

# On the *MOVE*



Profiles of Promising Professional Development  
Initiatives for Promoting Physical Activity During  
the Out-of-School Time Hours

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## FORWARD

We are pleased to present this collection of profiles of professional development initiatives that are hosted by organizations promoting the healthy development of children and youth during the out-of-school time (OST) hours. These profiles were organized as part of a Commissioned Analysis of the implementation of the National AfterSchool Association's Physical Activity Standards which was funded by the Active Living Research Program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJ #70583). The National AfterSchool Association adopted the Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Standards developed by the Healthy Out-of-School Time Coalition (HOST) in 2011.<sup>1</sup>

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans Midcourse Report identified Community and Out-of-School Time Program settings as showing limited evidence about specific intervention strategies to increase physical activity among children and youth, and noted that these settings should be highlighted as priority areas for additional research. There is among OST service providers, intermediaries, and advocates, a substantial interest in, and organization around, promoting physical activity in OST settings, and equipping program leaders and staff with the necessary skills and strategies to work effectively on raising children and youth's physical activity participation. A number of promising professional development models do exist. These models offer insight and guidance towards training program leaders and front line staff in the delivery of high quality physical activity experiences during the OST hours.

It is our hope that this collection of profiles is responsive to some of the gaps identified in the Midcourse Report and informs providers, funders, school administrators, and policy makers about promising approaches to increasing physical activity for children and youth participating in OST programs. OST programs can be a significant contributor to childhood wellness and chronic disease reduction and we place great value on this "practice-based evidence" emanating from the field.

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<sup>1</sup>The Standards were developed by members of the HOST leadership team: Jean Wiecha, Georgia Hall, Ellen Gannett, and Barbara Roth with funding from the Active Living Research Program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJ#67296).



## A World Fit for Kids!

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### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A World Fit for Kids! (WFIT) is a healthy behavior and personal empowerment training program designed for children in grades K–12 during the afterschool program hours. WFIT began in the wake of the 1992 Los Angeles riots as a partnership between LA-based health clubs, the fitness industry, and an elementary school. Created in 1993, the Fitness Alliance of Los Angeles had a goal of bringing professional fitness instruction back into schools in response to the elimination of traditional physical education classes. An afterschool program component was added in 1994 and was later followed by a full transition to an afterschool program model. In 1999, WFIT formed a successful partnership with Beyond the Bell, the division of the Los Angeles Unified School District that oversees the district’s before- and after-school programs. Through trainings and programs, WFIT seeks to ensure that youth develop the physical, mental, and emotional fitness they need to succeed.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Using a train-the-trainer approach, WFIT trains high school students, parents, and teachers to mentor and coach younger students in staying physically active and making healthy decisions. WFIT leadership training programs include Physical Activity Leadership (PAL), Mentors in Motion<sup>SM</sup> (MiM), Nourishing Matters<sup>SM</sup>, and Freshman Leadership Program (FLP). Master trainers guide others on how to teach and incorporate healthy behaviors and personal empowerment program models into any existing program and curriculum.

- **Physical Activity Leadership (PAL)**

This three or six-hour interactive workshop is designed to educate program leadership on what a quality physical activity is and prepares staff of any fitness level to lead safe, fun, and meaningful activities. During the training, participants (students, parents, and teachers) engage in a physical activity and then discuss what worked and how to improve the activity to make it a quality activity. The hands-on approach helps participants understand how to meet a specific goal, get all kids moving and engage youth safely. The training prepares participants to lead warm-up activities, energy breaks, track heart rates, and understand how to maximize resources, space, and available equipment. The training also explores ways to utilize curricula (such as GenMove, SPARK, CATCH, or Sport4All) and incorporate math and literacy activities.

- **Mentors in Motion<sup>SM</sup> (MiM)**

MiM is a comprehensive healthy behavior and personal empowerment leadership training for participants who work directly with youth. The training works to increase self-awareness, build confidence, and strengthen interpersonal skills. The program teaches personal fitness/nutrition education, leadership advocacy, conflict resolution, group management, first aid, and CPR. Teens in the program receive mentoring, academic assistance, enrichment activities, and work readiness training. Teen participants have the opportunity to apply for a six-month internship as Assistant Coach-Mentor.



## A World Fit for Kids! (continued)

- **Nourishing Matters<sup>SM</sup>**

This interactive nutrition workshop helps guide participants through a health and wellness self-discovery process as they explore new healthy living perspectives. Participants assess their own overall health and develop an awareness of the four energy regulators that affect them physically, emotionally, and mentally. The training provides the tools needed for (a) making informed choices about healthy eating, (b) exploring relationships with food and the impacts on health and well-being, and (c) developing and utilizing strategies to create a healthy culture in one's community and personal life.

- **Freshman Leadership Program (FLP)**

FLP provides opportunities for students transitioning from middle to high school to build self-esteem and self-awareness, practice success strategies, develop open communication and healthy relationship skills, and build mentoring relationships. High school students who have completed the MiM training serve as group leaders and mentors to FLP participants, leading reflective-discussion workshops, games, and team-building exercises.

### **HOW A WORLD FIT FOR KIDS! SUPPORTS THE HEPA STANDARDS**

The WFIT program encompasses (a) the California AfterSchool Network Nutrition and Physical Activity Committee's Nutrition and Physical Activity Resources and (b) the California Department of Education's California After School Physical Activity Guidelines and other guiding documents on nutrition and healthy behaviors. These sets of guidelines from California were instrumental in the development of HEPA.

### **PROGRAM AVAILABILITY**

WFIT afterschool programming is currently available in the Greater Los Angeles area. The model is replicable, and WFIT's training division is creating a sustainable, accessible way for others to achieve the same results. By working with a WFIT master trainer, youth-serving professionals and organizations can learn how to teach and incorporate the WFIT healthy behaviors and personal empowerment program model. For more information, visit the WFIT website at <http://worldfit.ehclients.com/training/>.

### **HIGHLIGHT**

WFIT training is based on awareness and observation; having a plan, a goal, and putting it into action; being mindful of what is working and what is not; and making changes until you succeed. WFIT alumni stories showcase numerous examples of elementary students returning as middle school volunteers, high school mentors, and later as college-aged supervisors.

### **RESEARCH**

Currently, there is no published independent research study of WFIT. Unpublished research data indicate (a) elementary youth have showed improvement in their understanding of healthy eating, engagement in physical activity, and increased strength measured by the Fitnessgram tests and (b) 54% of middle and high school students engaged in moderate-vigorous activity at least five of seven days compared to 8% of teens nationally.



# Triple Play: A Game Plan for the Mind, Body and Soul

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## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Triple Play is a comprehensive health and wellness program of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) created to improve the overall health of Club members ages 6–18 by increasing physical activity, teaching good nutrition, and promoting the development of healthy relationships. The program is called “Triple Play” in reference to its three-pronged strategy of targeting the Mind (nutrition and healthy habits), Body (physical activity and teen leadership), and Soul (social development through activities in the soul of the Club which is the games room). Developed in 2005 in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Triple Play components include youth nutrition education, 60 minutes of daily physical activity, and a variety of competitive and non-competitive games for all ages. Since inception, Triple Play has become the second most utilized program of the BGCA, with about 83% of all Clubs participating. Triple Play has served as an important mechanism for the rollout of the HEPA standards in BGCA.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Triple Play training components are available through online and in-person workshops. Staff have full access to a variety of 45-minute video-based training modules hosted on the BGCA’s website. In addition, staff can attend trainings provided through BGCA Leadership University conferences and workshops. New trainings are being developed to reflect the HEPA standards.

Triple Play materials include a number of program implementation guides including Healthy Habits (a 10 lesson curriculum), Daily Challenges, Triple Play Leadership Clubs as well as resources for creating quality social recreational activities, such as the *Smart Guide to Social Recreation: Effective Gamesroom Management and Leadership and the Back Pocket Program Hints* guide. All program materials are age appropriate for members ages 6-18. The program also offers a parents’ guide, Parents Game Plan, which describes healthy eating options and physical activities for home.

## HOW TRIPLE PLAY SUPPORTS THE HEPA STANDARDS

Healthy Habits, the nutrition component of Triple Play, was created in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and aligns with the HEPA healthy eating standards. The Healthy Habits program features age-appropriate modules to teach youth ages 6–18 concepts about nutrition and healthy living including limiting portion sizes, setting personal goals, and making smart snack choices. Triple Play promotes year-round physical fitness through daily challenges, Sports Leadership Clubs, competitive and non-competitive games, and leadership camps. In alignment with HEPA, Triple Play promotes 60 minutes or more of physical activity as well as guidance on aerobic, bone-strengthening, and muscle-strengthening activities.



