

# Policies Relevant to Physical Activity and Youth

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Active Living Research is interested in supporting studies that contribute to current policy debates. We are interested in research that stimulates consideration of new promising policy solutions to childhood obesity and physical inactivity.

There are policies from numerous sectors of society and government agencies that are relevant to youth physical activity, and many of them are not obvious or intended to change physical activity. Below are examples of policies with particular relevance to physical activity in young people and high-risk communities. They are classified by setting and policy decision making level.

Useful background to the variety of active living-related policies can be found in: Sallis, J.F., Cervero, R.B., Ascher, W., Henderson, K.A., Kraft, M.K., and Kerr, J. (2006) An ecological approach to creating more physically active communities. **Annual Review of Public Health**, 27, 297-322.  
<http://arjournals.annualreviews.org/eprint/bhffpAD7wqbybJ9u97Tr/full/10.1146/annurev.publhealth.27.021405.102100>

## **Setting: Schools**

### **Schools**

- opening schools for community use
- school wellness policies <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Healthy/108-265.pdf>
- providing physical activity supervision after school
- funding for intramurals, not athletics
- school siting reform <http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/state/5638/5652>
- siting schools within walking distance of residences
- [http://www.nationaltrust.org/issues/schools/schools\\_smartgrowth\\_facts.pdf](http://www.nationaltrust.org/issues/schools/schools_smartgrowth_facts.pdf)
- standards for school grounds and activity facilities
- physical education class size
- training for physical education instructors
- budget for physical activity facilities and equipment
- policies to reduce disparities in physical education funding

### **Private Sector**

- guidelines for use of commercial sponsorship physical activity initiatives at school
- facilitating access to private after-school physical activity programs for underserved youth (e.g., sliding scales)
- National Association of Sport and Physical Education standards

### **Local**

- school siting reform <http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/state/5638/5652>
- joint use agreements of school grounds and activity facilities between schools and park departments

### **State**

- requirements for quantity & quality of physical education
- physical education content standards
- accountability and enforcement of physical education requirements and standards
- requirements for quantity & quality of recess
- physical activity requirements for child care & after school programs
- school siting reform <http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/state/5638/5652>
- policies to reduce disparities in physical education funding

## **Federal**

- incentives for quality physical education and physical activity programs in reauthorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml>
- physical activity requirements for Head Start <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/legislation/index.html>
- Carol M. White PEP grants
- policies to reduce disparities in physical education funding

## **Setting: Private Recreation**

### **Private Sector (including youth sports)**

- Sliding scale fees for teams & classes
- incentives for participation rather than winning
- location of facilities in low-resource communities
- Policies regarding amount of playing time in sports for youth
- Amount of after school time devoted to academics verses “play” (PA)

### **State**

- Tax incentives for providing physical activity for low-income youth

### **Federal**

- Tax incentives for private groups who provide physical activity for low-income youth

## **Setting: Public Recreation**

### **Schools**

- Joint use agreements with schools
- Recreation staff provide physical activity programs after school

### **Private Sector**

- Guidelines for commercial sponsorship of physical activity or sports programs

### **Local**

- Free after-school programs in low-income neighborhoods
- reduce disparities in park access and funding
- priority for improvements in parks in low-income neighborhood
- policing in and around parks
- joint programs/projects with public health entities
- playground modifications and access

### **State**

- Reduce disparities in park access and funding
- State trail funding

### **Federal**

- Park access as civil right
- Enforcement of ADA requirements
- Funding for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
- Passage of “No Child Left Inside” Act 2001

## **Setting: Transportation**

### **Schools**

- Safe Route to Schools (SR2S) [www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org)
- Walking school buses

### **Private Sector**

- Street design guideline reform (Institute of Transportation Engineers) <http://epa.gov/piedpage/codeexamples.htm> and ITE 2006 <http://www.ite.org/bookstore/RP036.pdf>
- opposition to pedestrian/bike investments

### **Local**

- Safe Route to Schools (SR2S) [www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org)
- complete streets [www.completestreets.org](http://www.completestreets.org)
- mass transit policies <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/>
- public participation in transportation planning
- Health Impact Assessment (HIA) of pedestrian/bike investments <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm>

### **State**

- Safe Route to Schools (SR2S) [www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org)
- complete streets [www.completestreets.org](http://www.completestreets.org)
- mass transit policies [www.transportation1.org/aashtonev/](http://www.transportation1.org/aashtonev/)
- public participation in transportation planning
- Health Impact Assessment (HIA) <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm>

### **Federal**

- Renewal of federal transportation bill <http://www.transact.org/>
- Funding based on mode share
- Mass transit policies <http://www.apta.com/>
- Safe Route to Schools (SR2S) [www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org)
- complete streets [www.completestreets.org](http://www.completestreets.org)
- Health Impact Assessment (HIA) <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm>

## **Setting: Community Built Environment**

### **Schools**

- Open school recreation facilities for community use
- school siting reform <http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/state/5638/5652>

### **Private Sector**

- Economics (e.g., return on investment) of walkable vs. sprawl communities
- lending policies for mixed use
- economic analysis of requiring affordable housing in major projects
- economic development policies
- evaluate LEED-ND award program [www.usgbc.org/leed/nd](http://www.usgbc.org/leed/nd)
- policies and practices of Habitat for Humanity and other providers of housing for low-income families
- study opposition to activity-friendly policies

### **Local**

- Prioritize walkability improvements in low-income neighborhoods
- Redevelopment without gentrification
- zoning reform <http://www.formbasedcodes.org/>
- affordable housing
- public participation in zoning decisions
- Health Impact Assessment (HIA) <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm>
- health element in general plans
- pedestrian and bicycling master plans <http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/>

## **State**

- Prioritize walkability and safety improvements in low-income neighborhoods
- affordable housing
- Health Impact Assessment (HIA) <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm>
- economics of improvements like sidewalks, street trees, traffic calming in low income areas
- restrictions on fast food or drive-throughs
- health element in general plans
- pedestrian and bicycling master plans

## **Federal**

- Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) urban renewal policies <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/economicdevelopment/programs/rc/index.cfm>
- HUD policies on affordable housing <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/index.cfm>
- National smart growth policies <http://www.smartgrowth.org/>

## **Setting: Social/Media Environment**

### **Private Sector**

- Exer-gaming promotion & availability
- equal time for physical activity promotion in media
- tax promotion of sedentary behavior (& non-nutritious food)

### **Local**

- Community policing
- neighborhood watch groups

### **Federal**

- Youth physical activity promotion as crime prevention (Justice)
- Youth physical activity promotion as drug and alcohol abuse prevention