



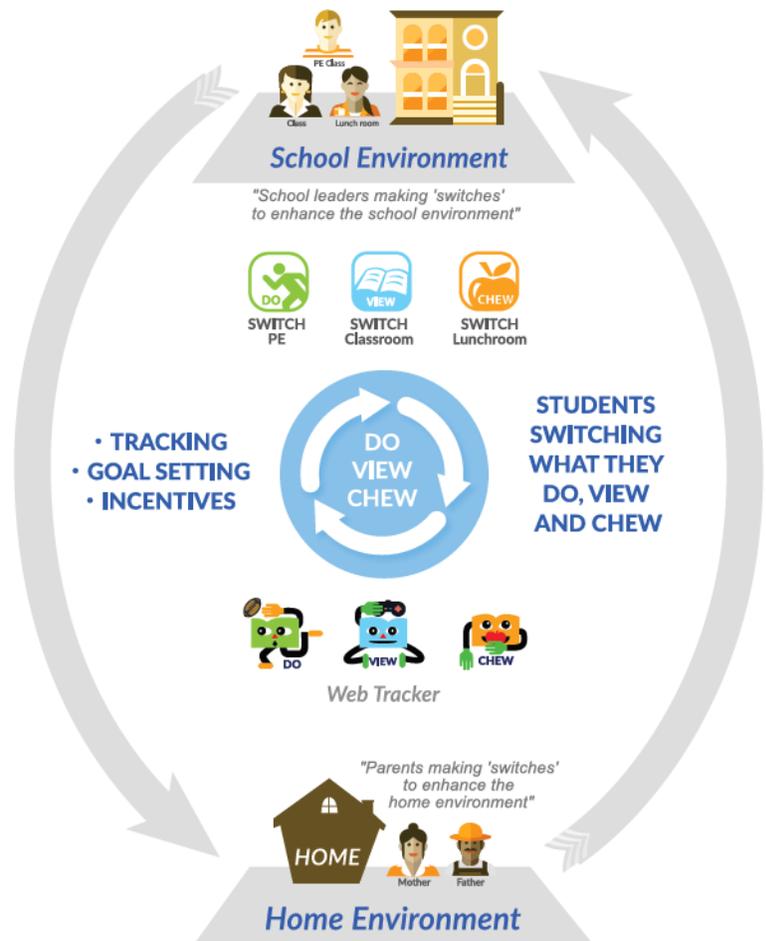
www.iowaswitch.org

## The Basis of SWITCH - Targeting Do, View & Chew Behaviors

The SWITCH initiative (*School Wellness Integration Targeting Child Health*) was developed to facilitate the dissemination of an evidence-based obesity prevention program called 'Switch'. The original Switch program promoted broad school / community collaborations to help youth to 'switch what they do, view and chew'. By following the refined SWITCH model, schools now learn how to run programming on their own. Refined, through a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the SWITCH process directly helps schools meet school wellness requirements established by the USDA (i.e. 'The Final Rule'). However, the comprehensive school-wide approach used in SWITCH is also consistent with recommendations in the "[Whole School - Whole Community - Whole Child](#)" movement and notions of '[Comprehensive School Physical Activity Programming](#)' endorsed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These models emphasize a "whole of school" approach that is critical for sustainability as well as for improving children's behaviors.

The **SWITCH implementation process** guides schools through a capacity-building process that helps with learning how to plan and implement effective school wellness programming. Resources are provided to schools to facilitate programming in targeted settings including physical education, classroom and the lunchroom. However, schools have autonomy to plan programming that most effectively addresses their needs and goals. A key to implementation is the web-based content management system that provides schools with a robust platform to communicate and integrate programming across the school while also promoting engagement by parents at home. Teachers and school leaders create 'switches' when they create healthier school environments while parents create 'switches' by enhancing the home environment.

The integrated **SWITCH web platform** also provides opportunities for students to learn self-monitoring skills that help them to be more aware of their habits and lifestyles. Students track their "Do", "View" and "Chew" behaviors through an interactive system and set and monitor goals to try to adopt healthier habits. The focus in SWITCH cycles across the three behaviors to keep programming fresh and to facilitate more intentional curricular integration. SWITCH provides students with a simple and consistent message about healthy living (i.e. Switch what you Do, View and Chew). While the mantra is simple, it takes coordinated efforts in school and at home to achieve the specific programming goals. [Details on the basis for targeting these priority behaviors is on the back page.](#)



## Rationale and Resources for the Targeted SWITCH Behaviors

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**SWITCH UP to 60 minutes or more of physical activity a day!**

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and National Physical Activity Plan Alliance, children should aim to obtain at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Physical activity improves overall health, promotes self-esteem and improves concentration and alertness in school. Unfortunately, children don't receive enough physical activity throughout the day. SWITCH promotes use of active, conceptual physical education (PE) and movement throughout the day but promotion at home is also critical.

### Key Resources

- Centers for Disease Control (CDC): [Comprehensive School Physical Activity Programs](#)
- SHAPE America: [Physical Activity Promotion Toolkit](#)



**SWITCH DOWN to 2 hours or less of screen time a day!**

Minimizing excess time being sedentary is an additional public health priority and it is especially important for youth. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) suggests that children should minimize non-educational screen time as much as possible, and recommends no more than 2 hours per day. Evidence suggests that youth spend far more time being sedentary so efforts are needed to help youth establish habits that minimize sedentary time. The SWITCH program targets this goal by encouraging regular activity breaks during the school day but it is also important for parents to help reinforce this goal at home.

### Key Resources

- American Academy of Pediatrics - [Screen Time Recommendations](#):
- Alliance for a Healthier Generation - [School Wellness Tips](#)



**SWITCH UP to 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day!**

Eating a healthy diet rich in a variety of foods is essential for child and adolescent health! The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommends that children consume at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day as part of a balanced diet. A healthy diet in youth is important for facilitating optimal growth and development, promoting weight control, and strengthening various body systems. Healthy nutrition habits start at home but the SWITCH program enhances habits by promoting use of the Smarter Lunchroom model and by helping youth learn about good nutrition.

### Key Resources

- USDA - [Team Nutrition for Schools](#)
- Action for Healthy Kids - [Promoting Nutrition in Schools](#)