## Triple Play: A Game Plan for the Mind, Body and Soul (continued)

### PROGRAM AVAILABILITY

The BGCA University trainings are limited to BGCA staff.

### HIGHLIGHT

Through the leadership club component of Boys & Girls Clubs, youth become ambassadors of a club and engage in the promotion of healthy eating and physical activity in their communities. A recent two-and-a-half day youth summit brought together 125 Club youth to the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, CO. With Triple Play as the primary focus, youth worked with representatives of professional sports groups such as US Lacrosse, USA Rugby, and USA Table Tennis on activity leadership, skill-building, and engagement strategies with hopes to energize and activate their home communities.

### RESEARCH

The Triple Play program was evaluated in 30 Clubs nationwide by Youth Development Strategies, Inc. Findings indicate that Triple Play had a significant impact across a wide range of outcomes for youth, as well as on the Clubs' culture and structure.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, Triple Play was recognized as a *Program that Works* by the Promising Practices Network (PPN) in fall 2010. PPN offers research-based information to validate the effectiveness of programs that serve children and families, and is often referred to as a "model program" or "best practices" site. Visitors to the PPN site can be assured that programs listed have met high standards of scientific credibility, objectivity and clarity. The website is run by the RAND Corporation, a national think tank comprised of more than 150 researchers and consultants who specialize in child health, juvenile justice, education, child care, labor and demographics.

The Promising Practices Network named Triple Play as a "Programs that Work" in 2010.

Available at <http://www.promisingpractices.net/program.asp?programid=276>

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<sup>1</sup>Gambone, M., Akey, T., Furano, K., & Osterman, L. (2009, August). *Promoting healthy lifestyles: The impact of Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Triple Play Program on healthy eating, exercise patterns, and developmental outcomes: Final evaluation report*. Philadelphia, PA: Youth Development Strategies.





# Philadelphia Youth Sports Collaborative

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## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Philadelphia Youth Sports Collaborative (PYSC) works with local nonprofit youth-serving organizations to support sports as a framework for healthy youth development. PYSC began four years ago as an informal partnership between several local Philadelphia sports-based programs. Recognizing their common interest in professional development, idea sharing, peer community building, and joint grant writing, the group formally established the Philadelphia Youth Sports Collaborative. PYSC works to strengthen program delivery and participation impacts on youth by facilitating communication, cooperation, and sharing of resources between partner organizations. Currently PYSC works with eight partners and 30 member organizations throughout the Philadelphia area.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PYSC supports program staff and the public by offering character-building and life-skills training within the framework of healthy physical development. Monthly seminars, featuring three peer panelists and focused on youth sports topics, are offered to the public. Attendees engage in small group discussions, have access to seminar minutes, and are provided with attendee contact information.

Each month, PYSC updates its website with new documents and research links along with resources from local, regional, and national organizations involved with youth sports. Sample resources include (a) an online professional development calendar that provides information about youth sports workshops, conferences, and webinars; and (b) a traveling service directory, featuring youth-sports outreach programs that travel to and directly engage students.

Member organizations help create policy for PYSC and can take part in special projects such as Sports for Juvenile Justice (see highlight section). PYSC is also working with Up2Us to place coaches in programs and provide trainings for its members' direct-service staff. Local foundations have funded a series of nonprofit capacity-building workshops for PYSC administrative staff.

## HOW PYSC SUPPORTS THE HEPA STANDARDS

The Health Promotion Council of South East Philadelphia published the Healthy Living Standards, which are promoted to all local programs in the Collaborative and align with HEPA standards. Programs also align with local wellness standards as required by individual funders. PYSC is currently hosting a HOST Manager from the Alliance for Healthier Generation to support implementation of local and HEPA standards.



### **PROGRAM AVAILABILITY**

Membership in PYSC is free. Organization members agree to (a) implement youth sports programs with a focus on positive youth development, (b) serve youth in the Philadelphia area, (c) work with under-resourced communities serving low-income populations, and (d) have a 501(c)(3) status. Access to PYSC professional development opportunities is available to all members.

### **HIGHLIGHT**

The Sports for Juvenile Justice (SJJ) program was created in 2012 in collaboration with the U.S. Attorney's Office and the Philadelphia Juvenile Probation Department, with generous funding from the Department of Human Services. SJJ places juvenile offenders into one of several PYSC member programs that offer activities such as tennis, squash, fishing, lacrosse, and Ultimate Frisbee as well as homework help, adult mentoring, and similar interventions. The goals of the program are to reduce recidivism rates, promote positive youth development, and cultivate adult-to-youth and youth-to-youth relationships. SJJ was awarded the "Best New Project" at the Beyond Sport Summit 2013 held in Philadelphia, PA. Beyond Sport is a global organization that promotes, develops, and supports the use of sport to create positive social change.

