



ANNUAL  
REPORT

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**2016**

STATE HEALTH  
IMPROVEMENT PLAN

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# INTRODUCTION

Washington's State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) calls everyone to action to create a culture of health that reduces barriers to health and gives opportunities for healthy childhoods and healthy choices throughout life. It envisions a future where everyone is actively seeking health and everyone has a chance to live the healthiest possible life.

The SHIP was completed in late 2014 with input from many sectors across the state. Its near- and long-term goals align and build on Washington's many plans to improve our residents' health.

This report:



**DESCRIBES** progress toward the goals identified in the SHIP,  
**HIGHLIGHTS** innovative local efforts to influence these goals,  
**OUTLINES** the long-term work of several statewide initiatives working to make a culture of health our new reality.



# NEAR-TERM GOALS

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## 02

### PROGRESS

- 03 Improve nutrition, physical activity, and obesity rates
- 04 Improve access to care

# GOAL 1 —

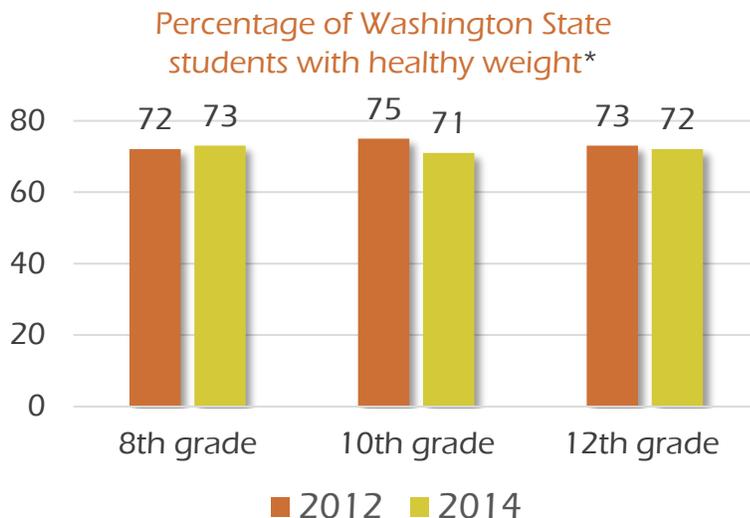
## IMPROVE NUTRITION, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, AND OBESITY RATES

**MEASURE:** Proportion of middle and high school youth who have a healthy weight

Many partnerships and coalitions are working to make progress on this indicator. Our current results suggest we can do much to improve, especially with high school-age youth. States that are making progress in this area find that single solutions don't work; rather it takes many solutions, by many people.

In the places where children spend their time—early learning settings, schools and communities—efforts focus on improving healthy weight by supporting healthy eating, physical activity, and breastfeeding. Data from the 2016 *Healthy Youth Survey* to update these results will be available in 2017.

Community organizations, tribal governments, and local, and state governments all provide funds and technical assistance to help create and sustain local projects to improve nutrition and physical activity. One statewide initiative, **Healthiest Next Generation**, provides technical assistance to many projects. An example of their success is the launch of a statewide recognition program for **breastfeeding-friendly hospitals**. Governor Inslee's initiative, **Results Washington**, convenes a diverse group of state agencies to address unhealthy weight. The departments of transportation, agriculture, education, early learning, and health work to share and align strategies that impact this measure. Increasing students' opportunities to **walk and bike to school** is an example of a strategy they are collaborating on.



\*Source: *Healthy Youth Survey*

## SMARTER, HEALTHIER LUNCHES EATEN BY MORE SPOKANE ELEMENTARY STUDENTS



Using **Smarter Lunchroom ideas**, elementary schools in the Spokane Public School District are serving healthier meals, cooked from scratch, and students are actually eating them. Since meals are only good nutrition when they are eaten, 10 elementary schools nudged 4,000 students to choose the healthy meals during the 2015-2016 school year. With technical assistance from Spokane Regional Health District and WSU Extension, schools used successful behavioral science strategies like placing the hot entrée first, providing new menus using kid-friendly entree names, and making lunchrooms welcoming through positive communication. In the first 10 schools, *Smarter Lunchroom* scores improved from an average baseline of 35 points (out of 100) in spring 2015 to 42 points (fall 2015) to 51 points (spring 2016). Seven of the 10 schools have high enough scores to consider reapplying for the **Healthy U.S. School Challenge** Silver level and potentially receiving \$1,000 in funding. In fall 2016, 14 more elementary schools transitioned to scratch cooking, helped by Empire Health Foundation's training that included success stories from the first schools and developed messages to promote healthy entrees. About 8,000 students in 24 of the district's 34 elementary schools are now eating meals made from scratch.



