



A Statewide Examination of Best Practice Policies Targeting Childhood Obesity

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West Virginia

- Largely rural state with 1.8 million people
- 25-30 % of counties – economically distressed
- 85% of counties - wholly or partially identified as Medically Underserved Areas
- Consistently among top 5 states for adult and youth obesity



Healthy Lifestyles Act of 2005

HB 2816 established school-based requirements regarding:

- Physical education time
- The sale of healthy beverages
- Fitness testing
- Health education and assessment
- Collection of BMI measurements



Year 1 Evaluation Data Sources

- **Surveys of school personnel**
 - Superintendents
 - Principals
 - School nurses
 - Physical education teachers
- **Interviews**
 - Parents
 - Students
 - Key informants
- **Surveys of health care providers**
 - Physicians
 - Nurse practitioners
- **Dept. of Education data**
 - Physical education plans
 - Health Education Assessment Project (HEAP)
 - FITNESSGRAM[®]
 - Local Wellness Policies



Key Findings



Increased Awareness

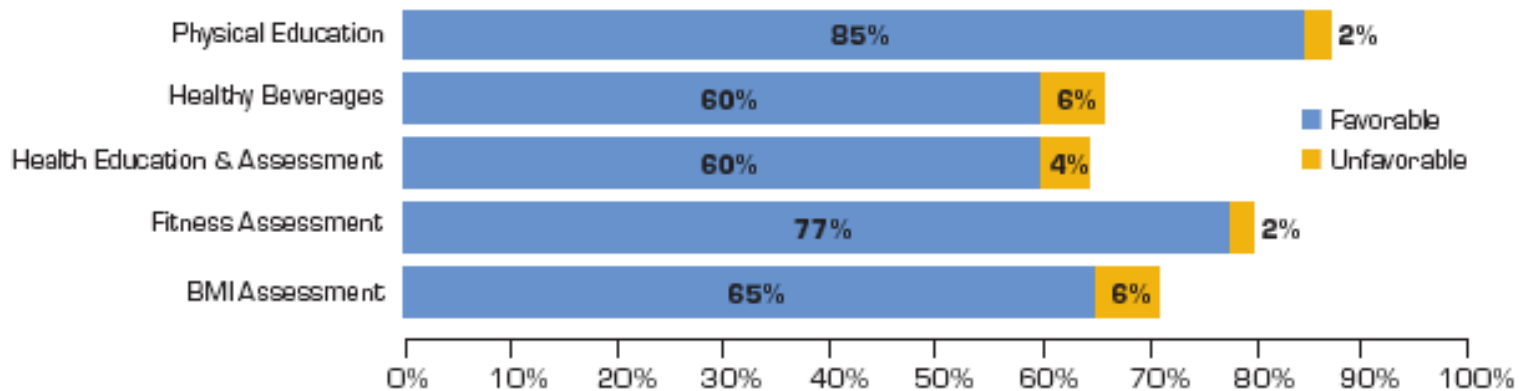
The Healthy Lifestyles Act increased awareness of students' health status among school personnel and spurred the creation of new programs and efforts to increase physical activity and promote healthy eating among students and families.



Strong Support

School personnel generally supported mandates of the Healthy Lifestyles Act; the strongest support was seen for physical education.

Principal Perceptions of Healthy Lifestyles Act Mandates



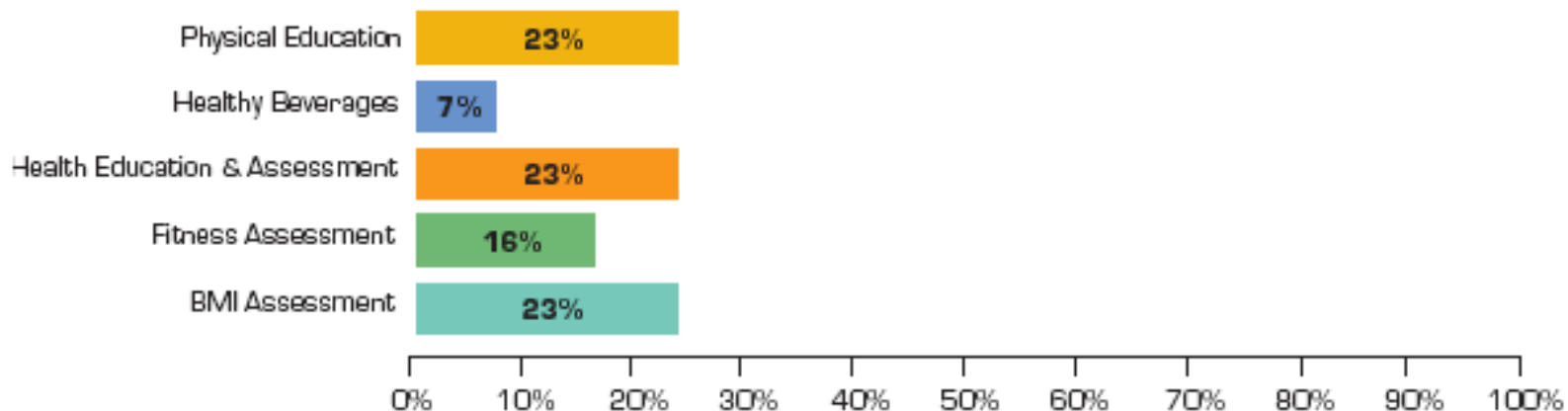
The percentages shown in Figure 3 do not include neutral responses.



Resource Challenges

41% percent of schools lacked the resources needed to implement one or more of the Healthy Lifestyles Act mandates.

Schools Lacking Resources Needed to Implement New Requirements





Healthy Beverages

Restrictions on vended beverages did not result in lost revenues for most schools.

- Among the 431 principals who provided revenue impact information, 80% indicated that revenues remained stable.



Assessment Data

Health education, fitness testing, and BMI screening data are underutilized in curricula and policy development, and evaluation.

- Less than 25% of superintendents report using health education testing results to evaluate county progress or set county goals.
- Less than 25% of Local Wellness Policies indicate one or more of these data sources will be used to help evaluate the policy.



Best Practices

Many county- and school-level policies do not reflect current best practices for student physical activity and nutrition.



Physical Activity: Recess

County Level Policies

- 55% of counties required recess
- 34% recommend recess
- 11% neither require nor recommend

School Level Policies and Practices

- 97% have scheduled recess
- 27% schedule recess for some or all grades before lunch
- 24% prohibit removing recess to punish students for misbehavior



Physical Activity: Facilities

Availability of school facilities for family and community use

- 93% of principals report facilities are available
- 63% of families believe facilities are available



Nutrition: Rewards & Fundraising

- **County Level Policies**

- 19% prohibit use of food or food coupons as a reward
- 30% have a fundraising policy that includes nutrition guidelines

- **School Level Policies**

- 38% prohibit use of food or food coupons as a reward
- 18% prohibit sale of food for fundraisers



Nutrition: Other

- County Level Policies – junk food prohibitions
 - 60% vending
 - 51% school stores
 - 38% parties
 - 38% after school programs
 - 4% concession
- School Level Policies - advertising
 - 45% prohibit advertising by food and beverage companies



Recent Developments

- Policies
 - WV's New Standards for School Nutrition
 - Revised Local Wellness Policies
- Practices
 - Recognition for “Dry” counties



Spectrum of Prevention

- Level 1: Strengthening individual knowledge, skills
- Level 2: Promoting community education
- Level 3: Educating service providers
- Level 4: Fostering coalitions and networks
- **Level 5: Changing organizational practice**
- **Level 6: Influencing policy and legislation**

Cohen and Swift, 1999