



Indiana  
Department  
of  
Health

## Healthy Schools Newsletter

February 2025 Edition

### Celebrate National Nutrition Month This March

March is National Nutrition Month! It is an [annual campaign](#) established in 1973 by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. During the month of March, everyone is invited to learn about making informed food choices and developing healthful eating and physical activity habits.

This year's theme is "**Food Connects Us.**" Food is a connecting factor for many of us. Food connects us to our cultures, our families and our friends. Sharing a meal is an opportunity to learn about its preparation, who made it and where the ingredients were sourced. Health, memories, traditions, seasons and access can all impact our relationship with food. While these factors influence the foods we eat, the foods we eat also affect our health.



# Food ConnectsUs

2025 NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH®

A Campaign by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

[Click here for resources](#)

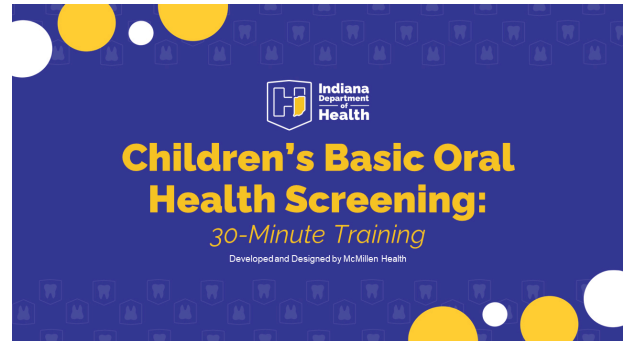
## New Oral Health Resources

The Indiana Department of Oral Health provides essential resources to promote oral health education and early detection of dental issues in schools through two key resources.



### Super Smiles: A Dental Health Adventure (K-2 Curriculum)

This engaging curriculum helps young students develop lifelong oral hygiene habits, understand the importance of preventive care, and recognize the connection between oral health and overall well-being. By incorporating oral health into early education, we can empower children to take charge of their dental health from an early age.



### Children's Basic Oral Health Screening Training

This training equips school nurses and non-dental professionals with the knowledge and tools to conduct basic oral health screenings for school-aged children. The focus is on identifying early signs of tooth decay and other visible oral health issues, ensuring prompt intervention and better health outcomes for students.

[View the resources](#)

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## Upcoming CATCH My Breath Trainings

CATCH My Breath (CMB) is an evidence-based vaping prevention program for grades 5-12. The curriculum is grade-level specific and meets health education standards.



### Implementation Training

Participants who complete this training will become certified to implement CATCH My Breath to youth in their school or

### Train-The-Trainer Trainings

Participants will become certified community trainers which equips them to train other adults to implement the

community. Four virtual training options available in February-May.

[Learn more](#)

program. Seven virtual training options available in February-June.

[Learn more](#)

Questions? Contact Melina Rivera at [MeRivera@health.in.gov](mailto:MeRivera@health.in.gov).

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## Grant Opportunities

### Health by Design Safe Routes to School Grant

Health by Design is offering grant funding to individual schools/corporations, community organizations, and counties/cities/towns. Funding amount ranges from \$2,500 to \$10,000. It is intended to support the development of initiatives to make it safer for children to walk and bike to school and throughout their communities.

**Deadline:** Applications due Friday, March 7.

[Application](#)

### Tactical Urbanism Grant

The Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) is providing funding for Indiana communities to assist in the design and implementation of low-cost pop-up, tactical urbanism demonstration projects that support active living in Indiana. This funding will assist grantees in the planning, preparation, and implementation of one or more tactical urbanism demonstration projects in their communities.

**Deadline:** Applications due Thursday, Feb. 27.

[Application](#)



## **HANDS in Autism® Make-It Take-It Workshop**

Designed to educate participants about evidence-based strategies, learn how to use these strategies with individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

Next workshop: Wednesday, Feb. 26, noon-2 p.m. EST.

