

The Minnesota Department of Education is just one example of how Healthier Generation is partnering with state education agencies across the nation to improve the health of kids. For over four years, Healthier Generation and the Minnesota Department of Education have been working to transform Minnesota communities into healthier places for more than 375,000 kids.

“Healthier Generation provides easy-to-use guidance and tools that help public health intersect with education. They utilize a ‘whole child approach’ that connects academic indicators and speaks volumes to education decision-makers.”

– Terri Swartout, School Health Coordinator, Minnesota Department of Education

Building Capacity and Partnering for Success

With the help of 1305 funding for statewide chronic disease prevention, Minnesota built capacity amongst local public health departments to support school districts in the areas of healthy eating and physical activity through its Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP). This coalition expands opportunities for active, healthy living across Minnesota, supported by the Department of Education and Department of Health.

Learn more at HealthierGeneration.org



Healthier Generation supports Minnesota's SHIP goals by providing professional development trainings, such as:

- **Making the Grade with Wellness Policy:** Dept. of Health and Dept. of Education staff developed expertise to build capacity and equip over 40 SHIP coordinators to support districts in creating nearly 450 healthier schools. Coordinators learned how to build school buy-in to support implementation of local wellness policy components, including food and beverage marketing and healthy fundraising, celebrations and rewards.
- **Fostering School, Out-of-School Time and Community Connections:** Participants learned how schools and youth-serving organizations can create winning partnerships—from aligning school wellness policies with out-of-school time eating and physical activity standards to utilizing tools and resources to implement best practices.

In 2014, Healthier Generation partnered with the Minnesota Department of Education to train SHIP staff on its Healthy Schools Program and Healthy Out-of-School Time Initiative, inclusive of in-person professional development, live virtual trainings, monthly check-ins, data reports and technical assistance to help SHIP coordinators launch their school and out-of-school efforts in Minnesota.

As a result of SHIP's efforts, Minnesota school staff in all 87 counties are now using the Healthy Schools Program framework to assess the health of their school and design action plans to address strengths and weaknesses. Through this collaboration, half of the more than 2,500 schools in Minnesota have engaged in the Healthy School Program.

In addition, through this partnership with the Department of Education, Healthier Generation has also expanded its reach in the out-of-school time setting. Since 2014, Healthier Generation has grown from supporting five out-of-school time sites to now serving 95 sites across the state—a direct result of the many doors opened by the Department of Education to reach and serve more schools and out-of-school time sites in Minnesota.

“Healthier Generation’s Healthy Out-of-School Time framework helps school and afterschool staff start conversations and align priorities.”

– Eric Billiet, Education Specialist, Minnesota Department of Education

Expanding Reach and Impact

The opportunities for this partnership continue to grow. In 2016, through generous support from Target, Healthier Generation convened 138 Minneapolis-area schools to improve health and wellness for more than 91,000 students.

Today, Healthier Generation’s Healthy Schools Program, funded in part by Target, works with school districts in Hennepin, Ramsey and Dakota counties to establish groundwork for sustainable improvements in schools, such as increasing physical activity minutes and improving the quality of school meals and snacks. In working closely with SHIP coordinators, Healthier Generation identified school administrators’ commitments to wellness policy implementation and building staff capacity around nutrition and physical activity promotion.

Through the Healthy Schools Program, these districts will continue to build on their progress with and commitment to the Minnesota SHIP in 2018 and beyond.



Learn more at HealthierGeneration.org



Healthier Generation and SHIP staff collaborate in Hennepin, Ramsey and Dakota counties to identify opportunities for district engagement, resulting in:

- More than 150 staff in 138 schools received professional development about how to build wellness committees, assess their school, implement action plans and obtain resources for making healthy changes. In addition to enhanced communication between district administrators, school staff and SHIP coordinators on wellness goals, schools have now established wellness committees and are actively utilizing the Healthy Schools Program to drive wellness policy implementation.
- Nearly 100 school staff in four districts received professional development on incorporating physical activity in the classroom. Research shows that active kids are better learners, and now students have opportunities to move during class time.

Looking Ahead, Opportunities Abound

Together, the Minnesota Department of Education and Healthier Generation are leading schools and youth-serving organizations on a path to exercising nutrition and physical activity best practices. Through this partnership, Minnesota’s SHIP had over 300 schools accomplish more than 900 policy, system and environmental changes. Healthier Generation values this strong partnership, which has led to tremendous outcomes for students in Minnesota and looks forward to continued expansion and opportunities.



“Through our partnership with Healthier Generation and the expertise that its staff bring, we’re able to build upon on current programs and reinvigorate our school communities around wellness.”

– Stacie O’Leary, Health Service Coordinator, Dakota County School District 197

Timeline: Reaching More Minnesota Children than Ever Before

2014	2015	2016	2016	2016	2017	2018
Healthier Generation partnered in school recruitment efforts through 1305 funding with Dept. of Education	Dept. of Education and SHIP coordinators expand Healthy Schools Program reach through regional training efforts using Healthier Generation tools	Support from Target deepens engagement in Minnesota districts	Dept. of Ed signs official intermediary partnership with Healthier Generation to expand technical assistance delivery throughout the state	Dept. of Ed expands outreach to include Healthy Out-of-School Time program	Additional Healthier Generation trainings offered through CDC 1601 Expanded wellness policy implementation through support from Target	Continued collaboration with Dept. of Ed, Target, CDC 1601 to continue to improve nutrition and physical activity environments in Minnesota schools and out-of-school sites

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