




# The Obesity Epidemic and Montana Students

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## What is the problem?

The 2015 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicates that among high school students:

### Obesity and Overweight

- 10% were obese (students who were  $\geq 95^{\text{th}}$  percentile for body mass index).
- 15% were overweight (students who were  $\geq 85^{\text{th}}$  percentile but  $< 95^{\text{th}}$  percentile for body mass index).

### Unhealthy Dietary Behaviors

- 5% did not eat fruit or drink 100% fruit juices during the 7 days before the survey.
- 10% did not eat fruit during the 7 days before the survey.
- 5% did not eat vegetables during the 7 days before the survey. (1)
- 19% drank a can, bottle, or glass of soda or pop daily during the 7 days before the survey. (2)
- 16% did not drink milk during the 7 days before the survey.
- 13% did not eat breakfast during the 7 days before the survey.

### Physical Inactivity

- 11% did not participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on at least 1 day. (3)
- 45% did not attend physical education classes on 1 or more days in an average week when they were in school.
- 22% watched television 3 or more hours per day on an average school day.
- 34% played video or computer games 3 or more hours per day on an average school day. (4)
- 38% did not play on at least one sports team run by their school or community groups during the 12 months before the survey.

## What are the solutions?

More health education ▪ More physical education and physical activity programs ▪ Healthier school environments

## What is the status?

The 2014 Montana School Health Profiles indicates that among high schools:

### Health Education

- 90% required students to take 2 or more health education courses.
- 65% taught 20 key nutrition and dietary behavior topics in a required health education course.
- 82% taught 13 key physical activity topics in a required health education course.

### PE and Physical Activity

- 99% required physical education for all students.
- 32% offered physical activity breaks in classrooms during the school day outside of physical education class.
- 55% offered opportunities for all students to participate in intramural activities of physical activity clubs.

### School Environment

- 52% sell soda pop or fruit drinks that are not 100% juice from vending machines or at the school store, canteen, or snack bar.
- 40% always offered fruits or non-fried vegetables in vending machines and school stores, canteens, or snack bars, and during celebrations when foods and beverages are offered.
- 46% prohibited all forms of advertising and promotion of candy, fast food restaurants, or soft drinks in all locations. (5)
- 51% used the School Health Index or a similar self-assessment tool to assess their policies, activities, and programs in nutrition and physical activity.

1. Green salad, potatoes, [excluding French fries, fried potatoes, or potato chips], carrots, or other vegetables.
2. Not including diet soda or pop.
3. Doing any kind of physical activity that increased their heart rate and made them breathe hard some of the time during the 7 days before the survey.
4. Played video or computer games or used a computer for something that was not school work.
5. In school buildings; on school grounds, including on the outside of the school building, on playing fields, or other areas of the campus; on school buses or other vehicles used to transport students; and in school publications.