HEALTHY STUDENTS HEALTHY STATE

Ensuring a Healthier Future for All...
Starting with Students

Imagine a better future with our nonpartisan plan: our children doing well academically, physically, mentally and financially—with parental rights and choices respected. This is the transformative power of ***Healthy Students Healthy State***.

SERIOUS RISKS FACING OUR KIDS:

Our children's health habits have worsened for decades. Now they face serious lifelong risks, across all income levels and ethnicities:

- 1/3 of teens have prediabetes
- Almost HALF of teens report mental health struggles—1 in 10 have attempted suicide
- 77% of teens are unqualified to enlist in the military
- Few children improve their health habits as adults

How did this happen?

Schools increased reading & math instruction time to achieve higher standardized test scores, without extra funding. So they **slashed recess, PE, nutrition & health education, and arts ed**. (Arizona has one of the lowest per-student K-12 funding rates in the USA.) Yet test scores barely improved in over 40 years! And research shows that the **extra seat-time** limits the development of kids' brains. Making this even worse, **screen-time, social media and highly processed food** have taken over outside school.

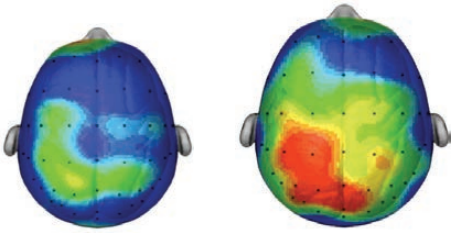
THE LIFELONG CONSEQUENCES?

Across income levels and ethnicities, most American children are destined for **unhealthy high-cost lives** – ***unless we make major changes***.

THE IMPACT:

When Inactive Children Become Unhealthy Adults

- **2-3 TIMES HIGHER HEALTH COSTS** for the nearly 2 in 3 adults with chronic conditions.
- **MORE THAN 15% OF FAMILY INCOMES SPENT ON HEALTH COSTS**—more than 700% health inflation in last 35 years!
- **OVER $55 BILLION LOST EVERY YEAR** in Arizona GDP and wages.
- **HEALTH CARE COSTS = 50% of federal budget and deficits.**
- **MILITARY RECRUITMENT ISSUES threaten our national security.**



Sedentary Active

A BETTER FUTURE: The Benefits of *Healthy Students Healthy State*

REDUCE CHRONIC CONDITIONS & COSTS

MOST KIDS **50+%**

ADULTS **20%**

INCREASE FAMILY & BUSINESS INCOME

- $1000s/year more wages, lower premiums and out-of-pocket costs
- Productivity incl. fewer days out sick

INCREASE ECONOMIC GROWTH

- $5B+ per year GDP
- $500M+ per year government tax revenue

THE KEY: *Schools*

Students are open to change and can learn to improve with trained teachers and staff. They need more recess & social interaction, physical activity, quality nutrition & physical education, mental wellness, and more…including for critical health-related issues like avoiding fentanyl and dealing with bullying and limiting harms from social media.

K-12 schools provide a unique 13-year opportunity to affordably ***transform health habits*** on a large scale by helping children ***develop their abilities*** and ***personal responsibility*** for their physical and mental health.

OUR ACTION: Investment & Accountability

MORE DOLLARS for MORE MINUTES for MORE HEALTH

Investing up to $1 billion annually pays for laws mandating:

- Min 180 minutes/week of health-related education
- 60 minutes/day of physical activity (including recess and PE time)
- Restoring 5,000 teachers, counselors, school nurses
- Each school, in consultation with parents, invests 10-20% of funds for other health-related resources and effective nonprofit community partnerships, before/during/after-school, to implement the school's local wellness policy plan.

CONTINUOUS EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT: Regular accountability, including student-privacy-protected aggregated-only dashboard metrics throughout the school year.

SCALING OVER TIME: Expand each year, starting in elementary and middle schools, then adding high schools.

FUNDING 2% FOR 20% HEALTH COST SAVINGS: Annual funding growing to 2% each of Medicaid/AHCCCS, the Arizona General Fund, and Private Health spending.

10X ROI FOR ALL FUNDERS: This 2% investment for 20% lower chronic health costs saves $5B/yr plus grows GDP/wages $5B/yr, compared to current trends–by **preventing/postponing** the **on-set** and **reducing** the **severity of chronic diseases**.

HEALTHY STUDENTS HEALTHY STATE

Become part of this transformative movement!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO LEARN MORE:
HealthyStudentsHealthyState.org

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Sources: NHANES, YRBS, NAEP 8th grade reading test scores: US:1971-2024; AZ:1998-2024, CDC, US Census/NCES, Milken Institute, KFF, CMS, CBO, Johns Hopkins U, DOD/DOW, Hillman et al/*Neuroscience*, Esteban-Cornejo et al/*NeuroImage*, Desy. See source details & cost estimate calculations at website including in slide deck @Resources. Healthy Students Healthy State is trademarked.

HSHS @March 30, 2026

3 in 10

middle school students said that gym/physical education is their favorite subject.

OUR SUPPORT:

Caring deeply about Healthy AZ Children

- 1.1 million K-12 students
- 1.5 million parents
- 1.5 million grandparents
- 450,000 veterans
- 350,000 nurses and health care professionals
- 120,000 teachers & school staff
- 550,000 Arizona businesses
- 30,000 nonprofit community organizations

PARENTAL RIGHTS ENSURED

Healthy Students Healthy State avoids controversial subjects like sex/gender, protects individual student health data, and allows parents to opt their children out of topics.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE & MENTAL HEALTH IMPROVE WITH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY!