Project Healthy Schools Goals

- Eat more fruits and vegetables
- Choose less sugary food and beverages
- Eat less fast and fatty food
- Be active every day
- Spend less time in front of a screen

Did you know?

- Thanks to the generosity of numerous donors, PHS received over $11,000 on Giving Blueday!
- For the past two years, PHS has collaborated with the School of Kinesiology on a classroom-based physical activity intervention called InPACT. The InPACT program at Munger Elementary-Middle School in Detroit, a BHC:PHS school, was recently featured in a U-M Stories of Our State video.
- PHS Wellness Coordinator Jana Stewart presented, Project Healthy Schools: Creating Healthier School Environments in Michigan Middle Schools, at the 70th Annual Conference of the Society for Public Health Education in Salt Lake City, UT, in March 2019.

Arizona students benefit from PHS

“All is going great with PHS in Saints Peter and Paul School sixth grade classes,” said Sabrina Plattner, M.Ed, a Senior Health Educator from the University of Arizona who is overseeing the Project Healthy Schools (PHS) implementation. Thanks to a partnership with the University of Arizona, PHS is being pilot ed in Saints Peter and Paul Catholic School in Tucson, Arizona. This is PHS’ first implementation in a state outside of Michigan, and this fall 53 students in two sixth grade classrooms received the PHS lessons. Plattner is following a model similar to the “Health Ambassador” model used to implement PHS in the Ann Arbor schools, where college students teach the lessons.

Last May, Plattner visited U-M and spent two days learning about PHS, receiving training on how to implement the program and visiting a school to observe PHS in action. Now she instructs public health students at the University of Arizona on how to teach the PHS lessons. Then they deliver the lessons to the middle school students and help administer the health behavior questionnaires. They have also hosted a sugar shock display table.

University of Arizona student Samantha Werts teaches a PHS lesson to sixth grade students at Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic school in Tucson, Arizona.

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Three BHC:PHS schools win Best & Brightest Awards

Project Healthy Schools (BHC:PHS) program:
- East Middle School, Plymouth
- St. Charles Borromeo Catholic School, Coldwater
- White Pine Middle School, Saginaw

The Best and Brightest In Wellness awards recognize and celebrate quality and excellence in health awareness. The program highlights employers, wellness providers, schools, faith-based groups, and nonprofits that promote a culture of wellness.

Congratulations to the principals, wellness champions and wellness teams at the above schools for their exemplary work. Consideration for the 2019 award starts by submitting a nomination at https://thebestandbrightest.com/programs/nominations/.

In October 2018, 12 Michigan schools were recognized with Best and Brightest in Wellness awards. Three of the award winners have the Building Healthy Communities: Engaging Middle Schools through

Brenda Mescher, principal at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic School accepts the Best and Brightest In Wellness award on behalf of the school.

PHOTO COURTESY ERIC MAES, BEST AND BRIGHTEST PROGRAMS
BHC:PHS helps Ishpeming student make lasting behavior change

Ryan Reichel, a teacher and the wellness champion at Ishpeming Middle School said, "This program has given me the ability to implement the tools of proper eating habits and expose my students to good tasting healthy foods. It has allowed students to learn they actually like healthy food options just as much as the not so healthy foods." In 2017, Reichel shared that one of his students, Tyler, lost 20 pounds since the lessons started.

Reichel said, “Tyler does not need his inhaler as often now and is able to complete specific tasks in Boy Scouts that he couldn't previously. He changed eating habits and it also has inspired his family to do so. Tyler has taken the concepts taught in class to help make better informed decisions when picking out food.”

Tyler, then a sixth-grade student at Ishpeming Middle School added, "I learned a lot about foods that can give me good energy and are healthy for me. I also learned that being active and eating well can help me and my body.”

Recently, Reichel reported that Tyler, now an eighth grader, is a school athlete. He is on the basketball and tennis teams and hiked 150 miles last year. He has maintained a healthy weight while continuing to practice the healthy habits he learned from BHC:PHS in the sixth grade.

Fall Wellness Champion Gathering focused on mental health

PHS wellness champions from nearly 25 schools converged on the U-M Comprehensive Depression Center last November to attend the Fall Wellness Champion Gathering. In addition to program updates and presentations on healthy foods and snacks in schools, refining health programming in schools and physical activity breaks, the day’s agenda included two speakers presenting on topics related to mental health.

Will Heininger, outreach coordinator for the U-M Depression Center and a former defensive lineman for the Wolverines, shared a moving video of the story of his battle with depression. He talked about mental health in schools, answered questions and spoke candidly about his journey from despair to wellness.

After lunch, Kelcey Stratton, PhD., U-M program manager for Resilience and Well-Being Services spoke on staff resiliency. She discussed the physiology behind stress, shared a mindfulness exercise and simple strategies, such as practicing kindness and gratitude, for improving well-being.

This comment from one of the attendees does a good job of summing up the impact of the day, “I enjoyed the whole day! Will’s story was powerful and inspiring. Kelcey was wonderful in reminding us to search within ourselves to relax and be kind. I feel very inspired to do more and do better with my life and students.”
The benefits of PHS in high risk students

By Rachel Krallman

The prevalence of metabolic syndrome, a cluster of conditions that increase the risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, and type II diabetes, has risen to 6.8% in overweight children in recent years. A study by the PHS research team sought to assess the effectiveness of PHS among high risk students, as well as determine the prevalence of metabolic syndrome among these PHS participants. Metabolic syndrome and high risk status were based on the following criteria:

- **BMI**: $> 85^{th}$ percentile
- **Total Cholesterol**: ≥ 200 mg/dL
- **HDL-Cholesterol**: ≤ 35 mg/dL
- **LDL-Cholesterol**: ≥ 130 mg/dL
- **Random Glucose**: ≥ 140 mg/dL
- **Triglycerides**: ≥ 150 mg/dL
- **Blood Pressure**: Systolic ≥126mmHg OR Diastolic ≥80mmHg

Unfortunately, 51.3% (943 of 1837 students) of PHS screening participants were considered high risk, with 23.2% (n=219) of high risk students meeting the criteria for metabolic syndrome. However, high risk students saw significant improvements in total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, glucose, systolic and diastolic blood pressure measures following the PHS intervention. While the high prevalence of metabolic syndrome in this population is concerning, if the improvements seen post-PHS are sustained over a lifetime, they may translate into clinically meaningful cardiovascular disease risk reduction.

