



Make schools healthy to beat childhood obesity, says leading expert

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Parents play an important role in shaping their children's view of food and exercise. But school-age children spend much of their time away from their parents—in school and amongst their peers. That's why making schools healthy, with lots of nutritious food choices and plenty of opportunity for exercise, is key to winning the battle against childhood obesity, says Ginny Ehrlich, executive director of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation. Ginny and others experts recently spoke to [BeSmartBeWell.com](#) about the childhood obesity epidemic and its causes and solutions.

BSBW: Why are schools so important in the fight against childhood obesity?

Ehrlich: Young people have access to the food that schools provide to them, and so the onus is on the systems to create the opportunity for kids to have access to healthy products. We also know that many schools are electing to eliminate recess in favor of more academic time.

92% of high school students do not receive daily physical education. Physical activity has been shown to increase attention span, reduce behavior issues in schools, increase attendance. We really need to change the environment around young people [to be] consistently promoting physical activity and healthy eating.



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See video of Ginny Ehrlich and many other experts, parents and kids, as well as a practical list of 10 [Habits to Have®](#) that can help families tackle the childhood obesity epidemic at [BeSmartBeWell.com](#).

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