[Register](#)

## **Indiana Interagency Autism Coordinating Council (IIACC)**

The Council serves as a forum to increase public understanding and awareness of the state's collective priorities, activities, programs, policies, and research.

Next meeting: Thursday, March 6, 9–11:30 a.m. EST

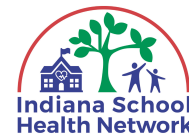
[Register](#)

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## **2025 ISHN Conference**

**June 9-11, 2025**

**Embassy Suites  
Plainfield**



## **Indiana School Health Network Conference**

### **Call for Exhibitors**

The ISHN Conference attracts over 600 school, community, and public health professionals from across Indiana. It offers individuals passionate about childhood development and school health a unique opportunity to expand their knowledge, enhance their skills, and collaborate with like-minded professionals. Exhibitors can increase brand and program awareness, build valuable connections, and network with conference attendees.

**Submission Deadline:** Friday, April 25

[Exhibitor Information](#)

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# WellSAT: 3.0

## Wellness School Assessment Tool

### Wellness Policies

All schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program are required to have a district-level school wellness policy to guide school wellness activities and promote student health, wellbeing, and learning ability. Districts are required by the Indiana Department of Education to review the policy at least once every three years. IDOH, DNPA offers free wellness policy reviews using the WellSAT 3.0 scoring tool and technical assistance with policy updates.

[Contact us for a policy review](#)

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### New IDOH, DNPA Staff

IDOH, DNPA recently welcomed Shelbi Cummings to the team! With over 25 years of multi-sector experience supporting individuals, organizations, and communities in achieving their self-determined health and quality of life goals, Shelbi joins the DNPA team as the SNAP-Ed Director to help SNAP-eligible Hoosiers establish healthy eating habits and a physically active lifestyle. Having led direct education and policy, systems and environmental change strategies in both physical activity and nutrition, she serves as a subject matter expert in these areas.



Shelbi leads a team focused on all aspects of SNAP-Ed including delivery of SNAP-Ed services, technical assistance for implementing agencies, data collection and evaluation, reporting to USDA-FNS, community engagement and cross-sector partnerships.

Prior to joining DNPA, Shelbi provided leadership for the Equitable Food Access Initiative-Indianapolis (EFAI), a public and privately funded initiative focused on strengthening Indianapolis' local food system through place-based approaches. She led as community development partner for the Diabetes Impact Project-Indianapolis Neighborhoods (DIP-IN), providing funding, training and technical assistance for a team of community health workers who developed and implemented diabetes



prevention strategies focused on improving the built, economic, and social environments in disinvested neighborhoods. As a former employment training specialist working in the evidence-based practice of individual placement and support (EB-IPS), she developed an unwavering commitment to empowering people through self-determination, person-centered planning and strengths-based approaches, all guiding principles and practices that she continues to apply to her work at IDOH.

Shelbi currently serves on the board of directors for HealthNet, and Gennesaret Free Clinics-Indianapolis, both of which provide healthcare services to low-income and uninsured residents. Her previous board experience includes Indianapolis' Coalition of Homelessness Intervention and Prevention (CHIP), Kalamazoo Area Runners, and Girls on the Run-Kalamazoo. She also served as mayoral appointment to the City of Indianapolis Food Access Advisory Commission. In her free time, Shelbi enjoys officiating track and field meets, running, reading, porch chats with neighbors and spending time with her family, especially her grandson.

Email Shelbi



## Division of **Nutrition & Physical Activity**

If you would like more information on school health or have content to share, please contact the Indiana Department of Health, Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity (IDOH, DNPA).

Youth Physical Activity Coordinator Emma Smythe, [esmythe@health.in.gov](mailto:esmythe@health.in.gov)

School Health Coordinator Jenna Sperry, [jsperry@health.in.gov](mailto:jsperry@health.in.gov)

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To **promote**, **protect**, and **improve** the health and safety of all Hoosiers.



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