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# LONG-TERM SHIFT AREAS

## RESULTS

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# 05

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

06

Support development of healthy neighborhoods and communities

08

Broaden health care to promote health outside the medical system

10



# SHIFT AREA 1 —

## INVEST IN THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF OUR YOUNGEST CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

This long-term area seeks to ensure that families and communities build a strong foundation in children's early years for a lifetime of good health, educational success, and economic prosperity.

### Essentials for Childhood

The **Essentials for Childhood** initiative is working statewide to impact this area. This initiative is comprised of a large number of stakeholders and partners who work together to raise awareness and promote social, emotional and relationship resources and support for families. Their goal is that children in every community have:

**SAFETY:** All children feel safe at home and in all of the places they go to live, learn, and play

**STABILITY:** Every child has a stable place to live, receives regular nutritious meals, and experiences consistency in family and caregiver relationships

**NURTURING:** Each child's parents, caregivers, and other close adults are able to sensitively and consistently respond to and meet the needs of the child

When children have stable, responsive relationships with caring adults at home and in the community, they get off to a good start with a strong foundation for future development. When children don't have these experiences, because of exposure to violence, untreated parental mental illness, or other chronic challenges that produce what is now known as *toxic stress*, they suffer and we put our state's future well-being at risk. When we strengthen families and provide high-quality child care and education, we improve the life course of children and families.

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## KITSAP PUBLIC HEALTH SUPPORTS HEALTHY STARTS FOR CHILDREN

The Kitsap Public Health District helps children get a healthy start through intensive nurse home visiting and support for 300-350 low-income pregnant women and children each year. In addition to poverty, participants often identify risk factors including depression, isolation, history of adverse childhood experiences, and limited caretaking/parenting ability. The program tracks changes in clients' knowledge, behavior, and status. The most recent analysis shows clients made the greatest gains in the categories of pregnancy, mental health, and substance abuse. Also, the preterm birth rate was low at 6.4%, breastfeeding rates were improving, 94.1% of clients were up to date on immunizations, and smoking was reduced by 40%. Over time, this program has led to significant improvements in mental health issues, caretaking and parenting, economic stability, prenatal care, childhood immunization rates, avoidance of early repeat pregnancies, and connection to health and social services.

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## COLLABORATING TO REDUCE EARLY CHILD- HOOD OBESITY

Grant County's *Healthy Beginnings Project* is addressing childhood obesity. Based on the nationally recognized *5-2-1-0 Let's Go Challenge*, the project aims to reduce obesity among children ages two through five by 10% by 2020. Data from well-child visits will tell the story of the effort's success. This community initiative is the work of the *Columbia Basin Partnership for Health*. It involves the Grant County Health District, three local health care organizations, a *Head Start* program, the local parks and recreation department, a farmers market, and other community organizations. In 2014, participating clinics applied quality improvement measures around weighing and measuring two- to five-year-olds at well-child visits. In 2016, clinicians added family education, counseling, and prescriptions for play to two- to five-year-old well-child visits. In their program guide, the parks and recreation department identifies classes that qualify for the prescriptions for play. Local grants assist families with the cost. Additional community efforts include the *Farmers Market SNAP Match* program, nutrition classes for pregnant and postpartum women, and a breastfeeding coalition to help infants get the healthiest start. The health district—a founding member of the project—provides community support, assessment, and evaluation.



## SHOALWATER BAY TRIBE BUILDS HEALTH INTO ALL POLICIES

The Shoalwater Bay Tribe is building health into policies, practices, and growth plans. It was the first tribe in the state to adopt a *Complete Streets Resolution* in August 2015, encouraging physical activity such as biking and walking instead of driving. The Tribe sees land and transportation improvements as ways to sustain their ancestors' healthy traditions and culture. Although the Tribe had planned to apply for *Complete Streets funding* from Washington State, unfortunately tribes are not eligible. This funding would be a great benefit to tribal communities, if eligibility criteria in state law were broadened to include them. In addition, the Tribe adopted a food sovereignty resolution and nutritional guidelines to increase access to healthy nutritious food, including growing, harvesting, and preparing organic and traditional foods. Other items on the drawing board are a policy addressing commercial tobacco/e-vaping use, and increased opportunities for traditional physical activities, like gathering, canoeing, and dancing. The Tribe is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation *2016 Culture of Health Prize* winner.

# SHIFT AREA 2 —

## SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITIES

In this long-term area, communities are working to promote positive social connections and support health-promoting behaviors. The American Indian Health Commission's *Pulling Together for Wellness* framework, the *Essentials for Childhood* initiative, and Governor Inslee's *Healthiest Next Generation* initiative are all working statewide to support healthy neighborhoods and communities.

