UNLOCK THE DOORS™ AND KEEP KIDS HEALTHY.
Expanded Shared Use: Incentives and Monitoring

NO PLAYING AFTER SCHOOL HOURS
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Preface

Voices for Healthy Kids®, a joint initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and American Heart Association (AHA), works to help all young people in the United States eat healthier foods and be more active. Nearly one in three kids and teens are overweight or obese. By engaging, organizing, and mobilizing communities across the country, Voices for Healthy Kids aims to ensure that every child has access to healthy foods and drinks at home and in school, safe streets for biking and walking, and safe places to play after school. This toolkit is designed to help coalitions educate their communities on ways to make this vision a reality.

Voices for Healthy Kids actively supports policy changes where children live, learn, and play to reduce obesity across the country. While childhood obesity affects the entire country, it does not affect everyone equally. For this reason, Voices for Healthy Kids is committed to reaching communities that are disproportionately impacted by the epidemic, including those of color; high poverty urban, suburban, and rural populations of all races and ethnicities; and Native Americans.

State and local policy changes are effective strategies to reverse the obesity epidemic. Public officials have both the right and the responsibility to ensure communities have access to healthy foods and safe places to be active. Our policy priorities to achieve healthier communities are:

- Improving the nutritional quality of snack foods and beverages in schools.
- Reducing consumption of sugary beverages.
- Protecting children from unhealthy food and beverage marketing.
- Increasing access to affordable healthy foods.
- Increasing access to parks, playgrounds, walking paths, bike lanes, and other opportunities to be physically active.
- Increasing and improving opportunities for kids to stay active when they are out of school.

In this toolkit, you will find tactics to help your community increase opportunities to be physically active. More specifically, the content will help you advocate for the creation of a state shared use initiative to help schools keep their doors open during non-school hours—which includes requirements for incentives, monitoring, and reporting of local shared use, as well as creation of an advisory body. Voices for Healthy Kids is excited to offer this toolkit—as well as several others—to support communities striving to live, learn, and play in healthy environments. If your organization would like more information on liability related to shared use, please contact us via the email address below for our companion shared use liabilities toolkit.

In order to ensure the most successful community advocacy possible, we encourage everyone using this toolkit to engage the staff and partners of Voices for Healthy Kids. Stay connected to our work on Facebook, Twitter, and on www.VoicesforHealthyKids.org, or reach us directly at VoicesforHealthyKids@heart.org. You can also join in the conversation with others engaged in the movement across the country at PreventObesity.net.
Introduction
Physical activity can help reduce the risk for obesity and some types of cancer. Yet finding a place to play or be active can be a challenge if a community does not have an abundance of safe and convenient facilities available. Research shows that people who have parks or recreational facilities nearby exercise 38 percent more than those who do not have easy access.

Recreational facilities are often not evenly distributed in communities, especially across low-income and communities of color. However, schools generally are. School facilities can be an excellent resource within communities because they offer safe play spaces that already exist, are known to the community, and are well-equipped for activity. Many schools are willing to open their doors and gates after hours, offering “shared use” (also referred to as “joint use” by some organizations) of playgrounds, fields, running tracks, pools, gymnasiums, fitness rooms, and other spaces. In fact, studies show that as many as 93 percent of school districts engage in some kind of shared use, maximizing shared use of school facilities after school hours and offering activities to address both students’ and the community’s needs for recreational activity spaces.

Yet, in many cases, schools may engage in just a limited level of shared use and may not have the resources to explore more comprehensive shared use practices. Research shows that less than half of the shared use agreements into which schools enter specify that both indoor and outdoor facilities be available for public use. In some cases, schools do not participate in shared use at all. This may be because they are unaware of how shared use can work or are concerned about possible problems that could arise. With a greater understanding, strengthened agreements, and enhanced incentives (outlined below), schools would have the support to not only open their gymnasium doors, but also the gates to their tracks, fields, and playgrounds.

Formal shared use policies are generally passed by the school board and may outline the district’s commitment to shared use, describe when and where shared use can occur, and specify other requirements or conditions of use. Shared use agreements are contracts between the district and another partner—perhaps the local parks department, a community-based organization, or youth-serving organization—that clarify important issues such as liability, proper use of school facilities, and sharing costs for maintenance and supervision. With encouragement from parents, advocates, or local government partners, many schools are happy to put a shared use policy in place or expand on an existing agreement.

This toolkit addresses two ways of increasing the availability of schools for shared use: encouraging shared use policies and agreements at the school district level and incentivizing districts to engage in shared use through state law.

Encouraging Local Policies

The best way to expand shared use in local communities is to generate enthusiasm and obtain strong support from parents, school administrators, and school board members. Share with them the many benefits shared use has for schools—from building strong community goodwill, to supporting healthier and more successful students, to allowing shared costs for maintenance and new facilities. It’s even more convincing to show that shared use is already having a positive impact. Schools often start by informally opening their doors for community use, slowly offering limited facilities to select groups, such as those that are school-sponsored or school-affiliated. But when school districts begin to see the merits of shared use, they can take steps to ensure that the practice becomes standard throughout their district, so that schools can expand their offerings to the community.

Helping Incentivize a Statewide Approach

Because local advocates and school administrators are often stretched very thin and may not have resources to fully explore shared use, another effective strategy may be to pass state legislation that provides incentives for implementing or expanding shared use. School districts struggle with limited budgets, scarce resources, changing standards and expectations, and a challenging mission. Even though districts care about student health and community well-being, sometimes these concerns cannot compete with the daily demands of educating children.

By providing districts with incentives to support shared use, a state law can help overcome the hurdles of competing priorities and limited resources. A state law can set up a process through which districts receive key benefits for supporting shared use; they can also increase the effectiveness of shared use programs, especially in communities with fewer resources. The benefits may include programmatic grants, capital money for shared use projects, additional staff or technical assistance resources to organize shared use logistics, or even just recognition for advancing shared use. In exchange, the law may require districts to meet certain conditions such as signing shared use agreements or passing more explicit shared use policies that clearly define which facilities may be used, by whom, and when. State shared use laws should also include monitoring and reporting, which help to increase understanding of the shared use opportunities that are available around the state and any barriers that schools may be facing that prevent shared use programs that must be overcome.

The following list includes a range of potential strategies, illustrating actions from the chart that follows, to expand shared use and increase physical activity opportunities in the places where children live, learn, and play. Much of this toolkit will focus on the first strategy listed below (statewide policy change for incentives, monitoring, and reporting). The second strategy (systems level) addresses working with school districts to create policy change at the system level. There are, however, other ways to advocate and become involved with this issue at multiple levels.

1. **Policy Level:** Advocate for creation of a state shared use initiative that includes requirements for incentives, monitoring, and reporting of shared use in schools around the state.
2. **Systems Level:** Work with school districts to create a shared use policy that sets out a district’s willingness to engage in shared use and describes parameters for the practice. School districts
can also create policies for collecting and reporting facility usage data to state departments of education or other appropriate state agency, and can commit to working with community recreation and planning departments to maximize their ability to share facilities.

3. **Organizational Level:** Encourage individual schools to open their facilities or to expand the hours or spaces that are available for community use.

4. **Starting at Home:** Families can work with their parent teacher association (PTA) or other volunteer groups to encourage schools in their community to open their doors to shared use.

5. **Individual Pledge:** Individuals can share their stories of increased physical activity resulting from taking advantage of programs at school buildings and facilities available through shared use.

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**To get started:**

We have made it easy to raise awareness in your community by creating model tools about why shared use is important and the different ways to support it. In this kit are guides to identifying and recruiting volunteers, spreading the word online, alerting local media, holding events, and meeting with state and local public officials to encourage policies that make it possible for schools to create or expand their shared use programs.

- **Review the contents of this toolkit** and think about the types of activities that would work best in your community. What, if any, existing state or local laws are in place? What would be the most effective way to support shared use? Select one of the strategies above. Develop a plan to achieve your campaign goals.
• **Identify your core planning team** and think about the type of activity that will make the biggest difference in your state or community. Does your core planning team reflect the diversity of the communities most in need of shared use agreements? Are you holding meetings at a convenient time and place to engage new community members, such as faith-based groups or other diverse groups?

• **Plan an event** that features a well-known community member or a successful shared use initiative in the community to attract media attention. Does it make sense to activate and educate government leaders, schools, and community members through social media?

• **Consult the volunteers section** of this toolkit for specific tips on recruiting, engaging, and recognizing a diverse group of volunteers from communities and neighborhoods most affected by these issues who will help you achieve your goals.

• **Customize and include any language/cultural translation of the sample outreach materials** included in this toolkit for your activities.

With the support of local decision makers, community groups, and individuals, schools can be empowered to **unlock the doors™** and help keep children healthy.
A Note on Lobbying

It is always important to understand whether any activities you are planning could fall under the IRS definition of lobbying. This is especially true if you receive a Voices for Healthy Kids grant to support your efforts, because no Voices for Healthy Kids funds can be used to support lobbying. Generally, any activity or communication that takes a position on specific pending or proposed legislation—for Congress, a state legislature, a city council, or a town meeting—could be considered lobbying in some circumstances. Below are some examples of communications that may be considered lobbying, as well as those that are not.

<table>
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<th>Non-Lobbying</th>
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<td>1. “Contact your legislator and ask him/her to support bill number XXXX.”</td>
<td>1. “Ask your legislators to offer incentives for schools to open their doors for the community to get active!”</td>
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<td>2. “Click here to sign the petition to support bill number XXXX.”</td>
<td>2. “Sign the petition to urge our school board members to vote yes to open the doors to gyms and playgrounds during non-school hours!”</td>
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<td>3. A communication to legislators that supports bills not yet introduced: “Iowa should adopt Arkansas’ Shared use Agreement grant program!”</td>
<td>3. “As a concerned Jacksonville parent, I ask all my neighbors to join me in encouraging school officials to help keep our area’s school doors open when school isn’t in session.”</td>
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In the example above, note that the second example in the right-hand column is not lobbying even though it asks school board members to vote a particular way on a specific shared use proposal. School boards are not legislatures, so it is never lobbying under the IRS rules to ask school board members to support or oppose a proposal before their board.