### **RESEARCH**

PYSC regularly conducts internal surveys and data collection; some of these reports are posted on the OSTRC and PYSC websites. An article recently published in *AfterSchool Today* (National AfterSchool Association), November 2013, featured PYSC.



## Healthy Behaviors Initiative

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### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Center for Collaborative Solutions (CCS) is a nonprofit organization focused on developing innovative and effective ways for out-of-school time (OST) programs to collaborate and achieve goals. CCS designed and implemented the Healthy Behaviors Initiative (HBI), which supports programs in implementing exemplary practices in nutrition, physical activity, and food security. The three goals of HBI are to increase children's physical activity, improve children's eating habits, and ensure that youth and their families have access to adequate healthy food.

There are six practices that guide HBI: (1) intentionally embed healthy eating, physical activity and food security in program vision and design, starting with staff development and role modeling, (2) incorporate youth development principles and practices into everything programs do, including physical activities, healthy eating, and food security; (3) ensure that program activities are engaging and meaningful; (4) develop authentic partnerships with schools, families, and the community; (5) increase food security of children and families of participating children, and (6) secure adequate sustainable funding to support Healthy Behaviors activities.

Program sites implementing the practices at an exemplary level have been certified as Healthy Behaviors Learning Centers. The Centers—26 afterschool program sites in low-income communities across California—coach and support other programs in their regions. These learning centers impact the practices at almost 800 of their own program sites as well as hundreds of programs in their regions. Most programs take about a year to achieve exemplary practice status.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Healthy Behaviors Learning Centers offer a multifaceted approach to professional development for program directors and staff guided by *Changing Lives, Saving Lives: A Step-by-Step Guide to Developing Exemplary Practices in Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Food Security in Afterschool Programs*. Every six weeks, over the course of a year, program directors and site coordinators from multiple program sites participate in a one-day formal learning session. Each session focuses on one of the six practices. In addition to the learning sessions, staff receive on-site coaching from an HBI consultant. To assess growth in healthy nutrition, physical activity, and food security practices, programs use an HBI-developed tool with multiple indicators of progress for each practice. Program site directors are expected to track progress using the indicators with principals, program partners, and families. Resources and tools shared as part of HBI are intended to make nutrition and physical activity part of core programming.



### **HOW HEALTHY BEHAVIORS INITIATIVE SUPPORTS THE HEPA STANDARDS**

HBI, created in consultation with expert stakeholders, grounded in research and deep afterschool experience, and tested and implemented by a learning community of multi-site afterschool programs, aligns with HEPA standards. CCS and the Healthy Behaviors Learning Centers partner with regional and state organizations to promote state and federal policies to strengthen the role of afterschool programs in addressing the childhood obesity crisis. The organizations also work to develop resources for afterschool programs that want to improve their nutrition, physical activity, and food security practices.

### **PROGRAM AVAILABILITY**

Support is available to afterschool programs interested in improving their nutrition, physical activity and/or food security practices through site visits and trainings from the Healthy Behaviors Learning Centers. The step-by-step guide, *Changing Lives, Saving Lives*, is available on the CCS website, together with a wealth of resources to help programs create healthy environments.

### **HIGHLIGHT**

Since its inception, HBI has altered the lives of hundreds of thousands of participants as well as the staff and family members who support them. Children who were once overweight and rarely moving are now regularly taking part in physical activities. Staff and family members who never exercised before are more active and better engaged in healthy behaviors. CSS estimates that collectively thousands of pounds have been lost through HBI participation. HBI continues to develop new learning centers so that California programs in every afterschool region have access to the necessary knowledge and resources to address the serious health issues youth face and make a difference in their lives

### **RESEARCH**

Fletcher, A. J. (2010, Summer). Afterschool programs: Taking advantage of an unprecedented opportunity to combat child obesity. *Weight Management Matters*, 8(1). Retrieved from [wmdpg.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Summer101.pdf](http://wmdpg.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Summer101.pdf)



# Alliance for a Healthier Generation

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## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation, founded by the American Heart Association and Clinton Foundation, is one of the nation's leading non-profits working to reduce the prevalence of childhood obesity. The Alliance's Healthy Schools Program (HSP) began in 2006 in 231 schools in 13 states. The program has grown to include more than 20,000 schools in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico—becoming the nation's most extensive effort to prevent childhood obesity in schools. In 2010, the Alliance expanded its efforts to include OST programs. Recognizing that a large number of youth participate in afterschool programs, community centers, clubs, and camps, the Alliance took the lessons learned in schools and applied that knowledge to OST environments. Now more than 300 OST programs around the country are using the Healthy Out-of-School Time (HOST) Framework to improve wellness for youth.