### Healthy Communities: *Pulling Together for Wellness*

*Healthy Communities: Pulling Together for Wellness*, developed by the American Indian Health Commission (AIHC), is a comprehensive prevention framework. It focuses on policies, systems, and environmental change involving tribally driven planning and culturally grounded approaches to address health disparities. The framework blends public health practice with Native beliefs and *ways of knowing* (epistemology). It promotes tribally driven strategies designed specifically to strengthen tribal and urban Indian communities' capacity to build and sustain healthy communities using culturally specific approaches. It strongly emphasizes seven-generation thinking. A medicine wheel model depicts its holistic approach that includes four directions: physical, social, emotional and spiritual health. Tribal leaders stressed the importance of culture as a core component, interwoven into all four sectors of the medicine wheel, to maintain balance and health.

## Essentials for Childhood

*Essentials for Childhood* helps ensure that families and communities build a strong foundation in early childhood for a lifetime of good health, educational success, and economic prosperity.

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### USING SCIENCE TO CREATE BETTER LIVES FOR YOUTH



Building on a decade of community work promoting youth resilience, the Kitsap County community launched a project called *Kitsap Strong* to prevent adverse childhood experiences and build resilience. The founders of this collaboration are Kitsap County Public Health District, the Suquamish Tribe, United Way, and the Kitsap Community Foundation. A year into the project, a project director is working with a multi-sector leadership group of 15 decision makers and stakeholders. They have established shared measurements, and are promoting broad awareness in the community about research findings on neuroscience, epigenetics, adverse childhood experiences, and resilience (NEAR). Through *Kitsap Strong*, expert coaches have given 26 non profit agencies intensive training and tailored technical assistance on integrating the NEAR framework into their programs and policies. This outreach, training, and technical assistance will continue to ensure a NEAR lens is in place throughout the county.

## Healthiest Next Generation

The *Healthiest Next Generation* initiative (HNG) gives opportunities for community organizations, businesses, state and local agencies, and other partners to collaborate in support of children's health. Community organizations, tribal governments, and local and state agencies provide funds and technical assistance. HNG promotes statewide action based on community successes and the integration of health promotion into all environments where children spend their time. Strategies center on helping kids be active at least 60 minutes a day, making sure kids are well fed, and supporting breastfeeding-friendly places.

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### SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL SPOKANE



*Safe Routes to School Spokane* is a social marketing campaign designed to increase safe walking and biking to school at seven elementary schools. School teams are being developed to help each school promote safe walking and biking within the school community. Each school has a trained program liaison to lead their team.

*Walking School Bus* programs have launched in four of the schools. In these programs, pairs of trained adults accompany groups of children along 11 new designated routes to school. Inside the schools, contests and displays help to promote healthy and safe behaviors within the entire school community.

# SHIFT AREA 3 —

## BROADEN HEALTH CARE TO PROMOTE HEALTH OUTSIDE THE MEDICAL SYSTEM

In this long-term area, social and environmental factors impacting health are addressed. Community health promotion and disease prevention strategies across people's lifespans are emphasized.

### *Healthier Washington*

Washington is in the midst of a five-year health care innovation plan called *Healthier Washington*. *Healthier Washington* seeks to raise the quality of life in our state by helping Washingtonians have the best health they can regardless of their income, education, or background. A multi-sector public-private partnership created a state *Plan for Improving Population Health*, a part of *Healthier Washington* that addresses this long-term focus area. This plan, completed in September of 2016, delivers process tools and resources to help communities implement public health and clinical interventions for their own health priorities. It is a part of the groundwork for guiding the state in creating and implementing population health improvement strategies.



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## INCREASING ACCESS TO CARE TO IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES



In early 2015, Cascade Pacific Action Alliance, an *Accountable Community of Health*, launched a *Youth Behavioral Health Coordination* pilot project. In school and health care settings, the project identifies children with mental health and chemical dependency challenges as early as possible and connects children to community-based interventions and treatment services. Improved care coordination among schools, primary care physicians and pediatricians, and behavioral health providers is key to success.

Pilots were identified in the fall of 2015. The four sites (two rural, two urban) are located in Cowlitz, Mason, Thurston, and Wahkiakum counties. All pilot sites are slotted for implementation during the 2016-2017 school year. The goals are to improve school attendance and academic achievement by decreasing the number of school-aged youth with unmet mental and physical health needs. In the short term, the project measures behavioral health referrals, academic achievement, discipline incidents, and absences. Over the longer term, high school graduation rates and trends in *Health Youth Survey* data will be tracked.

**PUBLIC HEALTH**  
ALWAYS WORKING FOR A SAFER AND  
HEALTHIER WASHINGTON

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