



2014 – 2018 State Health Improvement Plan

FAQ

What is the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)?

In Washington, we have many plans to improve our residents' health, from local to statewide efforts. The State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) connects those plans. The SHIP calls everyone to action to create a culture of health that provides opportunities for healthy childhoods and healthy choices throughout life. Health equity and reducing equity gaps are key to the plan.

Why do we have a SHIP?

The SHIP is a call to action on key challenges to create the best health possible for everyone across Washington.

What is the SHIP's vision?

The SHIP envisions a culture of health and a system of wellness that gives everyone, especially the most vulnerable among us, a chance to live the healthiest possible life in a safe neighborhood, and be successful in education and employment.

How does the SHIP address health equity?

By promoting safe, welcoming, just, and equitable communities across the state, the SHIP emphasizes the importance of increasing health equity.

What are the SHIP's goals?

The SHIP has two near-term goals and three long-term focus areas:

NEAR-TERM GOALS

- Improve nutrition, physical activity and obesity, as measured by the increase in the proportion of middle and high school youth who have a healthy weight
- Improve access to health care, as measured by the increased number of local health jurisdictions and tribes actively participating in Accountable Communities of Health (ACHs)

LONG-TERM SHIFT

- Invest in the health and well-being of our youngest children and families
- Support development of healthy neighborhoods and communities
- Broaden health care to promote health outside the medical system

How will the SHIP track progress in its priorities?

The SHIP workgroup reports annually on the measures associated with the short-term goals and highlights long-term progress by [Essentials for Childhood](#), [Healthiest Next Generation](#), [Pulling Together for Wellness](#), and the [Plan for Improving Population Health](#).

NEAR-TERM GOALS

- Increase in the proportion of middle and high school youth who have a healthy weight

Who is working on this goal?

Across Washington, many early learning settings, schools and communities are working to improve healthy weight in children by supporting healthy eating, physical activity, breastfeeding, and access to safe drinking water. Community organizations, tribal governments, and local and state governments provide funds and technical assistance. The [Healthiest Next Generation](#) initiative (HNG) promotes statewide action based on community successes and the integration of health into all places where children spend their time. There are HNG coordinators at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Department of Early Learning and the Department of Health.

What work is underway to achieve this goal?

Here are some examples:

- Communities are working with local planners to increase access to healthy foods and physical activity
- Schools are applying for funds through the [Healthy Kids-Healthy Schools](#) grant for water bottle filling stations and facility improvements to support scratch cooking and physical activity
- The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction revised the statewide [Health and Physical Education Standards](#)
- The Department of Early Learning aligned curriculum with national best practice standards for healthy eating, infant feeding, physical activity and reducing screen time. This is required training for all new childcare center directors, supervisors and lead teachers and all family home childcare providers
- The Department of Health and over 60 partners promoted the purchase of fruits and vegetables by supplemental nutrition assistance (SNAP) recipients through supermarkets, farmers markets and health systems
- The Governor's Council for the [Healthiest Next Generation](#) secured funding to encourage children to walk and bike to school through [Safe Routes to School](#), implement [Complete Streets](#) to improve walking and biking in communities, invest in state parks, and support youth athletic facilities.

How will we measure progress toward this goal?

To track progress, the SHIP uses data from the [Healthy Youth Survey](#) (HYS). The HYS reports every two years on the percentage of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders with a healthy weight. The data will be in the SHIP's *Annual Report*. The SHIP will highlight progress by [Healthiest Next Generation](#) over time.

- Increase participation of local public health departments and tribes in Washington's nine regional Accountable Communities of Health

What actions will help achieve this goal?

Many stakeholders across the state, including public health leaders, are engaged in forming [Accountable Communities of Health](#) (ACHs). These regional coalitions are implementing health system reform, including integrating behavioral with physical health care and creating regional health improvement plans, anticipated to align with SHIP priorities. ACHs will pursue projects to build health system capacity, redesign care delivery, and improve population health through consideration of social and environmental factors. State and local public health bring vital skill sets to these tables, including expertise in health promotion, disease prevention, population data analysis, and community health improvement planning. Part of this effort is the [Prevention Framework](#), a blueprint for population health improvement. A multi-sector, public-private partnership led by the Health Care Authority and the Department of Health developed the framework. It is the basis for a state [Plan for Improving Population Health](#), to be completed in 2016.

How will we track progress toward this goal?

Annually, the Department of Health gathers data on the number of local health jurisdictions and tribes participating in their regional ACH. This data will also be included in the SHIP's *Annual Report*.

LONG-TERM SHIFT

What is the 'long-term shift' in the SHIP?

The long-term shift is about increasing health equity and giving everyone a chance to live the healthiest life possible by preventing health problems from occurring in the first place. Each person's prospects for health begin in their family, neighborhood, school, and job. By promoting safe, welcoming, just, and equitable communities we will improve the future health of everyone and prevent health problems from the start of life.

Who is involved in the long-term efforts?

Efforts involve many partners including tribes, schools, business, transportation, early learning, law enforcement, public health, health care and others. Through Washington's [Essentials for Childhood](#) initiative, partners from many sectors promote social, emotional, and relationship resources for families. The [Healthiest Next Generation](#) initiative supports positive social connections and healthy behaviors. The American Indian Health Commission's [Pulling Together for Wellness](#) framework involves culturally appropriate, tribally-driven action planning. Its focus is preventing and reducing chronic disease and addressing health disparities through policies, systems, and environmental change.

● Invest in the health and well-being of our youngest children and families

What work is under way in this effort?

Washington's [Essentials for Childhood](#) initiative includes partners from many sectors and geographic areas, who are creating a context for healthy children, families and communities. Their vision is 'All children in Washington State thrive in safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments.' Workgroups are collaborating to implement strategies including educating key stakeholders on brain science, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), resilience, improve trauma-informed services, align systems to enable family-centered services, increase sharing and use of data and spark innovative policy and financing.

● Support development of healthy neighborhoods and communities

What work is under way in this effort?

- The [Essentials for Childhood](#) initiative builds on existing efforts, promoting safe, stable, nurturing communities and families. Examples are [Reach Out and Read Washington](#), [ACEs Public-Private Initiative](#), and [Frontiers of Innovation](#).
- The [Healthiest Next Generation](#) initiative supports positive social connections and healthy behaviors. They encourage communities to implement [Complete Streets](#) for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders. Especially important for children are [Safe Routes to School](#) and [Walking School Bus](#) programs.
- The American Indian Health Commission's [Pulling Together for Wellness](#) framework is about culturally-appropriate, tribally-driven action planning, focused on preventing and reducing chronic disease and addressing health disparities through policies, systems, and environmental change. Examples are tribal-level commercial tobacco, food sovereignty and [Complete Streets](#) initiatives and policies.

● Broaden health care to promote health outside the medical system

What work is under way in this effort?

Washington is in the midst of a five-year *Health Care Innovation Plan*, including creating the [Accountable Communities of Health](#) described above. The [Prevention Framework](#), a blueprint for population health improvement, is part of this effort. A multi-sector public-private partnership formed in 2014 developed the framework, which is the basis for a state [Plan for Improving Population Health](#), to be completed in 2016. The [Plan for Improving Population Health](#) will guide and accelerate implementation in this area.