

Community Partnerships

Community Partnerships = Improved Student Health and Learning

Linking community activities to the classroom improves behavior and positively impacts student achievement.ⁱ Community partnerships add depth and practicality to classroom instruction by bringing the outside world in. Examples of effective partnerships include: local farmers connecting students to the places where their food is grown; extension educators and grocery market dietitians teaching students how to read food labels and identifying appropriate portion sizes; and local fitness centers providing a guest yoga or Zumba instructor to expose students to an array of lifetime fitness activities.



Elements of Effective, Sustainable School-Community Partnershipsⁱⁱ

- Form a School Wellness Council comprised of school and community stakeholders.
- Conduct a needs assessment to identify gaps in services that community partners can fill.
- Identify any connections among school staff or families with local businesses and nonprofit organizations. Utilize your network!
- Designate a person located at the school to lead the coordination of school–community partnerships.
- Set clear expectations and establish shared accountability for school and community partners.
- Develop a detailed sustainability plan, which includes diversified funding streams.
- Co-create a communication plan to share program successes and inspire others.

What Community Partners Can Do

Community partners can help with school wellness initiatives by encouraging your students to develop healthy habits for a lifetime of good health. Typical partnerships include projects such as:

- After-school physical activities
- School gardens
- Farm to school
- Nutrition education
- Professional development
- School health fairs
- School food pantries
- Safe Routes to School
- School-based health centers

“ The Action for Healthy Kids grant we received allowed us to purchase active indoor recess equipment for our students. ”

– 3rd Grade Teacher, Holy Name School

Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child

It takes a village to raise healthy kids. The [Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child \(WSCC\)](http://www.ascd.org/programs/learning-and-health/wsc-model.aspx) model reflects the symbiotic relationship between a student's holistic well-being and their academic performance. Just as a bike won't work with two flat tires, a child whose health needs are unmet will not perform optimally in the classroom. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), co-creators of the WSCC model, acknowledge this is no small feat and encourage community collaboration to achieve the task of educating *the whole child*.

WSCC Elementsⁱⁱⁱ

1. Health Education
2. Physical Education & Physical Activity
3. Nutrition Environment & Services
4. Health Services
5. Counseling, Psychological & Social Services
6. Social & Emotional Climate
7. Physical Environment
8. Employee Wellness
9. Family Engagement
10. Community Involvement

Community Resources

[Action for Healthy Kids*](#)

[Big Garden](#)

[Brain Blasters](#)

[Building Healthy Futures](#)

[Cooking Matters](#)

[Fuel Up to Play 60*](#)

[Go Nebraska Kids- 5-4-3-2-1 Go!*](#)

[Nutrition Education Program- UNL Extension](#)

[Safe Routes to School](#)

[Truck Farm Omaha](#)

[Whispering Roots](#)

**School funding available*



Image source: ASCD. 2018.
<http://www.ascd.org/programs/learning-and-health/wsc-model.aspx>

Check out Live Well Omaha Kids' [School Wellness Resource Guide](#) for additional community resources.

Join Partners for Healthy Schools

Live Well Omaha Kids convenes a group of school wellness champions for quarterly meetings throughout the school year to facilitate the sharing of best practices, funding and professional development opportunities. Email [Sheena Helgenberger](mailto:Sheena.Helgenberger@live-well-omaha-kids.org), to be added to the mailing list.

Every Kid Healthy Week

Whether you're a seasoned community collaborator or a relative newbie, one thing everyone can get behind is the goal of making Every Kid Healthy! Celebrated the fourth week in April each year, Every Kid Healthy Week is an opportunity to engage the community in efforts to create healthier school environments where students eat well and stay active! [Learn more](#)

ⁱ New Hampshire Department of Education. *Why Family and Community Involvement is Important*. .2012. https://www.education.nh.gov/instruction/school_health/health_coord_family.htm

ⁱⁱ Adapted from National Association of School Psychologists. *Nine Elements of Effective School Community Partnerships to Address Student Mental Health, Physical Health, and Overall Wellness*. January 2016. <http://www.nasponline.org/search/search-results?keywords=Nine+Elements+of+Effective+School+Community+Partnerships+to+Address+Student+Mental+Health%2C+Physical+Health%2C+and+Overall+Wellness>.

ⁱⁱⁱ ASCD. *Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child*. 2018. <http://www.ascd.org/programs/learning-and-health/wsc-model.aspx>