Look for the following icon throughout this toolkit, which identifies areas where lobbying may come into play:

![Icon]

When you engage in activities that may involve lobbying, consult your legal counsel, as well as the [Lobbying vs. Non-Lobbying Checklist](#) in the appendix of this toolkit, to help determine whether you need to use lobbying funds. Lobbying efforts must be supported with other funds, and these costs must be tracked separately from non-lobbying efforts. All types of activities, both lobbying and non-lobbying, can help promote healthy lifestyles in your community; however, if your ultimate goal becomes the passage of specific legislation, you will probably need unrestricted funds to conduct some of your work.

This toolkit is written for organizations that are legally able to lobby and have lobbying and non-lobbying funds available. (Public charities are able to conduct a limited amount of lobbying, while private foundations are not. Governmental entities are subject to different rules; check with your legal counsel for details.)
In this toolkit you will find important tips for understanding the distinctions between lobbying and non-lobbying activities, as well as when to use lobbying funds versus non-lobbying funds. We have provided examples to help you understand the distinctions between lobbying and non-lobbying activities so you can plan your activities strategically, without violating restrictions on your non-lobbying funds. Please also be aware that some states have additional rules that may be relevant to your activities, such as registration and other requirements; this guide does not address those state rules.
Engagement Phases

There are four key phases to a campaign: recruit, engage, mobilize, and evaluate. The following section outlines each of these phases; as you plan your campaign, designate time for each step.

Phase 1: Recruit

In the first phase of the campaign, lay the groundwork to ensure success, and recruit key advocates to your cause. Think about these questions: Who can be your spokespeople? Are there families in your community who would be willing to share their story through an op-ed or a letter to the editor (LTE)? Where do members of various ethnic, cultural, socio-economic, and racial groups in the community regularly congregate? What are the organizations in your community that advocate on behalf of different racial and multicultural communities? Are there any alliances with community planners or developers, doctors, nurses, public health professionals, researchers, teachers, coaches, school boards, PTAs/PTOs, intramural sports club teams, faith-based groups, community businesses, or academics that could be explored? Who do you want to be your “everyday advocates,” the large group of people who speak out on the issues at hand? Do these “everyday advocates” represent the diversity of the communities most affected by the issue?

Consider reaching out to specific groups that would likely support shared use agreements. For example, to increase support for incentives for shared use agreements, you could recruit community sports leagues that would be able to use the facilities to see if they want to be part of your efforts. They may be interested in meeting with state leaders and organizations to discuss the importance of incentive, monitoring, and reporting programs. In your outreach, make sure to target organizations that reflect the diversity of your audience.

Alternatively, some school districts, superintendents and community leaders who are part of these agreements can help build support for a larger statewide campaign to encourage programs for monitoring and incentivizing shared use agreements.

Reach out to these groups via all available channels: social media, existing member databases, personal emails, blogs, paid advertisements, community outreach, tables at street fairs and festivals, public announcements at places of worship, etc. Provide culturally and linguistically appropriate materials as well. Cast a wide net to recruit a diverse audience that cares about your issues.

Once you determine who is on your side, start thinking about how to garner support from public officials and other important leaders—another form of recruitment is gathering the support of your local leaders. It’s often most effective to do this through the advocates you recruit. In many cases, you can ask your supporters to communicate your message to their representatives or key officials. You can do that through letters, e-communications, blogs, public service announcements, LTEs, op-eds, and social media, among other tactics. Learn more about mobilization in the following pages and check the appendix of this toolkit for examples.

Finally, before executing any of the tactics in this toolkit, it is important to establish how you will measure the specific outcomes related to shared use agreements. Have agreements been enacted or expanded since you started your campaign? How many schools are receiving incentives from the state? Are kids more active? Are more kids using facilities during out of school hours? Are new allies joining your outreach efforts? How many community presentations have been conducted? It is also important
to determine how you will measure the effectiveness of your communications and grassroots advocacy: Media impressions? Likes? Comments? Open and click-through rates? Offline actions taken, such as signing up for educational opportunities or to volunteer? Media advocacy actions, such as op-ed or LTE placements? Set these parameters before you get started so you can measure your success throughout the campaign.

More information on how to implement the Recruitment Phase is found in the sections on Potential Allies, Recruitment Basics, and Recognition Plan.

Phase 2: Engage
During this phase, your introductory/educational email, initial media outreach (both traditional and social), and event planning take place.

This is the time to start building relationships. Communicate regularly with your activists or community organization leaders, keeping them engaged, informed, and ready to take action when needed. Start working with the media—they tend to respond best to people who are organized, clear, polite, and have newsworthy things for them to write about. Media engagement should include multicultural and mainstream press. This toolkit provides introductory language for your social media and e-communications efforts directed at advocates and media.

Additionally, start working with a diverse group of spokespeople relevant to the community in which you are working. Use the media tips in this toolkit, and familiarize your spokespeople with your talking points to ensure they are confident when speaking in public or with media. When scheduling your press conferences and events, give reporters and community members ample notice.

More information on how to implement the Engagement Phase is found in the sections on Diverse Audiences, Social Media Resources, and Tips for Using Social Media to Reach Journalists.

Phase 3: Mobilize
Now that your planning is complete, it is time to act. Reach out to your advocates, spokespeople, the media, community organizations, local businesses, etc., and let them know your campaign is in full swing. Keep track of your metrics of success, as well as the movement of the policy at hand, to deploy different communication methods to increase mobilization as needed.

Stay in touch with diverse community members and organizations to keep them informed and engaged. You may need them to do educational outreach at local gatherings to build popular support in the community. At other times, a social media action may be best to help bolster recruitment. Advocates may need to write letters to their leaders if a vote among the school board or legislature is just around the corner.

Note that the costs of planning and conducting this last type of activity may require lobbying funds, depending on the target of the letters and the content of the communication.

In this phase, leverage the media relationships you established in phase 2. By this time, you have made connections with reporters and local bloggers over the phone or via email. Communicate regularly with reporters to keep them informed and give them ideas for covering your campaign.
If you are planning media events, such as press conferences, this is the time to execute. Get your spokespeople ready to lead events, and make sure those spokespeople reflect the diversity of the audience you are trying to reach. For more details on media training, take a look at the Media Training Tips section of this toolkit. Set up opportunities for new advocates to join the cause. Let media know when an event is happening and give them special incentives to cover the story, such as a behind-the-scenes press pass that grants them an interview with your spokespeople and photo opportunities.

More information on how to implement the Mobilize Phase is found in the sections on Action Alerts, The Value of Phone Outreach, Hosting a Media Event, Media Training Tips, Why Op-Eds Matter, Meeting with Legislators, and Days at the Capitol.

Phase 4: Evaluate
Do not forget about evaluation—it is just as important as the rest of your campaign. Start by reviewing the metrics you put in place at the beginning of the campaign to help determine what worked and what did not, so you can make adjustments in your next campaign.

Share your campaign successes with your advocates so you can celebrate the wins together. Advocates need to know that their efforts made a difference to the campaign, especially if they are going to help your organization or cause in the future.

Key Takeaways
• Recruiting a diverse group of advocates and community organizations, especially those that represent the communities most affected by policy change, will be key to your campaign’s success.
• Educate volunteers, the community, and the local media about the issues that are important to you.
• Communicate regularly to keep advocates, community organizations, and media informed and engaged.
• Establish metrics for your campaign’s success and regularly evaluate your progress.
Recruit: Potential Allies

Your success will depend on creating local support for incentivizing schools to keep their facilities open during non-school hours. Working with state and local partner groups is one of the best ways to build that support. Consider the list of tips below as you begin outreach to other organizations, and consult the appendix for a detailed list of potential allies.

Who Can Help

There are many organizations working to prevent childhood obesity by increasing the number of places for people to get active. While there may be organizations solely focused on shared use agreements, far more groups work on shared use within broader strategies to increase physical activity. While some groups may not perfectly align with offering incentives to encourage schools to enter into shared use agreements, it is still worth reaching out to them—they may be valuable partners for other programs you are pursuing or other long-term organizational goals.

Leaders in the following areas may be potential partners:

- Social justice, civil rights, and health equity
- Educational justice
- Faith-based organizations
- Health and wellness, including reducing childhood obesity
- Child welfare
- Chambers of commerce and economic development corporations
- Community sports
- Parks and recreation departments
- Labor unions that represent staff from schools and municipalities

Although some potential allies and opponents will speak publicly, others will take a more subtle approach. Before making a decision on any potential partner or opponent, look at their goals, mission statement, programs, and activities to ensure alignment with your key goals and metrics.

Key Takeaways

- Partners can come from a variety of backgrounds—from faith groups to those solely committed to reducing childhood obesity. Cast a wide net to reach as many potential allies as possible.
- Understand your potential allies’ goals, priorities, and programs before engaging with them.
Recruit: Recruitment Basics

Deploying a campaign is not just about mobilizing your advocates to take action in support of more places for the community to be active. It is an opportunity to draw more supporters to your cause and retain them for future campaigns to improve the health of your community. The following recruitment guidelines will help you accomplish these goals.

Note that these tips are suggestions, not requirements. Choose the approach and tactics that work best for your organization and community. Regardless of how you recruit new supporters, dedicate sufficient resources to communicate effectively with the diverse audience you hope to engage. For instance, if you are hoping to reach Latino audiences, consider the need for translators and translated materials; if your target group does not use the Internet, emphasize offline recruitment opportunities.

Recruiting at Events

Every event your organization initiates or attends should provide an easy way for people to join your efforts to support schools and shared use agreements. There are several ways to collect information at events; a few ideas are listed below.

• **Join with your partners** to share a table at the event on being a part of larger aligned effort, such as a statewide obesity task force, where shared use can add value to their overall objective of increasing access to opportunities to be physically active.

• **Be sure to have the ability to communicate in your supporters’ language at the event.** If you do not speak the language, find another supporter who does.

• **Bring tablet computers.** Easy to use and extremely portable, tablet computers can be a simple and effective way to collect names and emails on-site.

• **Offer sign-up forms.** This option is easy and inexpensive to initiate. It’s also a natural way to combine an opportunity to sign up with an opportunity to take action. For example, asking attendees to fill out a pre-written postcard to an elected official can provide a compelling reason for people to share their personal information. However, do not assume that a person filling out the form wants you to contact them; include a box they can check to receive more information. Remember that transcribing these names of those who do sign up into a computer-friendly format will take time.
  o If the postcard talks only generally about shared-use policy, it is not lobbying. However, if the letter referred to specific legislation, it would be lobbying and your organization would need to pay for that activity with lobbying funds.

• **Try business card recruitment.** The less effort it takes to sign up, the more likely people are to do so. For example, if you are hosting an event with key business leaders in your community, ask everyone to leave their business cards behind to join the cause. You may pull in more names than with a traditional sign-up form because a business card approach is so easy.

Recruiting on Issues

It is important to show potential advocates that joining your cause will make a difference. Potential recruits are much more likely to take action when they believe that doing so will have an impact.

• **Expand the ask.** When recruiting, ask for more than just a name. Ask your potential advocates to take part in an action, such as signing a petition or sending a letter to their state legislators about establishing incentives, monitoring, and reporting programs for schools to enter into to shared use agreements.
If the petition or letter talks only generally about shared use policy, it is not lobbying. However, if the petition or letter referred to specific legislation, it would be lobbying and your organization would need to pay for that activity with lobbying funds.

- **Address issues head-on.** Do not be afraid to use conflict or controversy when appropriate. People like to engage in topical issues.

**Recruiting Online**

Do not limit yourself to recruiting at in-person events only. There may be a large pool of new advocates you can reach online.

- **Engage social media friends and followers.** If you have affiliate or state online properties, ask your fans to tell their friends about your organization and the way you are helping promote shared use agreements in your local school districts, or ask your followers to retweet invitations to join your efforts.
- **Add a sign-up form to Facebook.** If you add a sign-up app to your Facebook page, fans will be able to take advocacy actions without leaving the Facebook platform.
- **Use Facebook advertising.** Advertising on Facebook can be inexpensive, targeted, and effective. Many nonprofits can effectively use this medium to encourage people to sign petitions, volunteer, and/or attend free events, as well as to generate awareness for a campaign. You can even narrow the ad’s reach to the city level and localize content to improve engagement.

**Recruiting via Word-of-Mouth**

Are your advocates telling their friends and families about shared use agreements in their school districts and the importance of promoting these agreements through incentives? Healthy living is not just a volunteer opportunity, it is a way of life—so encourage advocates to mention it to the other groups in which they participate (e.g., civic organizations, fitness classes). Include culturally and linguistically appropriate materials for these recruitment opportunities. Again, as you approach new potential supporters, communicate in their language. If you do not speak their language, find another supporter who does.

In addition to some potential advocates, such as health care professionals and educators, there are several other groups to consider below.

- **Ask parents** to get their local PTA, PTO, or other parent group to support shared use agreement efforts. Other parents may see the benefit of states offering incentives for schools to open their doors during non-school hours and become advocates for your cause.
- **Ask your neighbors** to mention shared use agreements and the incentives and monitoring programs that could come with them at their community organization meetings. People who are involved in the community may be more dedicated to improving the health of the community by supporting schools that want to open their facilities to the public during non-school hours.
- **Ask faith leaders to get involved.** Engaging leaders in the faith community is a great way to connect with community members, especially in under-resourced communities.
  - Faith leaders may also have an interest in using school facilities for their church services, softball or basketball leagues, or other functions during the week, so shared use agreements could be beneficial to them as well.
- **Reach out through social and civic organizations in your community.** Ask to speak at a meeting or luncheon of groups such as the Junior League, Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, ethnic and mainstream
chambers of commerce, and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., as well as other ethnic and local fraternities, sororities, or organizations.

- Emphasize the importance of shared use in an active and healthy community, and provide details on the roles of the state, school district, and community partners in establishing incentives and monitoring programs to make shared use agreements more appealing to schools.

- **Coordinate speaking opportunities at local business associations.** Connect with members of local business associations and ask if you can speak at a luncheon about how they can help improve the health of the community in which they operate. Supporting local schools has always been an effective way for local businesses to build a positive presence in the community.

**Recruiting via Competition**

Some healthy competition among your existing advocate base can help bring new followers to your organization.

- **Challenge your existing** advocates to recruit friends, family, and other community organizations. Then, host a celebration to welcome new advocates to your organization.

- **Offer a prize** to whoever can recruit the most new friends and followers online. Create pre-written tweets and Facebook posts in appropriate languages for your community and count the number of shares and retweets. When possible, make sure the prize is health-related and sends a positive, healthy message.

**Recruiting in the Community**

What does your target audience like to do? Instead of creating new events, meet them where they already gather.

- **Attend community festivals.** Host booths at street fairs or carnivals, and ask attendees to sign up.

- **Partner with universities.** Host a table at school fairs and encourage students to form an on-campus group in support of incentivizing and monitoring shared use agreements.

- **Reach out to local places of worship.** Recruit members to attend local events and organize meetings through bulletin advertisements and in-person announcements. If services are held in more than one language, develop recruitment plans for those as well. Make sure that your materials are culturally appropriate and linguistically accurate.

**Recruiting via Politics**

Leverage the response of your state legislators to encourage advocates to recruit more friends to the cause. For example:

- **Send emails** with subject lines or topics featuring legislator opposition or support, and encourage existing advocates to recruit their friends and family. For example, “Tell Senator Jones to support incentives for shared use!” or “Please thank Senator Garcia for helping create new incentives for shared use!”

  - This email would not be lobbying unless “incentivizes for shared use” clearly refers to legislation pending in Senator Garcia’s or Senator Jones’s statehouse. A communication is not lobbying if it discusses a policy issue in general terms. A communication is lobbying only if it refers to specific legislation, or to a specific legislative proposal. A statement referring generally to shared use incentives and monitoring programs is not lobbying, unless it clearly refers to a specific piece of legislation, or to a proposal for specific legislation.
Key Takeaways

• Use the recruitment methods that are the most appropriate for building a diverse group of supporters who can best connect with the audiences you hope to engage.

• Make the recruitment process as easy as possible for your potential supporters. Offer different ways for them to sign up and take action.

• Be sure to have materials translated to languages spoken by your potential volunteers.

• Not all potential volunteers will have regular access to the Internet, so make sure you recruit both on and offline.

• Some recruitment tactics may constitute lobbying. Make sure to check with your legal counsel before referencing specific initiatives or legislation.
Recruit: Recognition Plan
Recognition: we all want it. It is no surprise that appreciated advocates are more likely to submit a letter to the editor, sign a petition, or attend a rally. As you conduct your campaign, recognizing your advocates for their contributions to your efforts will be crucial in gaining and retaining your support base.

Volunteer Recognition
Recognize New Volunteers
A strong campaign starts with a strong recruitment push. By creating a foundation of supporters early, you will have them ready to activate when the time comes. Consider the following ways to grow your base of support and recognize new advocates.

- **Small gifts branded with your organization’s logo** (e.g., water bottles or USB drives) can be a reward for signing up. To stretch resources a bit further, consider offering incentives to the first 50 or 100 people who sign up on a specific day or giving prizes to advocates for recruiting the largest number of new supporters.

Recognize Existing Volunteers
Gaining new advocates is never the end of the story. It is also important to maintain good relationships with your existing supporters, ensuring they know how valuable they are to your cause. Consider offering the following:

- **Exclusive opportunities**, such as the chance to meet with your organization’s leadership or serve on a volunteer advisory panel.
- **Certificates or trophies**, especially when presented at a public event.
- **Invitations** to attend volunteer after-hours receptions or trainings.

Choose the Right Time
Whether you are reaching out to new or existing advocates, we suggest taking advantage of specific times of the year when engagement is traditionally high.

- **Leverage local and school festivals**. Consider creating recognition awards for use at local street and school fairs or festivals, such as Field Day, with free entry or food tickets.
- **Speak up when it is time to vote**. If the state government is voting on measures pertaining to incentive and monitoring programs for shared use agreements, this is a key time to recognize existing and potential advocates. If you have the lobbying resources to do so, asking advocates to contact their state decision makers—and then thanking the advocates when they do—is an important step.
  - Depending on the government body involved, asking advocates to contact decision makers may be grassroots lobbying, because it is a communication to the public that reflects a view on legislation and contains a call-to-action. Asking the public to contact members or staff of a state legislature, tribal government, county council, city council, or town meeting would be considered lobbying if you refer to and reflect a view on specific legislation (or a specific legislative proposal). Importantly, contacting school board or zoning board members or staff is not lobbying, regardless of the content of the communication. Make sure you have the resources to pay for these activities and you track them appropriately.
- **Use the calendar to inspire you**. Create recognition pieces around key health, sports, or education observances taking place throughout the year (e.g., National Physical Fitness and Sports Month in
May or National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month in September) when you can spotlight and thank advocates for their efforts to facilitate shared use agreements in your community.

**Staff Recognition**

Volunteers are not the only people who make a campaign a success. As you thank your volunteers for their efforts, make sure to also thank the staff members who keep the campaign running every day.

- **Celebrate staff publicly.** If you hold an annual celebration, highlight the good work the staff has done over the past year. Offering awards or opportunities to publicly acknowledge hard work lets employees know their efforts have been noticed and are valued.
- **Ask your strongest recruiters of new advocates to lead a call or webinar** to share their tips with other staff members.
- **Conduct a staff contest** to see which members can bring in the most new advocates over a specified period. Offer a day off or a gift card as an incentive.
- **Highlight the diversity of your staff** to demonstrate its importance in engaging all members of the community.

**Key Takeaways**

- Recognize and thank volunteers for their commitment to your cause.
- Reward new volunteers with small gifts to help increase sign-up rates.
- Do not forget about your staff—they deserve thanks too.
Engage: Diverse Audiences

No matter the issue or the policy goals, engaging with diverse audiences should be a core part of your campaign. This is especially true if you are working on an issue that will have a direct impact on communities outside of your own. The most successful campaigns are often the ones that speak to and engage with as many different people as possible. Priority populations who are at risk for obesity and obesity-related diseases are particularly important to engage as partners and advocates, including people living in high-poverty urban and suburban areas, and particularly African-American and Latino individuals, people living in high-poverty rural areas, and Native Americans.

Below are some questions designed to help you think about who you are reaching out to and how. The following are intended to be thought-starters, not an exhaustive list:

- **Who is on your team?** Take a look at your volunteer base, your advisors, and your staff. Are your teams made up of people from many different backgrounds? Do they represent the communities where you want to have the most impact—particularly if the communities are historically underserved? If not, where may be opportunities to do more?

- **How are you recruiting and engaging?** If your teams are less diverse than they could be, consider expanding the ways you recruit and engage volunteers and staff. For instance, not everyone has access to the Internet; if your campaign is heavily based online, you may be limiting who is able to join your efforts. Pen-and-paper recruitment and offline volunteer opportunities can ensure more people are able to get involved.

- **Where are you recruiting and engaging?** When it comes to getting people involved, location is just as important as technique. Are you reaching out to local faith communities and the multicultural small business community? Many faith communities have separate services in different languages. If you are not already, try setting up a table at events that draw a diverse crowd or partnering with the local multicultural chamber of commerce.

- **Who are you talking to?** Make sure you are working with non-mainstream news outlets in your area. There may be newspapers, radio stations, or television networks geared toward diverse communities, particularly non-English-speakers and people of color. Multicultural media coverage can both provide new and different angles on your campaign and encourage diverse audiences to get involved with your work. Ensure you have appropriate spokespeople available to speak to these media outlets.

- **Is language a barrier to access?** If there are non-English-speakers in your area, consider having your materials translated and easily accessible at events and online. If you are planning on hosting phone banks, engage bilingual volunteers. Additionally, if you are planning on setting up a table at events where people are likely to speak other languages, make sure the people staffing your booth speak those languages.

- **Do your team members feel welcome and listened to?** Getting people to sign up or take action is one thing; fostering a welcoming, affirming environment is another. Listen to what your volunteers, advisors, and staff members say about your campaign, and strive for an environment where everyone has a seat at the table.

- **Are you considering unique cultural and community perspectives?** Every culture and community has its own nuanced way of thinking and talking about issues. Try to learn what these issues are ahead of time. For instance, if you are supporting shared use efforts, the salient issues for one neighborhood might not be childhood obesity, but rather a school playground that is safe and convenient where neighborhood kids can play.
What else can we do? Throughout your campaign, keep asking yourself the types of questions listed above. There are always opportunities to open your doors wider and expand your reach further.

Key Takeaways

- Diversity should be a core part of your campaign, from start to finish.
- Language and cultural barriers can prevent people from getting involved with your campaign.
- Think strategically about where you are recruiting and engaging. It is important to go to the communities you hope to engage and not expect people to come to you.
- There are always opportunities to create a more inclusive, welcoming community.
Engage: Social Media Resources and Tips

It is going to take many voices to promote shared use agreements in your community. Fortunately, social media platforms allow you to share your message with a wider audience faster than traditional door-to-door advocacy work can. With a few clicks, you can access the right people at the right moment, making them aware of the issue and garnering their support. The following tips will help you extend your community of advocates online to grow support for incentives and monitoring programs for shared use agreements. National experts may already have sample resources you can model or tailor for use in your campaign.

Using Images and Videos

Posts with multimedia drive higher engagement rates and increased reach—people like looking and clicking on images and video. Below is a quick overview of how to best use multimedia on Facebook and Twitter.

- **Ask your advocates to sign release forms.** Photos and videos of real-life advocates resonate with the community. Just remember that anyone you spotlight online—whether in stories, photos or videos—must sign an authorization release form. Ask your legal counsel for the appropriate forms.

Images

- **Include diverse people in your images.** It is important that different groups see people that look like themselves in the images you use.
- **Only use content you own.** The images, videos, or graphics you post should either be created by your team or purchased on stock photography sites. If your organization has an existing photo library, search it to see if anything can be repurposed. Getty Images offers free non-commercial use of many of its stock images on social media and blog sites when you use its embed feature. To find these images and the restrictions around their use, visit [http://www.gettyimages.com/](http://www.gettyimages.com/).
- **Ask your advocates to sign release forms.** Photos of real-life advocates resonate with the community. Just remember that anyone you spotlight online—whether in stories, photos, or videos—must sign an authorization release form. Ask your organization for the appropriate forms.
- **Use templates.** If you do not have access to graphic design services, there are free online resources you can use, such as canva.com, which offers templates for Facebook cover pages, Facebook ads, and Twitter backgrounds, as well as free and low-cost stock images.
- **Repurpose print materials online.** The postcard, flyer, and fact sheet included in this toolkit can easily be posted or linked to on Facebook and Twitter.
  - The postcard is especially useful as a featured image to supplement your Facebook posts.
  - Invite advocates to print the flyer and post it at work or around their neighborhood.
  - Save a PDF of the fact sheet and link to it from your post, inviting advocates to read and learn more or share it with friends and family.

Videos

- **Highlight your advocates.** If you have access to a video camera or a smartphone, consider creating a video of advocates’ stories. Ask your advocates to talk about their role in the campaign and why they believe schools should be offered incentives for opening their doors to the public after non-school hours. Produce videos in the appropriate languages spoken in the community.
Stories of real-life advocates can be one of the most effective measures for swaying decision makers because they represent actual constituent opinions on the policies you care about.

- **Create mini-documentaries.** A short film featuring a child who lives in an area without access to places where he or she can be active could highlight the need for support for schools to implement shared use agreements. This can emphasize the lack of safe places for kids to play and be active in a community and, therefore, illustrate the importance of enacting incentive and monitoring programs that will encourage schools to adopt shared use agreements. Keep in mind that the most viewed and shared videos are less than 90 seconds.

**Facebook**

Facebook can be an excellent way to engage your existing advocates and recruit new ones, especially if you already have an established presence. Below are a few tips for spreading the word on Facebook.

- **Use your existing account.** Do not create a new page just for promoting shared use agreements; instead, integrate the campaign into your existing Facebook page. This way, when new people “like” your page because of your work on shared use agreements, they will also stay informed on your other initiatives.
- If appropriate in your community, post messages in languages other than English on your page, or create a separate page in another language, such as Spanish, if that is more relevant to your work in the community.
- **Recruit new members right from Facebook.** Consider creating a registration app on your page so users can sign up to be a part of the effort without even leaving Facebook. You can point potential advocates to the registration app through Facebook ads and posts on your wall.
- **Highlight key posts.** Facebook allows you to select posts you would like to draw specific attention to and expand them across your page to catch your readers’ eyes. See the following graphics for an example.

- **Use images to help advocates identify with your cause.** The postcard in this toolkit can be repurposed to create an image advocates can use on their own profiles. Consider using the front side of the postcard to do the following:
  - Make it your page’s cover photo and ask advocates to tag themselves and their friends in the image. This way, their tags show up on their newsfeed and in their friends’ notifications.
- **Share the message with decision makers.** Many state decision makers have an online presence, which can be an effective venue for them to hear from advocates.
  - As advocates tag themselves in your cover photo, encourage them to tag their decision makers as well. Note that some decision makers may have set their privacy to restrict this.
  - Encourage advocates to tag their state decision makers in their Facebook posts about incentivizing shared use agreements. Check the appendix for examples of Facebook posts.

A post that tags a legislator should be considered a direct communication to that legislator, so it will be lobbying if it reflects a view on specific legislation. A post that does not tag a legislator is a public communication and will be lobbying only if it reflects a view on specific legislation and includes a call-to-action. Note that if a social media post constitutes lobbying, the staff time related to writing the post is attributable to lobbying, however small the cost of that staff time may be.

- **Ask advocates for a response.** Create posts that encourage advocates to interact, such as online quizzes.
  - Ask questions: “Does your school district receive support to keep its facilities open for community use during non-school hours? Tell us about it!”
  - Encourage story-sharing: “Tell us how your community works together to help make it possible for schools to keep their facilities open after school hours!”
  - Hold them accountable: “How have you helped encourage schools to keep their facilities open to the community after school hours?”

- **Actively manage your community.** Running a social media community successfully, particularly on Facebook, requires a long-term investment of time and energy that goes beyond posting content.
You should be devoting a significant amount of time (at least 1-2 hours) every day to managing your social pages.

- “Like” and reply to positive and constructive messages from your individual followers. This will enhance the community aspect of your page and give it a more personalized feel. Plus, replies can serve as an opportunity to share resources with your audience on an individual level.
- Answer questions to create a two-way dialogue and foster constructive discussion of your messaging.
- Ignore, or eventually ban, people who are posting consistently negative, inflammatory, or vulgar content. Engaging with them will only exacerbate the problem.

- **Highlight partners.** There may be other community organizations supporting schools in their efforts to enact shared use agreements.
  - Consider working with them to highlight each other’s efforts in Facebook posts. That way, your mention will show up on their channels (and vice versa), helping you reach their community for recruitment purposes.

- **Take online actions offline.** There are many creative ways to share several items in this toolkit—the poster, flyer, fact sheet, etc.—on Facebook and encourage people to distribute them in their communities.
  - Ask advocates to print the flyers and hand them out at events in their town or post them on community message bulletin boards in parks, libraries, or coffee shops.
    - Bring the action back online by asking advocates to post a picture of themselves putting up the flyers.
  - Post the decision maker fact sheet on your Facebook page so that it is available to advocates to use in meetings with decision makers. Ask them to come back to your Facebook page to report on what they are doing, and how their own meetings went.
  - In advance of offline activities, share the **Key Messages** with your advocates so they know how to speak about the issue.

**Ad Campaigns**

- **Promote your posts.** Promoted posts take highlighted posts one step further by elevating them in your fans’ News Feed. Promoted posts have a nominal cost and their benefits are far-reaching. Along with this toolkit, we have provided a suggested image for a Facebook ad. Use the image and then assign corresponding text, such as: “Did you know that when schools stay open after hours, more kids stay active? 84 percent of kids, in fact. If school districts, local decision makers, or local organizations provide support, more schools could be encouraged to keep their facilities open, so more families in the community can get active. To learn more and get involved, visit [INSERT URL].”
  - Promoted posts come with a range of pricing options, depending on the number of fans and people you would like to reach with your post. You will have the option to elevate your post in your fans’ newsfeeds or in both their newsfeeds and their friends’ newsfeeds. Also, you can target promoted posts by age, gender, and location.
  - You can promote posts directly from your Facebook page; look in the lower right-hand corner of the post you want to elevate. Click on “Boost Post,” select your dollar amount and audience reach, and then enter credit card details for payment. (See next page for examples).
• **Create an ad campaign.** You can also turn promoted posts into a wider Facebook advertising campaign, allowing you to target specific audiences in a way not feasible from your Facebook page.
  
  o Visit https://www.facebook.com/ads/create.
  
  o Select the kind of results you would like for your ads. For this example, we selected “Page Post Engagement.”
  
  o Select your destination page (this should be your organization’s Facebook page).
  
  o Select the post you would like to promote or create a new post to promote.
  
  o Now you are ready to choose your audience. First, select age and gender targeting and then type in interests. Remember to include broad interest topics to reach as wide an audience as possible.
    
    ▪ For targeting based on location, workplace, behavior, school, relationship status, or language, click the appropriate button and add targeting criteria. Consider groups of people who may have a natural interest in ending childhood obesity—parents or teachers, for example—and target them based on related interests, such as local parenting groups or the PTA/PTO.
    
    ▪ While you cannot select ethnicities through Facebook, you can use self-identified interests to increase the likelihood that you are reaching a specific ethnicity.
    
    ▪ You can also target audiences based on whether they are already fans of your organization on Facebook.
Finally, select your budget. Even a small amount can generate results.

**Twitter**

It does not take a lot to spread the word that incentives and monitoring programs can encourage more schools to adopt shared use. Even 140 characters can make a difference! Here are some tips for using Twitter to help build more support for shared use agreements in your state.

- **Set the stage with key information and creativity in your profile.** Your Twitter profile is a destination for users to learn more about your efforts with shared use. It is important to make use of all its features. Consider the following:
• **Use your profile photo to identify your organization.** The recommended size for profile photos is 400x400 pixels. To avoid unwanted cropping, size your photo to 400x400 prior to uploading it to Twitter.

• **Develop a prominent header image** that depicts shared use, such as community members using school grounds during non-school hours, and use it for the duration of the campaign. The recommended size for header photos is 1500x500 pixels. Note that the header photo is cropped to a 2:1 aspect ratio on mobile. As with the profile photo, make sure you size your image approximately before uploading to Twitter to avoid any unwanted cropping.
  - Provide a copy of your header image, correctly sized, so that your followers can use it for their header images as well. It is another way for their followers to find out about the campaign.

• **Write a concise Twitter bio**, up to 160 characters, explaining your organization’s connection to shared use, and include a call-to-action for users to get involved.

• **Pin your most important tweet** to the top of your profile timeline in order to capture the attention of visitors by clicking the More icon.

• **Link to relevant content.** Include hyperlinks to additional information in about a quarter of all your tweets.
  - Use the links to direct followers back to the website to take action or to resources where they can learn more about shared use incentives and monitoring programs.

• **Diversify your content.** Create a mix of tweets that both inform your followers about shared use agreements and encourage their support. Diversifying your information will help build a relationship between you and your followers.
  - Provide relevant news on how your community or neighboring communities are using your state’s incentives and monitoring programs to promote shared use.
  - Mention activities or news that occurred that day related to shared use agreements.
  - Ask followers to answer a question.
  - Share a daily fact about how shared use can promote physical activity in a community.
  - Retweet interesting content or news from followers or other influencers.
  - Embed videos, images, and infographics. Infographics are one of the most shared types of content on Twitter.
- Capitalize on real-time events. Use official event hashtags or other relevant hashtags like #sharedusesupport.
- Monitor followers to identify new fans and leverage potential relationships with those people/organizations. You could ask your most engaged followers to serve as spokespeople in their community.

- **Engage with decision makers.**
  - To reach decision makers, include their Twitter handles in your informational tweets.
  - Ask followers to tweet at state lawmakers, telling them to support incentives and monitoring for shared use agreements.
  - Share research and studies on shared use agreements with state decision makers so they have supporting evidence to inform their perspective on how and why to include incentives in shared use agreements.
    - A tweet that includes a legislator’s handle should be considered a direct communication to that legislator (because including the legislator’s handle alerts the legislator to the tweet), so it will be lobbying if it reflects a view on specific legislation. A tweet that names a legislator but does not tag that legislator is a public communication and will be lobbying only if it reflects a view on specific legislation and it includes a call-to-action. Note that if a social media post constitutes lobbying, the staff time related to writing the post is attributable to lobbying, however small the cost of that staff time may be.

- **Join the conversation.**
  - Reply to messages, questions, or ideas from followers as appropriate.
  - Focus on facts and avoid entering editorial disagreements or arguments.
  - Do not “feed the trolls”—avoid engaging professional critics or troublemakers.

- **Build your audience.**
  - Market your Twitter feed to your core audiences on other platforms, such as email.
  - Add your Twitter handle to other assets or websites (online and offline).
  - Begin to follow relevant influencers to stay plugged into the conversation and encourage these influencers to follow you as well.
  - If appropriate in your community, post messages in languages other than English on your page, or create a separate page in another language, such as Spanish, if that is more relevant to your work in the community.
  - Above all, create content that people want to share.

**Key Takeaways**
- Social media can be a powerful way to share your message with a broader, more diverse audience.
- People respond well to posts with multimedia, so include images and video you own whenever possible.
- Use social media to encourage advocates to interact and support your offline activities.
- A small investment in paid advertising, such as Facebook ads, can make a positive difference for your campaign.
- By using appropriate languages you can do effective outreach to priority populations.
Engage: Using Social Media to Reach Journalists

With more than 6.9 million active users on Twitter every day and 552 million daily active users on Facebook, social media can serve as a powerful tool to amplify your message and reach highly targeted audiences.

Just as consumers are increasingly turning to social media for news, so are journalists. They use it to research stories, follow trends, and interact with their own networks.

Note: while many journalists use social media for news, sometimes a phone call or a meeting in person is better. Some journalists may want to engage in more traditional ways.

Reach Media through Social Channels

- **Start with research.** Before you begin engaging with journalists, research their backgrounds to help you personalize your messages, including referencing relevant past articles, and explaining why you have contacted them.

- **Try email.** Most journalists prefer to be contacted through email, not on social media. If you do not have an existing relationship with a journalist, a well-written email may be more effective than a tweet. You can also post a comment on the news outlet’s webpage under the online version of the news story.

- **Do not begin with a pitch.** Though it is generally not appropriate to pitch over Twitter, you can use it to get on a journalist’s radar. Start by following the reporter on Twitter and retweeting or commenting on content you find interesting.

- **Be respectful.** It is important to be mindful of journalists’ time and to remember that all interactions are public. Don’t mass-tweet pitches to several reporters and outlets.

- **Be careful with direct messages (DMs).** Do not ask a journalist you are not following to send you a direct message. Only people who follow one another can send each other direct messages.

Sample Tweets

Below are a few sample tweets designed to build relationships with journalists, while establishing you as a thought leader on issues relevant to shared use. Included below are references to specific policies demonstrating how they could fit within a tweet. Note that you can use all of these tweets for any of the policies by slightly tweaking the language. The Key Messages in the appendix can help with that.

- **In response to a journalist tweeting an article on a related topic/issue:** “.@[JOURNALIST] Really interesting take on support for #shareduse. Love your point on local organizations offering support.”

- **Sharing an article by a journalist:** “[INSERT QUOTE OR PARAPHRASED TEXT] via .@[JOURNALIST] [LINK TO ARTICLE] #sharedusesupport.”

- **Sharing an article by the journalist and generating discussion among your followers:** “Read [ARTICLE TITLE] via @[JOURNALIST] [LINK TO ARTICLE] to learn more about incentives for schools to create shared use agreements.”

- **In response to a journalist tweeting an article on expanded shared use:** “.@[JOURNALIST]—Loved this piece, such an important topic! Would love to chat about our program sometime. #sharedusesupport”

- **In response to a journalist tweeting an article on the need for safe places to play in your community:** “.@[JOURNALIST]—Interesting points! Thought of opening school recreation facilities to the public when school’s out to help reduce #obesity? [LINK TO SITE EXPLAINING PROGRAM]”
Social Media Engagement Tips & Tricks

- Be transparent and disclose your job/purpose/association in your bio.
- Employ a conversational tone and avoid buzzwords.
- Always begin by listening to the existing conversation.
- Identify opportunities to be current, relevant, and timely.
- Be human.
- Be prepared to carry on a conversation with your followers.
- Include hyperlinks for additional information.
- Use relevant hashtags when appropriate to help your comments show up in larger conversations.
- Use handles of people (e.g., policymaker, organization, or journalist) whose attention you are trying to garner.
- Focus on facts and avoid entering editorial disagreements or arguments.

Key Takeaways

- Begin with an email; then continue engaging with journalists on social media to build valuable media relationships.
- Make sure to research journalists’ backgrounds and tailor any messages you send them.
- Do not start off with a pitch. Use social media to get to know journalists and engage with them, not to ask them for coverage.
- Be transparent. Identify yourself and your campaign goals.
Mobilize: Action Alerts

The supporters in your existing database are well positioned to become grassroots activists. By joining your email list, these individuals have already indicated they want to learn more about who you are and the issues important to you. The next step is converting their interest into a deeper level of commitment to your mission by getting your supporters to complete an action, such as signing a petition, communicating directly with policymakers and other decision makers, or attending events. Remember to develop action alerts in the relevant languages spoken in the community.

As you begin a conversation with your supporters through email, keep these goals in mind:

- **Educate them** through issue updates or updated Web content. These communications allow you to:
  - Provide advocates with information and cultivate their interest in an issue.
  - Identify the message areas that resonate best with subsets of the audience to better tailor outreach.
  - Keep individuals involved and updated during periods when critical action is not required, making it easier to engage them when the time comes.

- **Engage them in efforts** to deepen their activism through surveys, “share your story” opportunities, or social media. These activities give people actions to take that help you:
  - Learn more about what type of participation people prefer.
  - Train activists to be good stewards of issue messages.
  - Expand your reach by amplifying your message through individuals’ social networks.
  - Reach out to diverse communities by engaging trusted messengers from those communities.
  - Show activists the importance of their participation, so they are ready to respond in times when urgent action may be needed.

- **Activate them** with new and varied calls to action based on the way in which their unique voices can make a difference. Your advocates can reach the public by:
  - Participating in public dialogue on key issues by commenting on news articles, blog posts, or polls.
  - Recruiting new individuals to join the cause.
  - Attending public meetings, town halls, or hearings in support of your position.
  - Contacting decision makers via email, phone, postal mail, or in person to contribute their opinions.
    - Encouraging people to contact legislators or other decision makers about general policies is not lobbying. However, if your request reflects a view on specific legislation, asking advocates to contact their legislators will be lobbying.

Email action alerts also allow you to communicate with supporters directly, measure their interest through open rates, and track their support through clicks on the links in your email. Because email communications have the capacity to be uniquely micro-targeted to recipients, sending alerts to your audience can be one of the most powerful ways to inspire mobilization an issue. Don’t forget to send these out in all appropriate languages.

**Key Takeaways**

- There are many different ways to engage your volunteers over email—action alerts can educate, motivate, and activate.
- Keep advocates interested by offering updates and new and varied ways to participate.
• Surveys or requests for feedback can make your email program even stronger.
• Engage trusted messengers in reaching out to diverse communities.
Mobilize: The Value of Phone Outreach
Even in today’s digital era, person-to-person contact remains one of the most effective means of relationship building. Below is an overview of how to train volunteers, as well as two different types of phone outreach: phone banks and phone patch programs.

Phone Banks
Operating a phone bank connects your organization’s volunteers with potential new advocates—people you hope will want to learn more about your issues, get involved with your campaign, and act to achieve your goals. In order to host a successful phone bank, follow the steps below.

Recruit and Train Volunteers
- **Enlist your team.** Find people willing to make calls on a regular or semi-regular basis. Current staff members at your organization or existing volunteers are the best resources.
- **Work with partners.** You may find a need to extend your reach beyond your own staff or volunteers in ways that would be best done through partner organizations. This is often the case when trying to connect with a wide-variety of diverse groups that have not yet engaged with your issues and where outreach is best done by a trusted and well-known voice.
- **Identify your manager.** Designate someone from your team to manage the call center. Train them to lead the volunteers and ensure program success.
- **Train your callers.** Brief volunteers on the issues so they can discuss these topics with callers and exercise cultural sensitivity when appropriate. Conduct a training session where they can learn your talking points and practice making calls to familiarize themselves with the process.
- **Identify any unique language needs.** Does your community include non-native English speakers? If so, be sure to recruit bilingual volunteers or enlist the help of volunteer translators.

Find a Location and Supplies
- **Decide where people will call.** Before moving forward in this process, determine if you want callers to work from a centralized location. People can make calls from their homes, but without supervision they might not stick to the script and could damage potential or existing relationships. Your offices could be a good location for local, targeted calls.
- **Equip yourself.** Ensure your call center has enough lines and telephones for volunteers.
- **Set time limits and provide refreshments.** Establish how long you want the call center to be open. If it is for a long period of time, provide food and drinks to volunteers.

Create a Call List
- **Develop your list.** A call list is essential to any successful phone bank, but like all communication it must be targeted. Target individuals based on a known or potential interest in providing support for shared use agreements—parents living in areas without safe playgrounds, members of school boards, members of coalition partner organizations, health professionals, school leaders, local health departments, etc. A number of resources are available to help discover target audiences, including U.S. Census data. As you develop your list, be sure to have callers who can communicate in the relevant languages spoken in the community.
- **Start with existing advocates at your organization.** You already have their information, and they will understand when they are hearing from you because they have expressed previous interest in related issues.
Consider buying lists. It is also possible to buy lists with phone numbers and other advocate information. Prices vary based on the amount of targeting and number of people on a list, but InfoUSA (www.infousa.com), Caldwell List Company (www.caldwell-list.com), and Dataman Group (www.datamangroup.com) are good resources for purchasing lists.

Develop a Script

- Prepare a script and one-pager to give volunteers the materials they need for effective and informative conversations. As you develop your script, test the script on someone unfamiliar with the issue to ensure your audience will understand it in the intended way. You should also develop a list of common questions and talking points for those difficult questions your volunteers may receive. Your script should include the following information.
  - **Introduction**: Provide a brief introduction of yourself and your organization. There is no need to begin explaining the issue at this point. Ask the individual if they have time to talk about the issue.
  - **Outline the Issue**: If the call recipient has the time, explain the issue and why it is important. This is the point where targeting is most important. People will have different levels of understanding and experience with shared use agreements, especially in regards to incentives and monitoring because not all communities have these programs in place yet. Know the person you are talking to, and tailor the conversation accordingly.
  - **Request for Assistance**: Following the explanation of the issue, ask the call recipient for another point of contact, e.g., their emails or mailing addresses. Having this information will allow you to follow up later and provide further details about the issue.
  - **Closing**: If someone declines to hear about the issue, ask if there would be a better time to call back. Always thank them for their time.

- Below is a sample phone banking script. You may need more than one script depending on your intended reach. Feel free to customize it to include any cultural variations for particular audiences of interest, and be sure to enlist and prepare materials for your bilingual volunteers.
  - Hi [ADVOCATE NAME]. My name is [YOUR NAME], and I’m calling on behalf of [YOUR ORGANIZATION].
  - We’re working to make it possible for schools to keep their doors open during non-school hours through shared use agreements in [ADVOCATE CITY]. Do you have a few minutes to talk about how this initiative will help you and your family by providing safe places for physical activity and play?
    - **IF YES**
      - Great! Children and adolescents in [INSERT AREA] need more places to be active, and schools are a great place for them to do this. Shared use agreements can make it possible for schools to unlock their doors during non-school hours, so they can be that safe place for kids to play. By encouraging your local decision makers to support schools that enter into shared use agreements, we can provide safe and convenient places for the community to be active before and after school.
      - **The Ask**: If you join us, we will keep you up-to-date on all the issues and progress being made in your area and nationally. Will you join us in this mission?
• IF YES: Wonderful. Let me get your [EMAIL, MAILING ADDRESS, ETC.], so we can keep you updated.
• IF NO: Well, thanks for your time, and if you want to learn more about the program, you can visit [WEBSITE]. Have a great [DAY, EVENING].

▪ IF NO
  • Is there a more convenient time I can call you back? (If yes, write when to call back and make a note. If no, then skip to...). Thanks for your time, and if you want to learn more about the program, you can visit [WEBSITE]. Have a great [DAY, EVENING]

▪ IF ANSWERING MACHINE
  • Hi [ADVOCATE NAME]. My name is [YOUR NAME], and I’m calling on behalf of [YOUR ORGANIZATION].
  • We’re working to help improve the health of families in [ADVOCATE CITY] by encouraging states to offer incentives to schools that open up their recreational facilities for use during non-school hours so community members can have access to safe places to play and be physically active.
  • The Ask: Please call us at [PHONE NUMBER] or visit our website at [WEBSITE] to learn more and to help school districts and decision makers see the need for programs that support incentives for schools to create shared use agreements.
  • Thank you and have a great day!

Compile Data
• Track the data garnered from these phone calls—who you are calling, how many people you reach, how many volunteers sign up, how often people are called, etc.
  o Set standards and guidelines for recording data, and be sure volunteers are trained on the proper way to record information.
  o Create a template in Excel for volunteers to record the data. Determine what you want to know about each person. You should at least have first name, last name, phone number (home or mobile), language spoken, whether they picked up or you left a message, and whether they wanted to talk or whether they were supportive or not. If possible, try to record their email address and mailing address.

Maintain the Relationship
• Phone calls are the beginning of a relationship, not the end. To keep working with these advocates, you must follow up with them, either with another call or via email.

Phone Patches
A phone patch, as opposed to a phone bank, connects advocates with their elected officials. In order to host a phone-patching program, you’ll work with a third-party organization that calls advocates, explains the issue, and asks if the advocates would like to be connected with his or her representative to voice support for a cause or issue. This is a supplemental method to the phone bank program and should target existing advocates, not new ones.
If you ask advocates to contact a legislator to support or oppose specific legislation, your phone patch calls will be considered grassroots lobbying. Make sure you budget lobbying funds to cover these costs. You can use non-lobbying funds for phone patches by avoiding references to any specific legislation, but that may dilute the impact of the calls.

Select a Vendor
- Find a company that will call individuals on your behalf. Make sure to verify the vendor has the capacity to provide services in languages other than English if needed in your community. Some companies that can assist in the program implementation include:
  - Mobile Commons
  - Winning Connections
  - Stones’ Phones
  - Strategic Consulting Group

Create a Call List
- As with phone banks, you will need to create a list of contacts to provide to the vendor for use during outreach.

Develop Scripts for Messages
- When individuals answer their phones, they will hear a pre-recorded message and will be connected to a representative by pressing a designated number. A script that highlights the importance of the initiative should be written to serve as this recording. There should also be an option for non-English speakers to press a number to hear the message in their language.
- An additional message could be written to record on an answering machine if the person misses the call.
  - **Script for Initial Recording**
    - Hi! I am calling on behalf of [YOUR ORGANIZATION]. Si quiere continuar en español oprima el 2. In the midst of our nation’s obesity epidemic, 65 percent of adolescents are not getting the recommended amount of physical activity each day. It doesn’t help that so many schools keep their recreation facilities closed off to the public after hours, shutting down one of the only places for exercise in some communities. But, we can do something about this. We can encourage schools to adopt shared use agreements and unlock the doors to their facilities during non-school hours so more people can be active. If you would like to learn more about this issue and how you can help this effort, please press 1.
  - **Script for Leaving a Message**
    - Hi [ADVOCATE NAME]. My name is [YOUR NAME], and I’m calling on behalf of [YOUR ORGANIZATION]. We’re working to encourage more school districts and decision makers to make it possible for school grounds to stay open when [CITY’S] schools are not in session. Right now, children and adolescents don’t meet the recommended amount of physical activity each day, but if schools open their doors to the public, it could help. Please call us at [PHONE NUMBER] or visit our website at [WEBSITE] to learn more about our efforts and how you can help. Thank you and have a great day!
  - **Script for Phone Operator**
Hi. How are you? Thanks so much for agreeing to take the next step to help encourage safe and convenient places for kids to play at your neighborhood’s schools. To implement this change, we need advocates to speak with their state decision makers to encourage them to support shared use agreements by implementing incentives and monitoring programs that will encourage schools to open their recreational facilities to community use outside of school hours. Before I connect you with your legislator, what questions can I answer for you about these policies or about the process? (Note: Advocates will have varying degrees of knowledge about this issue, so at this point it is good to let them ask questions.)

Script for Connecting Advocates with Representatives

- Now that you have all the information, I can connect you with your representative. Just so you are aware of the process, I will transfer you to your legislator [LEGISLATOR NAME], and someone on [HIS/HER] staff will talk with you. You will need to tell the person who answers the phone your name, that you are a constituent and that you support incentives and monitoring programs for shared use agreements in [STATE].
  - As written, this phone script is not lobbying, because it does not refer to a specific legislative proposal, unless the legislature is considering a specific program for incentives or monitoring. If, instead of referring to the general policy of shared use, the script urged people to tell their state legislators to support specific legislation that created incentives and monitoring for shared use agreements, the calls would be lobbying and would need to be paid for with restricted funds.
  - Note: Your phone bank operator will need to be trained to answer frequently asked questions and know where to refer questions he/she is unable to answer.

Record the Results

- Typically, a phone patch operator will provide a daily report with the results of the program. Collect that data and keep it for your records to strengthen future outreach efforts.

Additional Things to Consider

Whether you are phone banking or phone patching, below are some tips to help your process run smoothly.

- Avoid using computer or auto-dialing systems, as some states prohibit these, and federal rules restrict autodialed calls to cell phones. Instead, have people dial numbers by hand. Hand-dialed phone banks also have a higher completion rate (50 percent compared to 15 percent with automated dialing systems, according to The Voices of America).

- Hybrid systems also exist. These systems allow you to download data to the phone, so that volunteers just hit “dial.” Volunteers can record the answers to the survey on the phone, which can then be downloaded to a computer. It also allows you to record a voicemail, so the volunteer can push a button that automatically plays your recorded message after the beep without having to stay on the line.

- Try to make your calls between the hours of 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. on weekdays and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekends, as these are the hours you will most likely find people at home.
• Make sure volunteers know how to react in different situations (e.g., leaving a message on a machine or speaking with a hostile individual).
• Be sure the efforts of the campaign comply with do-not-call lists.
  o Typically, these apply only to telemarketing sales calls. At the federal level, the do-not-call provisions do not cover calls from political organizations, charities, telephone surveyors, or companies with which a consumer has an existing business relationship.
  o Most states follow the standard set by the federal government, but state laws can vary. Consult an attorney to ensure compliance with these laws.

Key Takeaways
• There are two different types of telephone programs: phone banking and phone patching. Phone banking is for recruiting volunteers, while phone patching is for connecting advocates with elected officials.
• To ensure a well-organized phone bank, brainstorm all potential questions and responses volunteers may receive, and build a script to equip your volunteers with the best ways to react.
• If your community includes non-English speakers, recruit phone volunteers who speak the relevant languages.
• Consider the hours between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. on weekdays and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekends, the best time to make these calls in order to reach the highest number of people.
• Check your state’s laws on phone outreach to ensure you comply with all do-not-call provisions.
Mobilize: Hosting a Media Event

Working with local media is a key way to raise awareness about your campaign, priorities, and goals. Media coverage can help you educate communities, create conversation, and recruit new advocates. To begin, you must first thoughtfully develop and carefully plan how you want to present the issue to reporters. Further building relationships with media and pursuing media advocacy well in advance of hosting a media event will help to ensure that your message is understood and the cause is well-positioned by reporters.

Start by thinking about what you want to accomplish and who you want to reach. Do you have news to release, such as a report or study? If not, what is your media hook? Does the nightly news highlight schools that help the community get active by keeping their facilities open after hours? What about your local paper? Would you be better served by engaging with community bloggers? Consider including multicultural media in this outreach, as well as other media outlets your target audiences turn to for trusted information. Once you decide what your goals are, you can start identifying media opportunities that match.

One way to engage members of the media is by inviting them to an event. A well-run media event—one with compelling speakers, stories, clear facts, and easily explained goals—will give reporters the tools they need to amplify your story in newspapers, on-air, and online.

Where and Who?

To give your message more impact, choose a location for your event that will reinforce the importance of community support of shared use agreements. Hold your event at:

- A school that regularly opens its recreational facilities for before- and after-hours events for children or events for the whole community.
- A school playground that has been improved thanks to the support of a local organization and is now participating in shared use.
- A public location, such as a school or playground that closes after school hours that would like to open their facilities to the community but is unable without incentives that could be offered through this policy change.
- A place of worship where leaders are calling for more safe places to play for community kids.

As you structure your event, consider speakers who can talk persuasively about the importance of supporting and rewarding schools for participating in shared use. This can include executives from your organization. Also consider bringing in a school board member who wants to implement more shared use programs in their district; a school principal who envisions better academic performance in the classrooms as a result of access to regular physical activity\(^6\); or a state lawmaker who supports incentive programs for shared use agreements in their district.

A diverse mix of speakers who can speak fluently in all languages spoken in the community and/or are familiar with other cultures will provide your media attendees with a range of perspectives about shared

use agreements. If your speakers are not bilingual, consider having a translator available to facilitate interviews with the press.

**Event Tips**

The following tips cover some of the basics of event hosting. However, the list below is not comprehensive—every event is different, and you will need to adapt your planning to each event’s unique requirements.

- **Establish a point of contact.** Your event point of contact should manage all logistics. This person could be a paid staff member or a trusted volunteer. Whomever you choose, make sure he or she has existing experience with event coordination and execution.

- **Send invitations.** For some media events, such as salon dinners or press conferences where you will focus on specific issues, make sure key influencers are in the room. Even if they are not speakers, their presence can lend an air of credibility to your efforts. Issue personal invitations to these influencers and follow up with them if necessary to secure their confirmation.
  - If someone on your staff has an existing relationship with these influencers, ask that person to call them on the phone or send a personal email. People are more likely to respond to messages from names they recognize.

- **Create briefing books.** Prior to the event, you will want to share briefing packets with media and key influencers who will be in attendance. Consider sharing your organization’s policy position statement on incentives for and monitoring of shared use agreements, the fact sheets from this toolkit, and relevant news articles. Create a list of common questions and key talking points that include responses to opposition arguments, a list of who your partners are, and an explanation of where your coalition receives its funding.

**Media Engagement**

- Research recent media stories—newspaper articles, TV segments, radio shows, etc.—to determine which media figures or outlets might be friendliest to the concept of the community providing incentives to encourage implementation of shared use agreements. Be sure to include multicultural media. Based on this research, reach out to the media you would like to cover the event.

- Think about what makes your story “newsworthy.” Reporters have several criteria for determining which stories they want to cover. It can vary depending on the nature of an issue, but the following are example “hooks” that will help you pitch your story.
  - **Timeliness:** the issue is being talked about, reported on, and/or action is being taken
  - **Conflict or controversy:** there are strong opposing opinions
  - **Proximity:** the issue is affecting the local community
  - **Prominence:** public officials or celebrities have weighed in
  - **Significance:** a large amount of people are impacted or taking action
  - **Human interest:** the issue is engaging because it draws emotion from the viewer, is often relatable, and is told by feature stories that really “hit home”
  - **Bizarre:** there is a strange, odd, or unbelievable tie-in

- Once you have established your media list, you can immediately begin pitching editorial board meetings. Since the editorial board makes significant decisions on which stories the outlet will cover, meeting with them in advance of major stories can ensure your story is not only included but is elevated for greater reach. This work should start at least one month prior to the event.

- Distribute a media advisory to all of your selected media outlets, and pitch print and radio two weeks out from the event. While some reporters may be slow to respond to your pitch, do not be
discouraged; keep following up with them until you receive a confirmation. Some will not confirm a story until the day it is published.

• Distribute a press release in the days leading up to the event and include an embargo to ensure that media adhere to your event date for releasing any new data.

• If you have secured interest from a TV station, follow up with the producer two days prior to the event and the morning of the event. Also reach out to unconfirmed print reporters two to three days prior to and the morning of the event.

• Visuals, such as a large banner or poster that are compelling and eye-catching, are great resources to bring to events to secure media coverage. Consider bringing props that demonstrate the changes you want to make, such as “before and after” images or photos of children playing on shared use playgrounds or community soccer leagues playing on fields thanks to shared use agreements. Compelling visuals may encourage print media to feature your issues above the fold or on the homepage.

• Depending upon media interest, coordinate media interviews on-site before or after the event.

• Prepare an op-ed to submit to a target newspaper about the event and the news you are releasing. Take a look at the sample op-eds provided in this toolkit for ideas on how to shape yours and who to ask to write them, but also include information that is relevant to your community.

Blogger Engagement

• If you have local bloggers in your town or city, consider inviting them to the event, especially if they write about topics relevant to incentives and monitoring of shared use of school facilities such as childhood obesity, playground access, and school district activities. Provide them with fact sheets and other appropriate background information.
  o Consider reaching out to parents who blog about healthy living for their family or neighborhood leaders who blog about happenings in the community. If your efforts involve engaging the school board and local businesses to encourage incentive and monitoring programs, a post from a well-known blogger could be helpful. Ensure the blogger is representative of communities where shared use challenges exist because this can add credibility to the post and make it even more powerful.

• As with any other media, develop an outreach plan and engage bloggers accordingly. Make sure your outreach is personal and calls out direct reasons why that specific blogger should come to the event.

• Track confirmations/declines and shape your outreach accordingly.

• Monitor for and report on any mentions of the event by targeted bloggers, both leading up to the event and after.

Database Growth

• If your event is not media-only, set up a table on the day of where people can sign up to learn more about incentivizing shared use. Because they are attending the event, they may want to join the campaign.
  o Consider using the sign-up opportunity for a dual purpose. For example, at the end of the event, attendees may be motivated to make some sort of commitment to help encourage state lawmakers and the school board to support shared use agreements in their community. Combine the sign-up with a pledge where attendees can share the specific way they will help the cause.
The type of action you have people take, and the decision makers whom you target, will determine whether this is a lobbying or non-lobbying activity. If you are paying for your event with non-lobbying funds, it is important that your action at the end of the event also is non-lobbying. Targeting school board members is never lobbying; targeting legislators is lobbying if you refer to specific legislative proposals. However, it is not lobbying to ask event participants to send a letter to the editor about the importance of a bill; to ask them to post to social media about the legislation; or to ask them to speak out on the issue to their local school groups, places of worship, or chambers of commerce.

- This will also help you keep track of the types of people in your database and the specific ways in which you can engage them based on their stated interest in shared use initiatives.
- As you add new members to your database, segment them into areas of interest so that you can quickly deploy customized messages or action requests based on their diversity of interest and skills.

- Transcribe the sign-up forms and upload your new advocates to your organization’s database. Send them a follow-up email welcoming them to your email list, thanking them for their attendance and asking how they want to be involved in the future.

**Post-Event Activities**

- Leverage the event by posting the speeches, photographs, and videos to all relevant websites and social media platforms as appropriate.
- Follow up with local influencers and potential advocates as appropriate to gauge their interest in further involvement.
- If there are media, including bloggers, who could not attend the event, provide them with information and an event synopsis with photos so they can cover the event retroactively.

**Key Takeaways**

- Start working on your event early. Between identifying diverse speakers, inviting journalists, and coordinating a run-of-show, a well-executed media event can take weeks to plan.
- To get the right people in the room, research journalists and their beats before inviting them to your event.
- Be sure to include multicultural media.
- The location of and speakers at your event are important to its success. Hold your event in a community striving to help schools implement shared use agreements and host compelling speakers on the subject.
- Once your event is over, follow up by making photos, speeches, and videos available online.
Mobilize: Media Training Tips
Speaking to the media can seem a bit daunting, but it is a prime opportunity to tell a compelling story that brings home the importance of implementing incentives for shared use agreements. Unlike any other tactic for your campaign, an interview with key media could allow you to access a wide audience in a personal manner.

In many cases, your media team will have pitched the shared use story to local media, offering your spokespeople as experts who can weigh in on this topic. Remember to reach out to media who have natural connections with the issue at hand (e.g., community development or health section reporters, school board reporters, etc.) because they are more likely to respond to your pitch. You will have a better chance of success with targeted mainstream and multicultural audiences when you create a pitch specifically targeted to those outlets.

With the appropriate preparation and practice, your speakers will become comfortable with your messaging and be able to speak articulately and passionately about the issue. The guidelines below will help you prepare speakers for success.

Choose Spokespeople
Develop a small cadre of spokespeople whose perspectives are especially important to the cause and who the media might be interested in interviewing. For each of these, strive for diversity that represents your community and be sure to include spokespeople who can speak in other languages as it makes sense for your community.

- Advocates without playground access or who have a story about what it is like to not have safe places to play and exercise (especially parents and youth) can provide a personal appeal that no one else can (e.g., a parent who wants his or her children to have a safe place to play after school or a community children’s sports league that needs a place to hold practice).
- Doctors who see the impact of obesity-related diseases on their patients will add credibility.
- Researchers who can share data on obesity’s impact on a specific city or state will add quantifiable evidence to the story.
- Finally, top-level executives from your organization are always important faces to add to your campaign. They can speak specifically about your efforts to incentivize and monitor shared use agreements.

Reach out to these types of spokespeople, ask if they would be interested in speaking on behalf of your organization about shared use agreements, and begin preparing them for the task.

Develop Content
Begin preparing your speakers for interviews as soon as possible. The more your speakers prepare, the more comfortable they will be and the better their delivery will be. Before you compose your responses, answer the following questions.

- **Who is your audience?** Before developing your messages, it is important to consider the audiences you will be reaching through the publication conducting the interview.
  - To what media outlet will your speaker be presenting?
  - What is the media outlet’s readership or viewership?
  - What are the demographics of the readership or viewership?
• **What should you say?** Speakers will need to be armed with talking points about shared use incentives and monitoring, but these core messages are just a starting point. Make your content more relevant by considering the following questions.
  o Are there specific facts you want to highlight during the interview?
  o What is the central theme you want to discuss—the core statement you return to over and over?
  o Are there any cultural sensitivities or community dynamics to be aware of in developing your core messages?
  o What would success look like? Provide numbers, statistics, and milestones if shared school use agreements were incentivized and appropriately monitored.
  o Can you make your messages more tangible? Consider adding comments about specific schools in the community.
  o Are there more groups or individuals taking part in the interview? What are their positions likely to be, and will you have to comment on them?
  o How would you respond to the concerns of your opponents?
  o Do you need to tailor messages to specific populations or communities?

• **What matters most?** Spend some time thinking about how your speakers can best portray themselves and the issue.
  o How should the interview begin and end? The most important parts of an interview are the introduction and conclusion because they are what your audience is most likely to remember.
  o Journalists craft stories around “sound bites”—short sentences that communicate your message quickly and boldly. It helps them keep up the pace of their story so they can keep an audience or reader engaged.
    - When you write talking points, avoid run-on sentences and complicated language. Craft punchy lines that grab attention and tell your story passionately.
  o Are there more ways to restate the main goal of the campaign? People need to hear things at least three times to remember them, so keep bringing the messaging back to your core points.
  o Is this still relevant? Reread talking points the day before the interview to be sure the proof points are still relevant. Read local news of the day and reference anything that is topical.

• **What questions do you expect?** Spend some time anticipating questions and developing direct responses or ways to turn the conversation back to your key message. Be sure to consider those opposition or “gotcha” questions since reporters often want to cover both sides of the debate.

• **Where will the interview be held?** Determine in advance if your interview will be held in person, over the phone, over email, or some other medium, so you can plan responses that fit best.

**Rehearsal**
No matter how familiar spokespeople are with your talking points, it is important to have them rehearse multiple times before the interview. Ask your spokespeople to rehearse your talking points in the following ways—and work alongside them as they do.

• **Read the text alone silently.** Read the content with a critical eye. Do all proof points support the overall story? Is the central theme clear?
• Read aloud alone. Spokespeople might be surprised to hear themselves speaking aloud, especially if it is their first time participating in an interview. Suggest to your speakers that they read aloud to themselves, and make note of places where they take natural pauses or get tripped up on words.

• Stand and read in front of a mirror (if the interview is on television). When spokespeople read the content aloud standing, they will begin to get a feel for their natural body movement and non-verbal cues that will help bring the content to life.

• Stand and read in front of peers. Gather your colleagues to listen to the spokespeople deliver their talking points. This can help increase a speaker’s confidence and provides a safe place for feedback. At this point, they should be able to deliver their content without reading directly from papers.

• Record their delivery and learn from it. One of the best ways to rehearse is to make a video recording of your spokespeople presenting. This allows them to see what the interviewer sees and will make speakers aware of any distracting movements or phrases they may unknowingly use.

• Rehearse in a comparable setting to where the interview will be held. You may not be able to take your spokespeople to the actual interview location, but try to create a setting that feels similar. Spokespeople can practice their movement in this similar space, developing a sense of how to move and talk effectively when they are in the interview.

Interview Delivery
When your spokespeople arrive for the interview, they should be friendly and engaging, greeting reporters and producers confidently. This confidence is especially important if any of the spokespeople are top-level executives from your organization.

• Own the space. When you are on-site in the room, remind your speakers of the movements they practiced. If it is the right setting, encourage them to move around.

• Engage the interviewer and the audience. Remind spokespeople to maintain eye contact with the reporter as often as possible. They are the window to the viewers who are watching or listening. If there is an audience present, make sure your spokespeople speak directly to them.

• Relax and enjoy. By this point, your spokespeople will have mastered their text and be comfortable with their delivery, so remind them to relax and enjoy their time in the interview.

• Say thank you. Thank the reporter at the end and suggest meeting with them at a later date for a follow-up interview.

Key Takeaways
• Identify a diverse core group of spokespeople who can consistently speak with the media about your campaign in all relevant languages.

• Develop smart, punchy talking points and customize them to be relevant for each interview. Prepare for those “gotcha” questions that may arise.

• Practice makes perfect—ask your spokespeople to rehearse their speeches or talking points to get comfortable with their comments before they speak with journalists.
Mobilize: Why Op-Eds Matter

Public commentary has long been one of the most powerful ways to broadly communicate ideas. You will be able to convey your campaign’s essential messages to legislators, journalists, and the community through a published op-ed.

In the past few years, competition from expanded news and information sources like blogs and social media has made publication easier but competition for attention tougher. This means you will have to offer your best thinking and most influential voices to maximize your chances of having a newspaper print your op-ed—and have people care about who you are and what you have to say.

Op-Ed Tips and Tricks

- **Choose your signer carefully.** To ensure the best chance of earning placement on a news platform or gaining people’s attention, enlist a high-profile influencer to sign and submit your op-ed. