



**Healthy Choices Count!**

# **ACTION GUIDE**

**EARLY CARE • EDUCATION • AFTER-SCHOOL**

**HELPING IOWA KIDS GET – AND STAY – HEALTHY!**

[www.IowaHealthiestState.com/5210](http://www.IowaHealthiestState.com/5210)

# WHY 5-2-1-0?

When it comes to kids, there is one thing everyone wants — for them to be healthy. That is why Iowa has created 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count!

It's a health-focused movement for kids under the nationally recognized program, 5-2-1-0. This proven, scientific method helps keep kids healthy by focusing on four numbers:



# HOW CAN 5-2-1-0 HELP YOU HELP KIDS STAY HEALTHY?

Children spend the majority of their day in early care or education settings and eat one or more meals, plus snacks, while there.

Early care and education sites have the opportunity to provide a “whole child approach” to wellness and education by providing healthier foods in the classroom and cafeteria and creatively increasing physical activity throughout the day. Out-of-school programs help provide additional support when children are not in school or with their families.

5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count! is flexible and can be easily woven into your busy day and other programming.

This toolkit supports:

- School districts and individual school buildings
- Teachers, nurses, P.E. teachers and other school staff
- Nutrition directors and cafeteria managers
- Principals and superintendants
- In-home child care providers and large child care centers
- Out-of-school program directors, supervisors and staff



# WHY 5-2-1-0 WORKS: PROVEN, SCIENTIFIC-METHOD BASED ON HEALTHY HABITS

## 5 OR MORE SERVINGS OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

A diet rich in fruits and vegetables provides vitamins and minerals that are important for supporting growth, development and optimal immune function in children. High daily intakes of fruits and vegetables among adults are associated with lower rates of chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes and possibly some types of cancers. Emerging science suggests fruit and vegetable consumption may help prevent weight gain, and when total calories are controlled, may be an important aid to achieving and sustaining a healthy weight.

## 2 HOURS OR LESS OF SCREEN TIME

Watching too much television and use of other screen media is associated with an increased prevalence of overweight and obesity, lower reading scores and attention problems. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends no more than 2 hours of screen time a day and that children under age 2 not watch any TV or other screen media. The AAP recommends keeping the TV and computer out of the bedroom.

## 1 HOUR OR MORE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Regular physical activity is essential for weight maintenance and prevention of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, colon cancer and osteoporosis. While most school-age children are quite active, physical activity sharply declines during adolescence. Children who are raised in families with active lifestyles are more likely to stay active as adults than children raised in families with sedentary lifestyles.

## 0 SUGARY DRINKS – MORE WATER

Sugar-sweetened beverage consumption has increased dramatically since the 1970s; high intake among children is associated with overweight and obesity, displacement of milk consumption and dental cavities. The AAP recommends that children 1 to 6 years old consume no more than 4-6 ounces of 100 percent juice per day and youth 7 to 18 years old consume no more than 8-12 ounces.

Water provides a low-cost, zero-calorie beverage option and is a healthy alternative to sugary drinks.

\*Screen time includes time spent watching television, playing video games, using a computer, smartphone and tablet. Recreational screen time is screen time used for non educational purposes.

Baker S, Cochran W, Greer F, et al. The use and misuse of fruit juice in pediatrics. *Pediatrics* 107(5):1210-1213. (2001). National Association for Sport and Physical Education, Physical Activity for Children: A Statement of Guidelines for Children Ages 5-12. (2004). Position of the American Dietetic Association: Dietary Guidance for Healthy Children Ages 2-11 Years, *J. Am. Diet. Assoc.* 104:660-677. (2004). Strasburger VC, Hogan MJ, Mulligan DA, et al. Children, adolescents, and the media. *Pediatrics* 132(5):958-961. (2013). The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, Issue Brief: The Role of Media in Childhood Obesity. (February 2004). USDHHS and USDA, 2005 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee Report, retrieved during 12/04 from [www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines](http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines). Walter C. Willett, M.D. Eat, Drink and Be Healthy: The Harvard Guide to Healthy Eating. (2001), Free Press, NY. Adapted from the Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center, Maine Youth Overweight Collaborative (MYOC) 6/5/15.

# 10 STRATEGIES OF SUCCESS

When you partner with Healthy Choices Count!, you can use the [10 Strategies of Success](#) to help you achieve your goals.

These strategies are evidence based and align with national recommendations to help increase healthy eating and active living in Iowa kids.

We recommend implementing strong policies around each of these strategies:

- 1.** Limit unhealthy choices for snacks and celebrations, while providing healthy choices.
- 2.** Limit or eliminate sugary drinks – provide water.
- 3.** Prohibit the use of food as a reward.
- 4.** Provide opportunities to get physical activity every day.
- 5.** Limit recreational screen time.
- 6.** Participate in local, state and national initiatives that support healthy eating and active living.
- 7.** Engage community partners to help support healthy eating and active living.
- 8.** Partner with and educate families in adopting and maintaining a lifestyle that supports healthy eating and active living.
- 9.** Implement a staff wellness program that includes healthy eating and active living.
- 10.** Collaborate with food and nutrition programs to offer healthy food and beverage options.

— denotes a priority strategy

# HOW TO IMPLEMENT 5-2-1-0

Now that you know what 5-2-1-0 is, you're probably wondering how to get started. Don't worry – there is a five-step process to make implementation easy!

This 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count! Toolkit will walk you through the process, help you assess your site and provide the resources and tools for you to create and implement an Action Plan to meet your unique goals.

## STEP 1: Engage

Identify a 5-2-1-0 Champion and team members.



## STEP 2: Register

Sign-up online to become a 5-2-1-0 Registered Site.



## STEP 3: Implement

Identify your goals and turn them into action.



## STEP 4: Share

Spread the word about how you're making #HealthyChoicesCount



## STEP 5: Check-In

Get recognized for making the healthy choice the easy choice.



# STEP 1: ENGAGE

## **5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count Champion**

All school, early care, and out-of-school programs should identify a Champion to lead their site through the five-step process. The Champion should be someone who is at the site daily and is familiar with and can help influence the healthy eating and physical activity practices.

5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count Champions are leading the way to a healthier generation of kids!

As the Healthy Choices Count Champion, you are leading the positive changes at your site or program. Your role as the Champion includes:

- Registering your school, early care site, or out-of-school program [online](#)
- Meeting with your team and creating an Action Plan around what your site wants to achieve that year
- Ensuring that parents and all staff are aware of and, if possible, included in the work
- Being responsible for sharing the 5-2-1-0 message and resources with parents and staff
- Recertifying your site each fall

## **Role of the Healthy Choices Count Team**

Sites are encouraged to gather a team to help support the 5-2-1-0 efforts. The Healthy Choices Count team can be an already existing team (e.g. wellness team, parent advisory group, leadership team, etc.), or it could be a newly created one. The team can include a variety of individuals that share the vision of creating healthier environments for kids (e.g. teachers, administrators, parents, staff, students, and community partners). How often a team meets is dependent on the goals of the group and the availability of the team members. We realize that not all sites have the ability to form a team — it is OK for one person, for example in an in-home day care setting, to serve the role of Champion and team.

# STEP 2: REGISTER

## **Why Should I Become a 5-2-1-0 Registered Site?**

An integral step to becoming actively involved with 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count! is to register through the Healthiest State Initiative website. Becoming a 5-2-1-0 Registered Site demonstrates that your school, early care site, or out-of-school program values health and wellness for Iowa kids and families. The recognition serves to highlight all of the great work happening across Iowa and connect you with like-minded sites.

## **Registration is free and easy!**

Register online: [www.IowaHealthiestState.com/5210Register](http://www.IowaHealthiestState.com/5210Register)

## **What to expect:**

The registration survey guides you through an assessment of what your site is currently doing to make the healthy choice the easy choice. At the end of the survey, you will choose which of the 10 strategies you would like to work on. Going through the registration process is a great activity for you and/or your team because it will help you identify the areas where your site is already excelling and pinpoint areas for improvement. We encourage you to download a copy of the registration to review prior to starting the online registration so you have the opportunity to compile any needed information.

## **Other benefits of registration:**

- Access to an exclusive monthly newsletter with information for registered sites, including funding information, educational opportunities and strategies to focus on
- A 5-2-1-0 Registered Site window cling to display at your site
- Included on online map of 5-2-1-0 Registered Sites
- Recognition at state level events and presentations
- Eligibility to apply for future Healthiest State Annual Awards



# STEP 3: IMPLEMENT

## **You are a 5-2-1-0 Registered Site ... now what?**

The site registration survey helps you become more aware of what you are already doing to improve health and wellness at your site, as well as opportunities to continue to improve your policies, practices and environment. The survey will ask you to review the 10 Strategies for Success (listed on Page 5 of this toolkit) and identify which strategies you'd like to focus on in the upcoming year. We recommend choosing one or two — remember that small steps can take you far!

## **How to create an Action Plan:**

Now that you know which strategy or strategies to focus on, create goals and an Action Plan. We recommend one or two goals per strategy for a total of one to four goals to accomplish each year.

- At the top of your Action Plan, write the strategy and goal.
- For each goal, create action steps and a timeline to reach your goal.
- Include who is responsible for the action step and if funding or partnerships are needed.
- Check-in with your Action Plan on a regular basis (weekly, monthly) and make adjustments.
- Leverage your team (if applicable) and partnerships so that more than one person is responsible for the Action Plan.

**TIP:** Consider aligning your goals and actions with other policies, such as the School Improvement Plan, District Wellness Policy or Iowa Quality Rating System.

***See Pages 10-11 for examples.***



# STEP 3: IMPLEMENT

**\*\*ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE\*\***

Strategy:

Goal:




ACTION STEPS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	FUNDING/ PARTNER NEEDS?	DUE DATE	DONE

# STEP 3: IMPLEMENT

## \*\*SAMPLE ACTION PLAN\*\*

**Strategy:** Provide opportunities to get physical activity every day.

**Goal:** Add flexible seating to 50% or more classrooms by May.

ACTION STEPS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	FUNDING/ PARTNER NEEDS?	DUE DATE	DONE
Determine which classrooms are using flexible seating already through environmental observation and survey.	Administrator	No	September	
Determine which teachers would like flexible seating and what kind through survey or conversations.	P.E. teacher	No	September	
10 minutes of professional development time: Discuss flexible seating questions and requests. Determine guidelines for seating.	All staff	No	October	
Research flexible seating options and budgets.	Administrator	TBD	November	
Secure funding/partnership for flexible seating options.	Administrator	TBD	January through March	
Take pictures and record success stories.	Teachers/ Students	No	February through April	
Share pictures and stories with parents and community through newsletter, social media, etc.	Teachers/ Students	No	March through May	
5 minutes of professional development time: Discuss what worked well and what could be better.	All staff	No	May	

# STEP 4: SHARE

Now that you've started putting 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count! into action at your site, it's time to start sharing all of your hard work with your students, parents and staff. There are already some great resources available on [IowaHealthiestState.com/5210/Resources](http://IowaHealthiestState.com/5210/Resources) to help you do this:

## Message to Families

Keep parents in the loop by sending home a letter or email to inform them that your site will begin implementing 5-2-1-0 strategies. Here is a [template](#) you can use – or write your own!

## Free Materials

Colorful posters are a great reminder to students and staff of the 5-2-1-0 message! You can order FREE posters and brochures from the Healthiest State Initiative. [Order here.](#)

## T-shirts

Generate excitement with your staff and students! This 100% cotton T-shirt — available in Adult and Youth sizes — has the 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count! logo on the front chest. Cost varies on order quantity. [Place your order here.](#)



## 5-2-1-0 Logo

You can add the 5-2-1-0 logo to any educational or promotional materials that support the 5-2-1-0 message. Download our [logo](#) and [follow these brand guidelines](#).

## Social Media

Social media is a great way to reach parents and other members of the community. Spread the 5-2-1-0 message by using the hashtag #HealthyChoicesCount. Download these [social media graphics](#) to share.

## More Resources

Looking for more resources to put your plans and strategies into action? Visit [IowaHealthiestState.com/5210](http://IowaHealthiestState.com/5210) to access resources, organized by sector:

- Download tip sheets, get activity ideas and find healthy recipes – all for free!
- Access the [“5-2-1-0 Feature”](#) – updated monthly with a new theme and message.

# STEP 5: CHECK-IN

Every September, each site will be contacted via email with a link to update their registration.




You will be provided with a copy of your registration from last year. The questions will be the same, so recertification will be quick and easy.

Once you have submitted your updated survey letting us know about the progress you have made, you will receive an email notifying you of your level – **bronze, silver or gold** – and if you are eligible to apply for a Healthiest State Annual Award.

Requirements for each level, and the recognition associated with each level, are listed on Page 14 of this toolkit.



# STEP 5: CHECK-IN

BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
<p>Display <a href="#">5-2-1-0 posters</a> (i.e., entrance, classrooms, cafeteria, library, gym, etc.)</p> <p>Send home “<a href="#">Message to Families</a>.”</p> <p>Use the “<a href="#">5-2-1-0 Feature</a>,” for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upload to website</li> <li>• Post link to social media</li> <li>• Have copies of message available in the site entrance/lobby</li> <li>• Display the message on a bulletin board</li> <li>• Incorporate in programming</li> </ul> <p> <b>Recognition:</b></p> <p>Same as Registered Site</p>	<p>Achievement of Bronze, PLUS:</p> <p>Implementation of <u>two</u> priority strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit unhealthy choices for snacks and celebrations; provide healthy choices</li> <li>• Limit or eliminate sugary drinks; provide water</li> <li>• Prohibit the use of food as a reward</li> <li>• Provide opportunities to get physical activity every day</li> <li>• Limit recreational screen time</li> </ul> <p> <b>Recognition:</b></p> <p>Same as Bronze Level PLUS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed certificate</li> <li>• Eligible to apply for the Healthiest State Annual Education Award</li> </ul>	<p>Achievement of Silver, PLUS:</p> <p>Implementation of <u>all five</u> priority strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit unhealthy choices for snacks and celebrations; provide healthy choices</li> <li>• Limit or eliminate sugary drinks; provide water</li> <li>• Prohibit the use of food as a reward</li> <li>• Provide opportunities to get physical activity every day</li> <li>• Limit recreational screen time</li> </ul> <p>Policy Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member of the school is an active participant on the district wellness committee OR</li> <li>• School or District Wellness Policy includes 5-2-1-0 strategies OR</li> <li>• Early care site / Out-of-School program adopts the five priority strategies into policy or handbook</li> </ul> <p> <b>Recognition:</b></p> <p>Same as Silver Level PLUS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count! interactive display</li> </ul>

# CURRENT PARTNERS AND SPONSORS

Thank you for helping to make the healthy choice the easy choice for Iowa kids. We appreciate your partnership and support of 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count!

If you have any questions about 5-2-1-0 or the use of this toolkit, please reach out via email: [info@iowahealthieststate.com](mailto:info@iowahealthieststate.com).

These organizations support using 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count! to help make Iowa's future healthier. Find them each online and on social media for more tips, resources and 5-2-1-0 success stories.



**Facebook:** [Iowa Department of Public Health](#)

**Twitter:** [@IAPublicHealth](#)

**Instagram:** [@iadeptofpublichealth](#)

**Website:** [www.idph.iowa.gov/5210](http://www.idph.iowa.gov/5210)



United Way  
of Central Iowa

**Facebook:** [5210 DSM](#)

**Twitter:** [@5210DSM](#)

**Website:** [www.unitedwaydm.org/5210dsm](http://www.unitedwaydm.org/5210dsm)



**Facebook:** [Iowa Department of Education](#)

**Twitter:** [@IADeptofEd](#)

**Website:** [www.educateiowa.gov](http://www.educateiowa.gov)



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