

## Kansas Coordinated School Health

One of the greatest threats to the health and well-being of our next generation is childhood obesity.

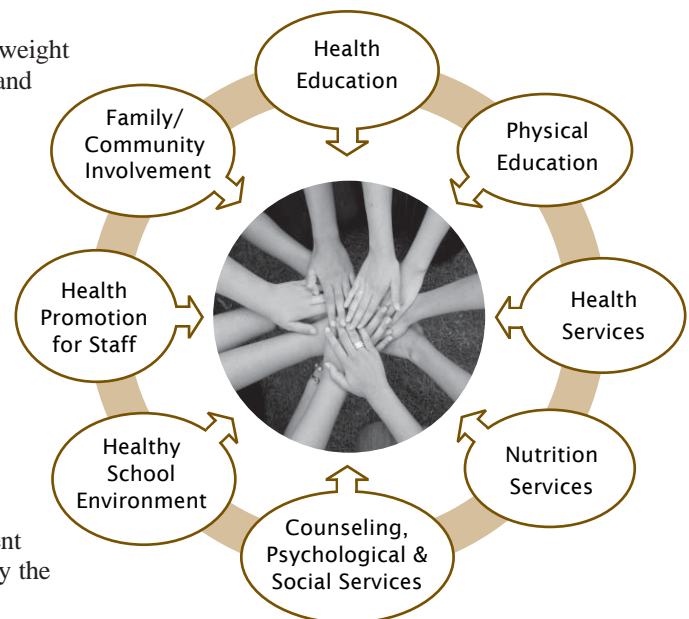
When children grow up overweight or obese, they are more likely to be overweight or obese as adults and more likely to experience health problems now and during adulthood. In fact, it is estimated that today's children will be the first generation with a shorter life expectancy than their parents due to the obesity epidemic.

In Kansas, 1 in 3 children are overweight or obese. These children are more likely to be diagnosed with diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and other problems that were previously considered adult medical issues. Childhood onset of such medical issues not only affects our health care system and the potential of our next generation, but ultimately affects the future prosperity of our state.

We know that a coordinated effort that involves parents, schools, communities and children is the most effective strategy for reducing childhood obesity rates. Kansas Coordinated School Health (KCSH) is a proven approach that helps communities create a healthy school environment where children can establish the nutrition and exercise habits that will lay the foundation for their future health and productivity.

Using an eight-component strategy, KCSH provides school districts with the resources they need to implement a local plan to improve children's health. Each district is able to tailor a program unique to their community's needs, whether that be improved nutrition, increased physical activity, or enhanced health education. KCSH has already impacted more than 80,000 children in 39 Kansas counties by providing those communities with the resources to develop healthier school environments.

Kansas Action for Children requests your support for funding the budget request to implement Kansas Coordinated School Health on a statewide basis. Expanding the resources of KCSH to all Kansas communities will give our next generation the opportunity to adopt lifelong habits of good health.



### Why is the school environment critical to children's health?

Children spend much of their day - and consume nearly half of their daily calories - in a school setting. That's why it's important for our schools to have the opportunity to create an environment that reinforces good habits being taught at home by Kansas parents. Additionally, the majority of public school officials in Kansas recognize the role that schools can and should play in combating childhood obesity.