

Healthy Kids Program

2026 Program Toolkit

Approved and endorsed by
the Ohio Chapter, American
Academy of Pediatrics

Ohio Chapter

INCORPORATED IN OHIO

American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



What is the Healthy Kids Program?

Health Action Council created the program to educate and encourage students and their families, school leaders, teachers, athletic directors, coaches, employers, and communities to promote improved health and wellness.

The goal is to:

Encourage & Promote

- ✓ Childhood preventable disease vaccinations
- ✓ Medical, dental, and vision well-child visits
- ✓ Physical activity among kids
- ✓ Healthy food choices
- ✓ Enhanced health literacy

Why launch the Healthy Kids Program with employees?

The health of children today has a direct impact on today's workforce and the workforce of the future. Not only does the health of current employee dependents impact productivity and absenteeism, but a large part of an employee's lost work time can be attributed to health problems they developed during childhood.

By increasing an employee's understanding of their benefits and education on how they can support and improve the health of a child, employers achieve:

- ✓ Lower healthcare costs
- ✓ Increased productivity
- ✓ Improved employee retention rates
- ✓ A healthier workforce for tomorrow

How does the Healthy Kids Program work?

This toolkit provides resources to help create awareness and build employee engagement. You can use all of them or choose only the tools that will have the most impact. These include:

- ✓ Childhood vaccination schedule
- ✓ Well child periodicity schedule
- ✓ Links to credible organizations with statistics and valuable reference information
- ✓ Social media posts and images to use on your intranet or in emails

“ We believe Investing in children's health strengthens families and builds a healthier and more resilient workforce for the future. “

~ Health Action Council





CHILDHOOD PREVENTABLE DISEASE VACCINATIONS

Every day, children come into contact with thousands of germs through eating, breathing, and exploring their environment. Their immune systems can handle most of these germs, but some can cause serious illness if left unprotected.

Like eating healthy foods, exercising, and getting frequent check-ups, preventable disease vaccinations can play a vital role in keeping children healthy.

Vaccines help children build strong protection against diseases before they are ever exposed to them. They train the immune system to recognize and fight off germs that can cause serious illness, keeping kids healthy and helping them grow, learn, and thrive.

Vaccine preventable diseases that still circulate in the U.S. include whooping cough, chickenpox, influenza, and there have even been recent cases of measles outbreaks. Since the decrease of children getting vaccinated, the risk of outbreaks due to vaccine-preventable diseases is currently at its highest point in the last 30 years, according to the Pan American Health Organization.

Preventable Disease Vaccination Schedule

Encourage parents to download these simple charts to ensure kids stay on track and are receiving the recommended preventable disease vaccinations during their well-child visits.

[!\[\]\(3e2231b1ad3ca8da8658228c00dd08e0_img.jpg\) **Click here**](#) to view charts.

Most early-childhood vaccinations require multiple doses - but about **1 in 3** U.S. children are not fully up to date on routine, vaccine-preventable immunizations by age 2.

[!\[\]\(870f5d5e9c0d57485634be3ecf52f3ca_img.jpg\) **Click here**](#) to view the study.



MEDICAL, DENTAL, AND VISION WELL-CHILD VISITS

Through ongoing preventive screenings, a child's doctor can often detect and address health problems before they become serious and impact their ability to grow and learn. Regular doctor visits provide comprehensive health promotion, include disease prevention exams, and monitor the development of kids through age 21.

✓ **On-schedule** for all preventable disease vaccinations.

✓ **Getting plenty of sleep.** Adequate amounts of sleep improve attention, behavior, creativity, learning, memory, problem-solving abilities, relationships, and overall mental and physical health.

✓ **Growing and developing properly** (heart, mental health, reproductive health, etc.). According to Better Health Partnership, approximately 20 percent of children in the U.S. suffer from a mental illness, and only 20 percent of these children receive treatment.

✓ **Receiving the proper nutrition.** Healthy eating in childhood is essential for growth and development and to prevent disease. Kids that struggle with weight have an increased risk of future health problems, including diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, and cancer.

✓ **Practicing dental hygiene.** Establishing good oral health practices starts when a child is young and encourages life-long dental hygiene. Early dental check-ups help prevent cavities, gum disease, and tooth decay, which can lead to pain, trouble concentrating, and other medical problems. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, tooth decay is one of the most common chronic childhood diseases in the U.S.

✓ **Screening for eye health.** Annual eye exams monitor vision milestones and ensure a child's eye health is on target. Vision problems can impair a child's development, interfere with learning, and lead to permanent vision loss, which plays a vital role in physical, cognitive, and social development. Poor vision impacts children's day-to-day activities and their ability to read, write, or play a sport.

Regular well-child visits help keep children **happy, healthy, and thriving**. The Bright Futures/American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) developed a schedule and set of comprehensive health guidelines for preventative well-child care, known as the "periodicity schedule." [!\[\]\(faf942dc3e59ce8eb64b4ac481eca7e0_img.jpg\) **Click here**](#) to view.



KEEPING KIDS ACTIVE

Encourage kids to live an active lifestyle, such as playing outside and participating in sports.

Physical activity plays a crucial role in the prevention and treatment of disease and promotion of health and wellness. Kids who develop healthy patterns at a young age will carry them forward.

Fewer than *one in five* children in the U.S. get the recommended amount of physical activity needed for heart health, according to the American Heart Association's 2025 Heart & Stroke Statistical Update.

Here is why physical activity is so essential for kids:

- ✓ Burns calories instead of storing them as fat
- ✓ Builds strong bones and muscles for strength and endurance
- ✓ Relieves stress and anxiety and helps with focus and concentration
- ✓ Maintains blood sugar levels and lowers blood pressure and cholesterol levels
- ✓ Enhances cardiorespiratory fitness
- ✓ Improves sleep and mental health
- ✓ Supports better posture and balance
- ✓ Boosts self-esteem and social interactions

According to The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans:

It's recommended that children and adolescents age six and older get **at least one hour a day** of moderate or vigorous aerobic activity.

"On average, young people who exercise more have lower levels of depression, stress and psychological distress, and higher levels of positive self-image, life satisfaction and psychological well-being."

– American Psychological Association



HEALTH LITERACY

Health is part of our everyday life and teaching health literacy at a young age is part of the process of caring for, educating, and raising children. Many health problems as an adult result from poor health habits created during childhood. Understanding the impact of healthy behavior will help children lead healthier and more productive lives into adulthood, while reducing overall healthcare costs.

Here is why:

- ✓ Helps promote, prevent, and maintain physical and mental health
- ✓ Improves health outcomes
- ✓ Empowers individuals and families to advocate for themselves and make better health and healthcare utilization choices
- ✓ Decreases costly emergency room visits, hospitalizations, and hospital readmissions

Examples of Healthy Behaviors for Kids

- Limiting screen time and encouraging reading a book or heading outdoors to play a game
- Eating healthy snacks such as fruits and vegetables and reducing highly processed foods and added sugars
- Following a bedtime routine and getting enough sleep
- Brushing teeth and flossing regularly



find the right care

Running to the ER for a child's minor illness or injury could cost thousands of dollars. Encourage employees to use our no-cost Find the Right Care Symptom Checker to match symptoms to the best healthcare option.

Visit findtherightcare.org to determine your best option.



HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES

Healthy eating is essential for a child's growth and helps prevent serious health conditions.

What children eat affects their ability to maintain a healthy body weight, consume nutrients, and reduce the risk of chronic illness such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and hypertension later in life.

Nutrition affects both physical wellbeing and mental health and promotes healthy development in children. Here are the effects of eating a healthy diet:

Mental and Behavioral Benefits

- Better concentration and memory, leading to better academic performance
- Higher self-image and confidence
- Decreased anxiety, irritability, and depression
- Improved sleep patterns

Physical Benefits

- Boosted immune system, which decreases the chances of long-term health problems
- Stronger muscles and bones
- Less risk of cavities, eating disorders, obesity, and malnutrition
- Increased energy and better participation in sports

“About **40% of children and adolescents** are overweight or have obesity” -USDA & HHS *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025*



[Click here](#) to view the report.



Promote #HealthyKids

We make spreading the message and educating employees about children's health as simple as 1... 2... 3...

1

SELECT A MESSAGE

Copy and paste the message.



2

PAIR MESSAGE WITH A PHOTO

Right click on the photo and save it to your computer.



3

SHARE

On your organization's intranet, social media, in a newsletter, or during a meeting.



WEEK	CATEGORY	MESSAGE	IMAGE
1	Childhood Immunizations	Childhood preventable disease vaccinations are one of the best ways to make sure your child stays healthy and safe. Check if your child is up to date using the AAP's Immunization Schedule. [Link]	
2	Well-Child Visits	Back to school means back to the doctor! 🧑‍⚕️ Follow these helpful tips for your child's next annual wellness exam. [Link]	
3	Keeping Kids Active	Sign your kids up for a sport to keep them active! ⚽ It encourages kids to be social and helps meet the minimum 1 hour of exercise that children need per day. [Link]	
4	Healthy Food Choices	Get kids started on a healthy eating adventure with these games and activities from the USDA! 🥬 Teach them about MyPlate and the food groups to set them on a healthy path. [Link]	
5	Health Literacy	Help kids notice their emotions and how they feel in their bodies. 🧠💖 This guide from Kids Mental Health Foundation shows families and educators simple ways to build these important skills. [Link]	

WEEK	CATEGORY	MESSAGE	IMAGE
6	Childhood Immunizations	Preventable disease vaccines are a critical way to protect against diseases and create a safer and healthier environment for everyone. Learn more: [Link]	
7	Well-Child Visits	Well-child visits are key to preventing illness. Ask your child's doctor about recommended preventable disease vaccines, nutrition, and safety. [Link]	
8	Keeping Kids Active	Encourage outdoor play and watch kids thrive! 🌳 Being active outside improves their physical health, mood, and focus. Learn more: [Link]	
9	Healthy Food Choices	Breakfast fuels the brain! 🥣 Studies show that kids who eat a balanced morning meal perform better in school. Explore ways to ensure they start the day with a healthy meal: [Link]	
10	Health Literacy	👁️ Did you know pediatricians recommend an annual eye exam for all children? Regular checkups can detect vision problems early. Learn 6 ways to protect and support your child's eye health: [Link]	

WEEK	CATEGORY	MESSAGE	IMAGE
11	Childhood Immunizations	Vaccines protect children from serious preventable diseases and help them stay healthy now and in the future. Learn how immunizations support lifelong health: [Link]	
12	Well-Child Visits	Well-visits are more than checkups. They're an opportunity to track your child's growth, behavior, and learning milestones. ✅ Ask your pediatrician how your child is progressing! [Link]	
13	Keeping Kids Active	👧 Regular movement helps children grow stronger, sleep better, and manage stress more effectively. ⭐ Here are 5 practical tips to make physical activity part of everyday life. [Link]	
14	Healthy Food Choices	🍏 Good nutrition fuels healthy growth and learning! Explore how to create balanced meals with fruits, veggies, whole grains, and lean proteins, plus tips for limiting added sugars and salt: [Link]	
15	Health Literacy	Did you know your child needs a dental check-up twice a year? 🦷⭐ Good oral health doesn't just affect teeth, it impacts overall well-being, school performance, and confidence. Learn simple ways to keep your child's smile bright and healthy: [Link]	

