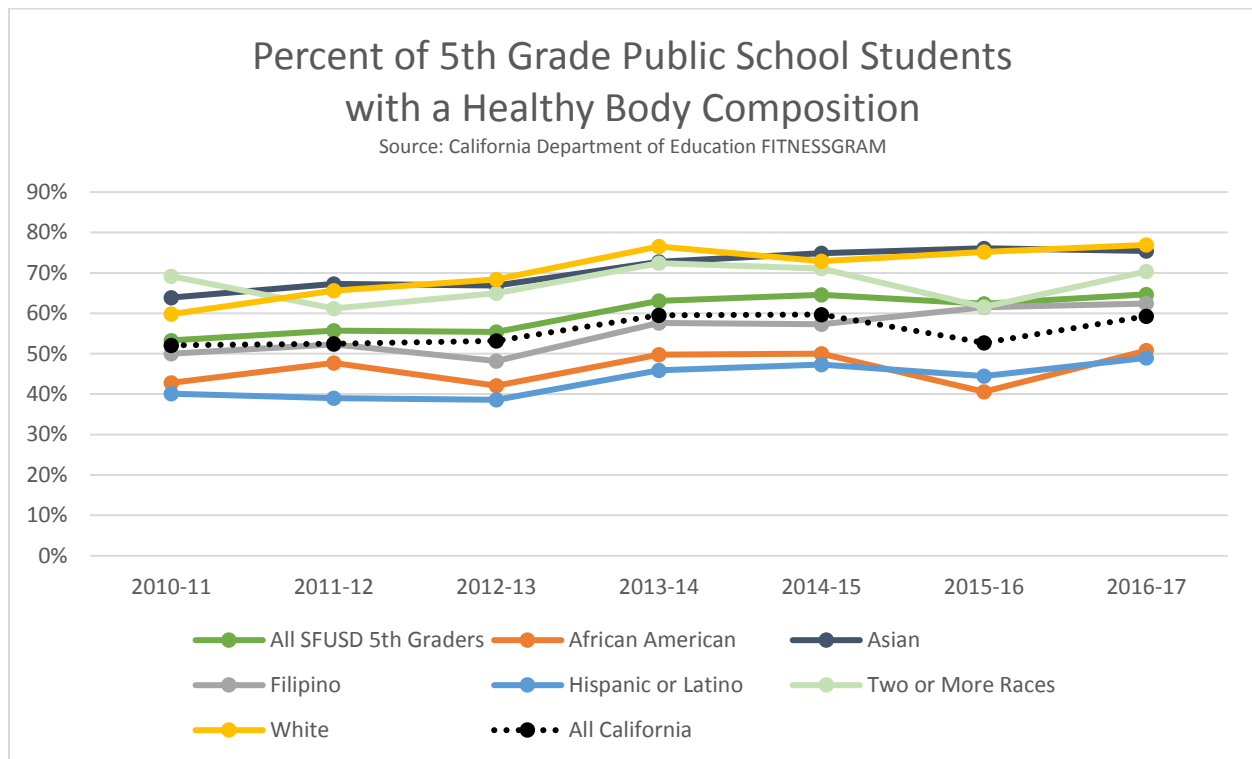


Increase the percent of 5th Grade Public School Students who are at a Healthy Weight



The above chart shows the percentage of 5th grade students in public schools in San Francisco that are within the Healthy Fitness Zone for body composition (a proxy for healthy weight) by race/ethnicity between 2010-11 and 2016-17. The line “All California” offers a State comparison.

Data Definition & the San Francisco Trend line

The FITNESSGRAM is a physical health assessment tool that is used across schools in California to help students start the life-long habits of regular physical activity. Students in grades 5, 7, and 9 take the six part test (which includes Aerobic Capacity, Body Composition, Muscular Strength, Muscular Endurance, Flexibility, and Activity Assessments). For each test, student results are compared against statewide standards by gender and age to determine whether the student falls in the Healthy Fitness Zone. DCYF is focusing on two of these components, Body Composition in this scorecard, and Aerobic Capacity in an accompanying scorecard. In 2010, new standards were incorporated into the testing structures for these two components, which is why only data from the 2010-11 school year forward is considered for this and the Aerobic Capacity indicators.

Body composition describes the part of total body weight that is fat and the part that is fat-free. Fat-free body weight includes bones and muscles. Some body fat is needed for overall good health, but too much body fat can lead to health problems, including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type-2 diabetes and heart disease. Therefore, by maintaining a healthy weight a child can potentially reduce their future risk of health problems.ⁱ

In the 2016-17 school year 65% of 5th grade, 67% of 7th grade, and 65% of 9th grade public school students in San Francisco were at a healthy body weight. The percent of 5th, 7th, and 9th grade students at a healthy body weight has increased almost every year between 2010-11 and 2016-17. In 2015-16, the percentage dropped slightly for 5th and 9th graders and in 2016-17, the percentage of 7th graders at a healthy body weight decreased 1%. Across all grade levels a larger proportion of all students in San Francisco are at a healthy body weight than the State. While the six year trend line indicates slight improvement in the percent of students who are at a healthy body weight, nearly a third of 5th, 7th, and 9th graders remain below state standards for healthy body weight.

Racial/ethnic, economic and gender disparities exist. Since 2010-11, Hispanic or Latino and African American students have had the lowest rate of healthy body weight across all grades. The number of American Indian or Alaska Native and Hawaiian Islander/Pacific Islander students in San Francisco is too small to report FITNESSGRAM data by grade level, but State trends suggest that these groups tend to have lower rates of healthy body weight as well.

The percent of students who are at a healthy body weight also varies by economic status and gender. On average, across all three grades for the past six years, economically disadvantaged students (defined as qualifying for free and reduced lunch) were less likely to be at a healthy body weight than students who were not economically disadvantaged. Finally, since 2010-11, a lower percentage of boys have been at a healthy body weight (an average of 4-7 percentage points lower) than girls. Inverse gender disparities appear when healthy body weight is compared to physical fitness, with a lower percentage of girls being physically fit as compared to their male counterparts.

Story Behind the Curve

It is promising to note that while significant racial/ethnic, gender, and economic disparities persist, the percent of 5th, 7th, and 9th grade students at a healthy body weight has consistently risen between 2010-11 and 2016-17, with 5th graders overall showing a 12% improvement in that time frame. However, students who qualify for free and reduced lunch have consistently had lower rates of healthy body weight, lagging an average of 11% behind their peers who do not qualify for free and reduced lunch.

We know that communities of color and low-income families face significant health challenges in the San Francisco Bay Area, with over 68% of the region's African American and Latino residents identified as obese or overweight.ⁱⁱ This preventable health risk is exacerbated by poor access to healthy foods, disparities in quality of- and access to- safe and affordable recreation spaces, and limited "walkability" of lower-income minority-majority neighborhoods. Significant factors contributing to the economic and racial disparities in the percent of students who are at a healthy body weight include prohibitive cost and physical access to healthy food.ⁱⁱⁱ Food deserts, defined as low-income census tracts where a substantial portion of residents have little to no access to a supermarket or large grocery store, is a condition predominantly experienced by people of color. In the Bay Area, African Americans and Latinos make up a much greater share of the population residing in food deserts (51%) than in areas with better food access (29%).^{iv}

Policy and Practice Shifts in San Francisco

As a city, San Francisco has undertaken a series of efforts to improve physical health outcomes for children and youth. Locally, significant efforts have been made to improve the physical fitness outcomes of children and youth: Shape Up SF, efforts to reduce the consumption of sugary drinks, policy changes within the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), and efforts to improve access to healthy foods.

The Mayor's Challenge: Shape Up San Francisco was created in 2006 to respond to growing levels of chronic disease, especially in San Francisco's low-income communities and communities of color. Unlike generations of previous work aimed primarily at educating San Francisco residents, the Shape Up SF (SUSF) Initiative adopted far-reaching environmental strategies in partnership with local neighborhoods and communities to create a city with healthy opportunities and choices. The initiative has focused on three priority areas: Healthy Food Access, Physical Activity Opportunities and Sugary Drinks/ Water Access. Over the past few years SUSF, the Bayview HEAL Zone (a Kaiser Permanente program to help make healthy choices more accessible to people in underserved communities) and many other organizations have focused their efforts on high-need communities by collaboratively working with neighborhoods and agencies to provide nutrition and physical education to families and youth, engage community advocates to work with their own communities, develop wellness policies, create walking school buses and work with the Recreation and Parks Department to ensure that local parks are accessible.^v

SFUSD Student Nutrition Services and Wellness Policies. In 2013, SFUSD contracted with Revolution Foods to provide healthier school meals for students, meeting much higher nutrition standards than in the past.^{vi} In alignment with the [Good Food Purchasing Policy](#), unanimously passed by the SFUSD Board of Education in 2016, SFUSD is committed to the equity and health of the food system, by purchasing foods that are also sustainably grown, from animals that are humanely raised, and by workers that are treated fairly and paid good wages, in addition to supporting local economies, and, as always, providing meals that are healthy and nutritious. Also in 2016, SFUSD launched the School Food Advisory, comprised of high school students from across the city, in order to ensure that school meal programs are student-centered.^{vii} In 2015 SFUSD updated their wellness policy to strengthen local school wellness and provide transparency around key areas that affect the nutrition and physical activity environment for youth, including but not limited to nutrition services, nutrition education and promotion, physical activity and education, and staff wellness. These policies regulate the types of food that students are permitted to eat at school much more strictly than in the past.^{viii}

Reduced Consumption of Sugary Beverages. Starting in 2008 there was a regional effort around limiting the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages including a "Drink Water" campaign and distribution of books to San Francisco Pre-K and Kindergarten classes. Shape Up SF also started providing technical assistance to youth-serving organizations to develop healthy beverage policies to reduce the number of youth drinking sugar-sweetened beverages. Additionally Shape Up SF has led or supported several large media campaign efforts including "Soda Free Summer" and "Open Truth", which highlight the health risks of sugary drinks.^{ix} Other youth-serving organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club San Francisco (BGCSF) passed similar healthy beverage, nutrition and physical activity policies in 2009.^x

The Bay Area Nutrition and Physical Activity Collaborative has been promoting policies regarding healthy beverages since 2012 by working with organizations to develop their own wellness policies focused on reducing or eliminating sugary beverages in their facilities so that both youth and adults are not faced

with unhealthy beverages in the workplace, after-school youth and sports programs, and elsewhere throughout their communities.^{xi}

In November 2016, San Francisco voters approved taxing soda and sugary beverages at the rate of 1 cent per ounce beginning on January 1, 2018. Similar policies in other jurisdictions have shown success in limiting the consumption of sugary beverages.^{xii}

Access to Healthy Foods. Studies have shown that youth who participate in federal nutrition programs such as Summer Food Service Program (SFSP; Free Summer Meals) and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP; Afterschool Meals) are at a healthier body weight than youth who do not participate in these programs.^{xiii} However, the increasingly higher cost of living in San Francisco means that many families earn too much to meet the minimum requirements for health benefits, and therefore tend to rely on more affordable non-perishable and/or unhealthy foods in order to feed their families.^{xiv} Further, immigration status can impact the eligibility of some families for certain federal assistance programs.^{xv}

There are a broad range of programs in addition to federal aid that provide access to healthy foods for families in need, including efforts by DCYF. For more than 15 years, DCYF has been a sponsor of free summer meals, working with over 60 community and faith-based organizations to provide free meals to youth 18 and under during the summer months, and has recently started supporting afterschool suppers. Since 2013, DCYF has been coordinating outreach efforts among other SFSP sponsors for summer meals, resulting in a 22% increase of total meals served between 2013 and 2016.^{xvi}

What Works: A Selection of Best Practices to support Healthy Weight

Both physical activity and nutrition are important components for healthy body weight, however this section will focus solely on programs that address nutrition, as physical activity is covered in depth in the corresponding Physical Fitness scorecard. While multiple efforts have persisted throughout San Francisco to improve healthy body weight for children, youth and their families, we know that nutrition also continues to be a key concern for youth. In a recent survey conducted by DCYF of 6,094 middle school and 3,690 high school SFUSD students, nearly half of all students indicated that they would like to engage in support services related to nutrition and physical health. The following outlines four evidence-based approaches supported by the Centers for Disease Control for meeting healthy body weight standards.^{xvii}

Adoption of the Food Service Guidelines or Other Nutrition Standards. The Food Service Guidelines (FSG) or nutrition standards are guidelines for organizations or programs to create healthy eating and drinking environments in government-managed cafeterias, snack bars, and vending machines. The guidelines can be applied to non-government settings as well, including schools, early childhood settings, or afterschool programs.

Food Service Guidelines. Every day, millions of Americans buy or are served food and beverages at their workplaces, or in other community settings such as hospitals, parks and recreation areas. Making changes to the types of food and beverages available in these settings can improve the diets of people who eat there. Food service guidelines are used to create a food environment in which healthier choices are made easier for consumers. These guidelines are used to increase the availability of healthier food and beverages, and to display them more prominently, to increase the likelihood that healthier options are selected by customers

Access to Healthier Food Retail. Healthier food retail initiatives can help increase peoples' access to places that sell healthier foods and beverages in underserved areas, including grocery stores, small stores, farmers markets, bodegas, or mobile food retail. Initiatives can involve creating new food retail outlets that sell healthier foods; improving the quality, variety, and amount of healthier foods and beverages at existing stores; or promoting and marketing healthier foods and beverages to the consumer.

Please see the following selected references for more information on the 'Story Behind the Curve' and highlighted 'Best Practices'

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^{xvi} DCYF. Nutrition Programs. <http://www.dcyf.org/index.aspx?page=100>

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