Fuel Up to Play 60 is popular at BHC:PHS schools

This school year, at least nine schools with the PHS program are also using Fuel Up To Play 60 (FUTP60). Participating in FUTP60 is a great way for PHS schools, especially those in their second year and beyond, to extend their wellness team funds. FUTP60 is an in-school nutrition and physical activity program launched by National Dairy Council and NFL, in collaboration with the USDA, to help encourage today’s youth to lead healthier lives. This free program offers funding opportunities for schools and an online playbook full of school-tested action strategies to improve healthy eating and physical activity at schools and beyond.

In Michigan, the program is administered by Building Healthy Communities partner, the United Dairy Industry of Michigan (UDIM), and the Detroit Lions. Schools can apply for up to $4,000 per year to jump-start healthy school changes. To apply for funds for FUTP60, schools select one Healthy Eating and one Physical Activity Play to implement. The “Plays” are equivalent to PHS wellness initiatives. Schools can reapply each year for funds to continue participation and growth in FUTP60 programming. UDIM also offers free resources, like Kickoff kits, incentives and ideas, to support a school’s FUTP60 program available at [http://bit.ly/FUTP_60_Resources](http://bit.ly/FUTP_60_Resources)

Lindsey Youness, a special education teacher and the wellness champion at Bentley Middle School said, “FUTP60 really complements our PHS wellness activities. The additional funding from FUTP60 has allowed us to enhance our breakfast options, have food taste testing sessions, opportunities to try different smoothies, and purchase indoor and outdoor recess equipment. Since receiving the equipment, we are able to provide the students with a productive recess before lunch.” Bentley Middle School is in its second year of BHC:PHS and was a 2018 Michigan School Wellness Gold Level Award Winner.

To qualify for FUTP60, schools must participate in the National School Lunch Program, have a registered Program Advisor (this could be the PHS wellness champion) and be enrolled in the program. The FUTP60 application for the 2019-2020 school year is open until April 10, 2019. Visit [www.fueluptoplay60.com](http://www.fueluptoplay60.com) for more information.
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and provided information about PHS at a couple of school events.

“The University of Arizona Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health, Service-Based Learning class students are doing a wonderful job working with the [middle school] students,” said Plattner. “I have 10 students this semester; last semester I had five students. I think there was a lot of buzz about this and so we had more students want to take the class,” continues Plattner.

According to Plattner, the college students really enjoyed teaching the PHS program. They liked how the program focused on nutrition, physical activity and disseminating current health information to kids at such a young age. They also enjoyed working with the kids and were shocked that some of the sixth graders had never eaten salad before, and actually liked it and wished their families ate more salad.

In addition to the sixth graders who received the lessons last fall, this semester about 40 eighth grade students are receiving the PHS lessons, while the seventh graders will serve as a control group, completing just the MyPlate lesson. All three groups will complete pre- and post-program Health Behavior Questionnaires. The information will be used to compare the differences between sixth and eighth graders and between those who received the 10 PHS lessons and those who only received one lesson.

Plattner said that the middle school teachers were really positive about the PHS program, and the middle school students enjoyed it and learned a lot. “They actually made great thank you notes for the [college] students. It was all really positive, and they are really excited to have us back again next year. The eighth graders were excited to have PHS in their classroom as well since they heard nice things about the program.”

Speaking about the PHS program, Plattner said, “I think it is very innovative and up to date on trends in nutrition guidelines. I have worked with many programs and some of them are seriously outdated. I like how interactive PHS is for the students. It also includes a parent component and the school community is tied in. I thought that was really exciting.” Plattner expects to continue PHS at Saints Peter and Paul next school year and hopes to expand to other schools in the future.

DeRoy Foundation sustains PHS in Detroit schools

Several organizations provide support for starting the PHS program in a school, but that funding usually ends after the first year and only covers direct in-school costs. However, once implemented, the PHS program usually continues in schools for years, benefitting future generations of students. While the cost for subsequent years is much lower than the first year, as the number of schools with PHS continues to grow, the costs add up. Project Healthy Schools (PHS) is extremely grateful to the DeRoy Testamentary Foundation for their support over the past several years in helping to sustain the PHS program in schools in the Greater Detroit area.

Creating healthy school environments and infrastructures can take several years. After the initial implementation, PHS continues to provide schools with professional guidance and financial support for wellness initiatives and lesson materials. To further sustain best practices and program implementation, PHS provides a yearly stipend for each school’s wellness champion to compensate them for the additional work involved with leading the school wellness team, completing the five steps of the PHS program each year, and sustaining the culture of wellness for their respective school.

PHS so appreciates the ongoing support we have received from the DeRoy Testamentary Foundation, a true partner in improving the health of youth in Greater Detroit.

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We are also grateful to the many other corporations, foundations and individual donors who have supported PHS over the years.

Information on how to donate is available at www.projecthealthyschools.org or by contacting Ryann Eff at 734-998-6044