WEEK	CATEGORY	MESSAGE	IMAGE
16	Childhood Immunizations	Watching your teen head off to college isn't easy, but making sure they're protected can bring peace of mind. ✅ Check that your student is up to date on all recommended vaccines before they go! [Link]	
17	Well-Child Visits	Your child's well-visit is the perfect time to discuss any questions or concerns. Come prepared with notes on sleep, eating habits, and behavior to make the most of your appointment. [Link]	
18	Keeping Kids Active	💪 Did you know? Kids who are physically active tend to sleep better, manage stress more easily, and perform better in school. Experts recommend at least one hour of active play each day. Small steps like family walks or backyard games can make a big difference! [Link]	
19	Healthy Food Choices	🍴 Good nutrition fuels healthy growth, boosts brain development, and supports long-term wellness. 🥬 Help your child eat well by planning balanced meals, involving them in cooking, and modeling healthy choices. [Link]	
20	Health Literacy	Is your child sick? Use the no-cost symptom checker to determine your best health care option. Check symptoms here: [Link]	

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21	Childhood Immunizations	<p>💉 Vaccines are one of the simplest ways to keep your child healthy and safe. Routine immunizations protect against preventable diseases and help kids stay strong as they grow. Talk with your pediatrician to make sure your child is up to date. [Link]</p>	
22	Well-Child Visits	<p>Have questions about your baby or child's health? 🗣️ Visit the "Ask the Pediatrician" section on the American Academy of Pediatrics website to find expert advice. [Link]</p>	
23	Keeping Kids Active	<p>🏠 Looking for fun ways to keep kids active inside? Explore 35+ indoor activities that support balance, coordination, strength, and imaginative growth. Turn everyday spaces into movement zones at home. [Link]</p>	
24	Healthy Food Choices	<p>One of the most important skills to teach children to encourage lifelong healthy habits, is the ability to cook. Check out these healthy recipes you can make with the family: [Link]</p>	
25	Health Literacy	<p>Understanding health literacy allows kids to grow up practicing healthy habits and making informed decisions about their health. Here's how to teach kids about health literacy: [Link]</p>	

WEEK	CATEGORY	MESSAGE	IMAGE
26	Childhood Immunizations	We can't predict every part of our children's future but we can help protect their health. 🦠 Make sure your child is up to date on all recommended vaccines to keep them strong today and healthy for tomorrow. [Link]	
27	Well-Child Visits	🌙 Good sleep matters at every age! Kids and teens need the right amount of rest to grow, learn, and stay strong. Follow age-by-age sleep tips from trusted pediatric experts to build healthy routines that last. [Link]	
28	Keeping Kids Active	Participation in sports has great benefits for children's mental and physical health. Learn simple safety tips to keep your child thriving! [Link]	
29	Healthy Food Choices	It's crucial to start practicing healthy eating habits in childhood. Learn how to create healthy mealtimes for your family and what nutrients kids should be consuming: [Link]	
30	Health Literacy	Struggling to afford your child's medical care? Some programs can provide affordable — even free — medical care and meet or supplement a person's medical insurance needs. [Link]	

WEEK	CATEGORY	MESSAGE	IMAGE
31	Childhood Immunizations	Your baby's vaccinations help protect against serious diseases from day one, building a foundation of health that lasts a lifetime. Explore this helpful guide to learn which vaccines your little one needs and when they're due: [Link]	
32	Well-Child Visits	👩‍⚕️👶 Your child's well-visit is more than a quick check-up, it's a key step in supporting their growth, health, and future. Yearly visits give you time to ask questions and share concerns with their pediatrician. [Link]	
33	Keeping Kids Active	Children need at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day. 🚴 Here are eleven ways to encourage your child to be physically active. [Link]	
34	Healthy Food Choices	🥗 Explore expert tips for mealtimes and learn the top 10 healthiest foods for kids for good nutrition. [Link]	
35	Health Literacy	As children grow, they may experience stress or anxiety at school or within social situations. Learn about helping your child cope with stress. [Link]	

WEEK	CATEGORY	MESSAGE	IMAGE
36	Childhood Immunizations	Today, most children in the U.S. lead much healthier lives. Preventable disease vaccinations are one of the success stories of modern medicine. [Link]	
37	Well-Child Visits	Discuss your child's complete medical history with your doctor during their well-child visit such as, prior screenings, diet, sleep, dental, medical care, family, and social histories. Learn more: [Link]	
38	Keeping Kids Active	❄️ Don't let winter slow your family down! Staying active as the days get shorter helps boost energy, mood, and overall health. 🏂 Check out the full list of winter activity tips here: [Link]	
39	Healthy Food Choices	🥗 Packing school lunches can be simple, healthy, and delicious! Check out this guide on how to boost nutrition with colorful fruits and veggies, whole-grains, and smart protein swaps—even when you're dealing with picky eaters or allergy rules. [Link]	
40	Health Literacy	Your child wakes up sick. What do you do? Use this Symptom Checker to help guide you to the best healthcare options: [Link]	

WEEK	CATEGORY	MESSAGE	IMAGE
41	Childhood Immunizations	<p>🛡️ When kids aren't vaccinated, it puts others at risk, such as babies and people with weak immune systems. Read why keeping up with childhood vaccines matters for everyone: [Link]</p>	
42	Well-Child Visits	<p>👩‍⚕️ Well-child visits are more than just checkups, they're key opportunities to monitor growth, catch concerns early, and support your child's health. Find out what happens at each visit and how to make the most of your next appointment: [Link]</p>	
43	Keeping Kids Active	<p>🏆 Team sports aren't just good for the body, they're great for the brain too! A recent study found that kids who play team sports had better focus, memory, and emotional control. Read more: [Link]</p>	
44	Healthy Food Choices	<p>🍳 A strong start matters! Breakfast helps kids stay focused, energized, and ready to learn. Make mornings count with quick, balanced meals. Learn how: [Link]</p>	
45	Health Literacy	<p>If your child has a sore throat, cough, or runny nose, you might expect the doctor to prescribe antibiotics. Sometimes antibiotics are not the correct treatment, here's why: [Link]</p>	

WEEK	CATEGORY	MESSAGE	IMAGE
46	Childhood Immunizations	Shots can be stressful for kids, but you can help make them smoother! Simple steps like distraction, comfort, and calm support can make the experience easier for everyone. Learn how: [Link]	
47	Well-Child Visits	A federally funded community health center is an option for low-cost medical care for your kids. Get checkups, preventable disease vaccinations, treatment, dental care, prescription drugs, and mental healthcare. Find one near you: [Link]	
48	Keeping Kids Active	🎉 Ready to turn moving into memorable family time? Make fitness fun instead of a chore with creative ideas like obstacle adventures, dance missions, and games. Take a look at these easy, positive ways to get your family moving together: [Link]	
49	Healthy Food Choices	Want to help your family eat smarter and feel better? ❤️ Check out these simple, everyday nutrition tips from the American Heart Association that make a big difference in building healthy habits for kids and adults: [Link]	
50	Health Literacy	Prescriptions for your child could become costly. Did you know you may be able to save by using a discount card? Check it out: [Link]	



QUESTIONS?

Email info@healthactioncouncil.org or visit
<https://healthactioncouncil.org/what-we-do/health-improvement/healthy-kids>



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Health Action Council is a not-for-profit 501(c)(6) organization representing mid and large-size employers that works to improve human and economic health through thought leadership, innovative services, and collaboration. It provides value to its members by facilitating projects that improve the quality and moderate the cost of healthcare purchased by its members for their employees, dependents, and retirees.

Health Action Council also collaborates with key stakeholders health plans, physicians, hospitals and the pharmaceutical industry to improve the quality and efficiency of healthcare in the community.

LET'S KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING!

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