



10 Keys to School Health Advisory Councils (SHACs)

1 If the SHAC in your school district is struggling, or just getting started, focusing on specific issues or state mandates can help it move in the right direction. Identifying a local issue that has the community's attention can also jumpstart your SHAC.

To establish a SHAC in your school district, please visit the websites below for basic information:

- <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/sdhac.shtm>
- <http://www.austinisd.org/schools/shac/>

2 SHACs are district-level advisory groups whose members must be appointed by the board of trustees, although district administrators may make recommendations. A majority of SHAC members must be non-employee, parents from within the school district. SHAC members should include all Local and Council PTA Healthy Lifestyles Chairs. Other members to consider would be:

- School Personnel
(*teachers/administrators*)
- Students
- Government
- Civic/Non-Profit Organizations
- Texas Agri-Life
- Extension Agents
- Social Services
- Faith Community
- Business
- Law Enforcement
- Local Domestic Violence Program
- Medical Community
- Senior citizens

3 SHACS advise and make recommendations to the school district and board of trustees on issues that impact student health. Issues are based on a coordinated school health program which include the eight components of school health as defined by the Center for Disease Control:

- Health Education
- Health Promotion for Staff
- Physical Education
- Healthy School Environment
- Nutrition Services
- Counseling/Psychological/
Social Services
- Health Services
- Family/Community Involvement

4 Beginning in 2007, school districts should have implemented a coordinated school health program (CSH) in grades K-8. Determine which CSH program your school district has adopted. The Texas Education Agency has approved four CSH programs, and those approved programs are listed on the TEA website, http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=2147483874&menu_id=2147483656

5 If your school district participates in the federal meal program (breakfast, lunch or snack), they should have Wellness Policy in place. Ask how it is being monitored and implemented.

- 6 Verify your school district has the following information published in the student handbook or on their website. These postings were mandated beginning in the fall of 2006.
 - School district policy on ensuring all students receive 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week of physical activity.
 - A statement of the number of times the SHAC meets during the year.
 - Whether the school district has adopted/enforces policies to ensure campuses comply with Texas Education Agency vending and food service guidelines.
 - Policies regulating tobacco use on campus.
- 7 Identify a champion on the board of trustees. Having a supporter as a board member will make it easier to work with the school administration.
- 8 Recruit a parent champion. In fact, find TWO parent champions! If you can identify two parents who have a passion for healthy children, they will help promote school health and ensure your SHAC is successful.
- 9 Work with existing groups and structures like PTA, campus advisory groups and youth groups to help recruit good members, find support for initiatives and educate the community on issues and solutions.
- 10 Be patient, plan for short-term and long term goals, and celebrate success!

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