The HOST Framework includes 11 standards based on best policies and practices that positively impact healthy eating and physical activity behaviors among youth and staff. The Framework encompasses the HEPA standards and emphasizes a six-step self-improvement process for building healthier OST environments. These steps include (1) build support, (2) assess your OST site, (3) develop an action plan, (4) explore resources, (5) take action, and (6) celebrate success. The associated tools and resources incorporate positive youth development practices that emphasize youth engagement, youth voice, and youth-adult relationships.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The HOST Framework relies predominantly on online professional development training. An interactive training video as well as a myriad of resources are available on the Alliance website free to all. Online resources include (1) Resource Database, with free or low-cost resources and funding opportunities; (2) Success Story Database, showcasing innovative ideas from member sites; (3) Product Navigator and Calculator, including an Alliance-approved list of products and vendors; (4) School Recipes, listing school-friendly dishes created by world-class chefs and celebrity food stars; and (5) In Your State Reports, providing overviews of local healthy childhood initiatives. The website acts as a hub of communication where participants share information, resources, and expert advice, and collaborate as a community of learners. The Alliance also provides free ongoing support through online and telephone consults.

Eight cities/counties nationwide are receiving direct technical support to implement the HOST Framework. Each has its own Alliance Field Member who recruits OST programs to participate and provides training, train-the-trainer models, and ongoing in-person support as needed. Participating cities/counties include Kansas City, Little Rock, Los Angeles County, Miami-Dade County, New Orleans, Oklahoma City, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC.



## HOW THE HOST FRAMEWORK SUPPORTS THE HEPA STANDARDS

The HOST Framework encompasses the HEPA standards. The Alliance also supports individual communities in aligning the Framework with their own local or state standards.

## PROGRAM AVAILABILITY

The HOST Framework and accompanying resources are available free at <http://host.healthiergeneration.org/>. Registration is required, but there are no obligations or fees associated with registration.

## HIGHLIGHT

CP3 Central City's Afterzone, in New Orleans, Louisiana, was one of the first programs to use the Alliance's HOST Framework to implement National Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Standards. In its second year of participation, the Afterzone has continued to use the HOST Framework as guidance, establishing 'Healthy Holidays at CP3' as a specific goal for the year. To kick-off the year-long effort, CP3 planned a healthy holiday celebration that combined staff and student participation, nutrition, and healthy eating all in one fun afternoon. The CP3 Iron Chef Event was organized as a Thanksgiving celebration where both students and teachers worked together to identify exciting, healthy recipes containing fruits and vegetables that may have been new to many of the young participants. Students were placed into teams with one or two staff members and worked together to prepare and cook their favorite healthy meals to share with the rest of Afterzone.

## RESEARCH

Although there has been no published independent research or evaluation of the HOST Framework to date, two evaluations of the Healthy Schools Program (HSP), on which the HOST Framework is based, are available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).<sup>1</sup> The CDC reports summarize that:

- HSP participating schools improved environmental policies and practices to prevent childhood obesity.
- Schools made significant changes in all content areas—policy and systems, school meals, competitive food and beverages, health and physical education, physical activity outside of physical education, before- and after-school programs, and school employee wellness—and the effect sizes were moderate to large.
- The amount of HSP training and technical assistance was positively and significantly associated with school progress.
- The HSP is a resource to implement HEPA standards.

