

**Physical Activity: The CT WSCC Partnership On-Demand Webinar Series Transcript**

Welcome to the physical activity on-demand webinar. There are 10 webinars in this series, each corresponding with one domain of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model. This webinar will focus on the physical activity domain, also referred to as physical education and physical activity. We will continue to refer to this domain as physical activity. Each webinar will begin with an overview of the WSCC model and an introduction to our practice briefs before a deep dive into the WSCC domain of focus.

The CT WSCC Partnership is a joint collaboration between the University of Connecticut’s Collaboratory on School and Child Health and the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Health. Before we begin, we want to acknowledge our funding partners and share that the content of this webinar does not necessarily reflect the official views of the CDC or the Department of Health and Human Services.

Our practice briefs draw on the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model, which is the CDC and ASCD’s framework for addressing health in schools. The model is student-centered and stresses the need to coordinate policy, processes, and practice across ten domains of student health and well-being to maximize student success. As can be seen in the outmost ring, the model is situated within the community, and emphasizes drawing upon community context and expertise to use the model in contextually-aligned ways. The model is not a prescriptive program. Instead, it is a framework for organizing a school or district’s efforts to support the whole child, facilitate high quality teaching, and maximize student learning and success.

Today's content comes from our WSCC Practice Brief series. These are freely available on our website at ctwscc.org. If you'd like to learn more about how these briefs were developed and about our CDC-funded project, please watch our "Intro to the WSCC Webinar Series" video.

What is physical activity?

Let’s hear what one of our community partners has to say about this WSCC domain.

Physical education classes is very important in terms of how we incorporate the physical activity. However, students have opportunities for recess, we know that over the years recess has been, I’ll say it’s been minimized some. We’ve had some creative scheduling where, for example, our middle school, which has just about 1000 students, they’ve been creative in terms of being able to get students to have more physical activity during lunch.

So, through our recent grant, one of the ways that SIBA has introduced more physical activity and time for play is to create clinics, physical activity clinics that we do monthly now after school. The way we got around to that idea was by surveying the students through our advisory, our connections program, and asking them, you know, what activities would you like to be introduced to or what activities would you like to see more of if you’re already doing them in PE/health.

Something that we do in Meriden is we have looked at the physical education curriculum at the high school level and we’ve kind of tailored to the individual needs of the kids because not every child is into teams sports or individual sports.

So what we have done now is we have is a weight training nutrition class for our physical education. We have a lifeguarding CPR class part of it and we also have a personal fitness physical education class where it is, the student guides that curriculum throughout the year. So we’re trying to meet the needs of all the students and promote lifetime fitness not just the, you know, volleyball, baseball, softball, so forth. We’re moving more towards away from that and more lifetime activities. So kids we know as they exit high school, they’ll find something they could love.

So, why is physical activity relevant to child outcomes?

Physical activity is important because we have an obesity problem in this country and for the past few decades the numbers have been steadily rising. And we find that kinds are not as active as they once were and some of those reasons are because of kids are more prone to be on their devices and playing video games inside instead of being outside. One of the big proponents of being physically active is it helps the growth and development of the body. So, kids are getting stronger bones, stronger heart, and feeling better. And it’s helping offset those kids who might be getting type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure as a result of not being active.

Physical activity to me is critical. And as an adult now, I always reflect and remember I started playing football when I was nine years old. I grew up in East Hartford, so I played, you know, here and it becomes a part of who you are, becomes part of the fabric. You understand that it is good for you health wise, but it’s also helping with the mental aspect of it. It helps to give an outlet. It gives you something to value. To me, it is one of those areas that supersedes many things because if we’re not physically and mentally ready, we’re not going to be able to receive the education that someone’s trying to share with us while we’re, while we’re sitting in a classroom.

Now that we know the why behind physical activity, let’s look at some evidence-based strategies that you can use in your practice.

The strategies are organized by required resource demand to help you choose appropriate initiatives for your setting. ​

We begin with strategies that require a low resource demand. The first recommendation is to avoid using physical activity as a disciplinary consequence. Forcing or withholding physical activity as a form of punishment or behavior management – including taking minutes away from recess or movement breaks – can negatively influence students’ attitudes toward physical activity and have negative effects on learning. Students who engage in physical activity are more likely to be attentive and on-task in the classroom which can reduce the need for disciplinary consequences. For this reason, school administrators should ensure that all students have equal access to participate in physical activity.

Another low-resource demand strategy is to promote employee involvement in physical activity. Teacher involvement in student opportunities for physical activity has been associated with increased rates of student physical activity. Schools can provide opportunities for personnel to lead recess activities, participate in physical activity breaks, incorporate physical activities into classroom lessons, and serve as healthy role models.

Next, we move into moderate resource demand strategies. The first recommendation is to encourage family involvement in physical activity. Physical activity interventions are more likely to be effective when family members are involved. Schools can provide families with information about how to be physically active at home, about physical activity events, and about programming in the community through homework, leaflets, or family events.

A second moderate resource strategy is to incorporate physical activity into existing curricula. Students are more likely to engage in physical activity when instruction related to maintaining a physical lifestyle is integrated into the core academic curriculum, as opposed to only in physical and health education. Instruction related to physical activity such as its health benefits and self-regulation behaviors like self-monitoring can be integrated into related science, environmental and biology classes. Physical activity can also be integrated into other related or unrelated academic content such as acting out the meaning of a word or jumping to solve a math problem. School-based interventions are more likely to be effective when classroom and PE teachers are provided with professional learning and classroom materials. School leaders can offer trainings and materials like posters, activity booklets, and equipment to promote physical activity in the classroom.

Next, we transition to the most resource-intensive strategies. Schools can provide opportunities for and choices of physical activity throughout the day. To the extent possible, schools should consider increasing Physical Education time. For example, activities such as yoga can be incorporated as a supplemental activity throughout the day or offered as a choice of activity during a PE class. Physical activity can also be incorporated into before and after school programs. Schools can use a freely available program, such as BOKS, which stands for Build Our Kids Success, to increase student activity during out-of-school time programs.

Our second high-resource strategy is to develop a comprehensive school physical activity program or CSPAP plan. Developed by the CDC and Shape America, the CSPAP help schools coordinate all components of physical activity before, during, and after school to provide opportunities for students to increase their daily physical activity levels and develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence to maintain a physically active lifestyle. Schools can use the CSPAP to evaluate, develop, or improve physical education programs by using the provided examples, activities, action plans, objectives, goals, and important points to consider during program development and improvement.

If you are interested in learning about additional resources related to the physical activity domain of the WSCC model, please see the full physical activity WSCC practice brief.

This brief, among the others, can be found on the Tools page of our website: ctwscc.org. After clicking on our tools, scroll down to Best WSCC practices. Here you will find our practice briefs.

Thank you for joining us! We hope you enjoyed today’s webinar. To view the other webinars in our WSCC on-demand webinar series, please visit our website at ctwscc.org. If you have any questions about the Connecticut WSCC Partnership, please feel free to contact us at ctwscc@uconn.edu.