



Nutrition & Physical Activity Division Initiatives

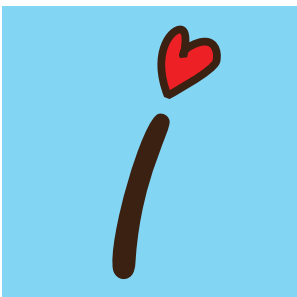


Vision for the Nutrition and Physical Activity Division (NPA): Alabamians of all ages embrace a culture of healthy choices as their normal way of life.

Mission of the NPA Division: The NPA Division serves as the lead authority for the Department regarding nutrition, physical activity, and wellness.



Scale Back Alabama (SBA) is a statewide public awareness program hosted by Alabama’s hospitals, the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama. The primary goals of the program are to create public awareness of the health issues caused by obesity and to empower Alabamians who are overweight and/or obese to implement healthier lifestyles and lose weight. A 10-week weight-loss competition is held at the beginning of each year, with the help of local hospitals, health departments, schools, and various community organizations. Each organization appoints a coordinator and individuals form teams of two to each lose 10 pounds and compete to win a chance at cash prizes. The SBA School program is an additional component that promotes wellness for teachers and other school personnel to set a positive example for the students. Schools that participate receive recognition and are eligible for prizes that promote nutrition and/or physical activity for the students.



iChoices is ADPH’s employee wellness program. This comprehensive program focuses on developing a healthier and more dynamic Department of Public Health and can be used as an example for others seeking to implement an employee wellness program. iChoices is a free, SEIB-approved provider program that’s confidential, individualized, self-paced, and non-judgmental. The program empowers employees to think better about their circumstances and choices. Free health coaching is available for employees to work together with a health coach to address issues of concern to them. iChoices also offers incentive based wellness activities, opportunities to participate in programs aimed at changing lifestyle habits, a walking club, and Toastmasters International.



The Alabama Healthy Vending Machine Program increases access to healthier foods and beverages in worksites and other locations. Offering healthier snacks and beverages in vending machines, and other venues where these items are available, is the goal of this initiative. Nutrition standards are used with the Good Choice logo to identify the healthier snacks and beverages. The program is being implemented in multiple businesses in the private sector throughout Alabama as well as local health departments and city governments. **The Alabama Healthy Checkout Program** is a new initiative that uses the same nutrition standards and logo for the AHVMP to assist corner stores and convenient stores to stock and promote the purchase of healthier food and beverages.



The State Obesity Task Force (OTF) works to address overweight and obesity issues through advocacy, policies, environmental changes, and programs that support healthy lifestyle changes. The OTF is a volunteer organization with a Board and committee structure composed of representatives from academia, business and industry, state agencies, health care settings, professional organizations, and the general public. One of the main functions of this group is networking to keep partners informed of obesity initiatives being implemented across the state. Staff from the NPA Division serve on the OTF Board of Directors and provide support with projects including the Think Your Drink and Get Moving Alabama campaigns, development of a Wellness Guide, policy workshop trainings, and working with medical providers to address obesity.



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Quality Physical Education and Adapted Physical Education: School based physical education increases student's level of physical activity and improves physical fitness. The NPA Division partners with the State Department of Education on the Champions for Healthy Alabama Schools initiative and other programs to improve quality physical education and adapted physical education in Alabama school systems. NPA staff assists with training efforts for teachers, principals, and superintendents and works to increase the number of students with disabilities participating in daily physical education classes.



Healthy Wellness Initiative (HWI): The NPA Division collaborates with the State Department of Education to provide healthy nutrition, physical activity, and wellness related information, technical assistance, resources, and training to the 21st Century Community Center Learning Programs, Dependant Care grantees and to Community Educators. Training and materials from evidence based youth curricula such as Catch Kids Club, SPARK, Media Smart Youth, and S.M.A.R.T. are available, as well as Fruits & Veggies – More Matters materials, health fair participation, and parent programs.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): Funds from SNAP (formerly food stamps) provide staff and supplies for nutrition classes for individuals and families receiving food assistance or in an income range that would qualify for food assistance. Activities primarily take place in schools with greater than 50% of their students receiving free or reduced meals. Other sites for SNAP efforts take place in senior centers, food pantries, and YMCA programs. Additional efforts are being made through SNAP to influence policy, system, and environmental changes such as improving school wellness policies and increasing access to healthy snacks in local SNAP offices.



Disability & Health Program was established in 2012, to promote and maximize equity in health, prevent chronic disease, improve emergency preparedness, and increase quality of life among people with disabilities. The program works with statewide partners to promote inclusion, reduce barriers and improve opportunities to participate in existing physical activity, healthy nutrition, and health promotion programs through adapting campaigns and projects. The Disability and Health program supports the inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of policy development, planning and implementation of state based public health programs.



The State Partnership Grant Program to Improve Minority Health: The State Partnership Grant Program to Improve Minority Health provides the Alabama State Office of Minority Health (SOMH) with an opportunity to focus on nutrition, physical activity, and obesity among minority populations and improve access to healthcare services. The SOMH strives to identify the health concerns of the minority populations living in Alabama in order to give everyone an opportunity to live a long, healthy, and productive life. The State Partnership Grant funding will greatly expand the knowledge and awareness of the health disparities that exist among minority populations living in the selected four hot spot communities: Demopolis, Greensboro, Livingston, and Marion; and lead to an expansion and creation of health policies and specific strategies to eliminate such disparities.

For more information on the Nutrition and Physical Activity Division and these initiatives, please visit www.adph.org/nutrition.