<sup>1</sup>Beam, M., Ehrlich, G., Donze Black, J., Block, A., Leviton, L. C. (2012). Evaluation of the Healthy Schools Program: Part I. Interim progress. *Preventing Chronic Disease*, 9:110106. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.5888/pcd9.110106>

Beam, M., Ehrlich, G., Donze Black, J., Block, A., Leviton, L. C. (2012). Evaluation of the Healthy Schools Program: Part II. The role of technical assistance. *Preventing Chronic Disease*, 9:110105. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.5888/pcd9.110105>



## LET US Play

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### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

LET US Play is a strategy developed by a working group of the YMCA of Columbia and the University of South Carolina to facilitate the implementation of federal and state standards for youth physical activity. LET US Play focuses on preparing direct care staff to implement HEPA standards into YMCA afterschool programs. The strategy is embedded within the “5Ms” approach to integrate the HEPA Standards into routine practice: (1) clearly defined mission; (2) motivate by providing choices, developmentally appropriate activities, feedback, and encouragement; (3) manage the structure and environment for safety, routines, and discipline; (4) monitor and ongoing evaluation; and (5) maximizing effort.

LET US Play defines expectations of staff implementing physical activity programming. In an effort to help youth achieve the benchmark of 30 minutes a day of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity in afterschool time, new expectations include (a) a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity scheduled each day; (b) a minimum of 60 minutes of girls-only programming during the scheduled 60-minute period; (c) no seated activities offered during scheduled physical activity time; (d) daily outdoor activities scheduled, weather permitting; (e) detailed programming schedules posted; and (f) games, necessary equipment, and staff leads identified on the schedule. In addition, staff are expected to dress appropriately, be prepared to participate in the physical activities with youth, and praise and encourage youth during the physical activities.

Physical activity games are modified according to the LET US Play principles:

- L (lines)—removal of lines from games
- E (elimination)—eliminating elimination from games
- T (team size)—reduce team size to no more than staff to child ratio
- U (uninvolved staff/kids)—staff are involved and playing games with children; staff identify uninvolved children and encourage them to play
- S (space, equipment, rules)—space, equipment, rules are modified to maximize physical activity

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The LET US Play model includes in-person staff training, videos that illustrate tradition and LET US Play modified games, marketing posters and banners that are placed in youth and employee spaces, and informational flyers for parents. Through this initiative, the YMCA modified its annual staff orientation and summer program training to focus on LET US Play strategies. During on-site trainings, staff play physical activity games that their youth enjoy and then modify the games to meet LET US Play principles. Staff are also offered quarterly “Booster Trainings,” in which trainers visit onsite and observe staff implementing physical activities with youth and provide feedback to staff to continually improve practices.



## HOW LET US PLAY SUPPORTS THE HEPA STANDARDS

LET US Play is a strategic approach that defines expectations for afterschool program staff and program practices on how to implement HEPA standards. For example, in order to meet the benchmark of 30 minutes a day of moderate-to-vigorous activity, LET US Play requires 60 minutes of scheduled physical activity time and offers strategies to encourage more movement throughout that time period (such as eliminating lines and reducing team sizes).

## PROGRAM AVAILABILITY

LET US Play training will be offered to YMCA programs throughout South Carolina in the summer of 2014. Three pilot sites across South Carolina will act as model sites and train others. Although LET US Play is not currently offered to the public, a slide presentation of LET US Play principles is available upon request.

## HIGHLIGHT

Program observations have helped researchers pinpoint strategies for maximizing physical activity time in programs. Activity schedules which historically hadn't specified details for location, equipment needed, or staff roles were associated with extended time children spent inactive as staff retrieved and set up necessary equipment, etc. Staff training and self-assessment using HEPA checklists helped identify appropriate strategies for planning and facilitating physical activities. With more detailed activity schedules and direction, staff were better prepared and more able to implement HEPA standards, increase youth participation in MVPA and reduce sedentary time.

## RESEARCH

Dr. Michael Beets, M.Ed., M.P.H., Ph.D., has been involved in elevating the impact of the LET US Play conceptual model and trainings since its inception. Findings show an increase in the percentage of youth participating in daily physical activity, as well as an increase in the number of youth meeting the benchmark of 30 minutes a day of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity during the afterschool program.<sup>1</sup> Girls increased their average number of minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity from 18 minutes in fall 2011 to 22.3 minutes in spring 2013. In addition, the percentage of girls meeting the 30 minute of physical activity benchmark also increased from 15.2% in 2011 to 30.7% in 2013). Boy's participation also increased both in minutes (22.8 minutes in 2011 to 28.8 minutes in 2013) and in numbers of boys meeting the benchmark (28.5% in 2011 to 45.6% in 2013).

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<sup>1</sup>Weaver, R. G., Beets, M. W., Webster, C., Beighle, A., & Huberty, J. (2012). A conceptual model for training after-school program staffers to promote physical activity and nutrition. *Journal of School Health*, 82, 186–195.





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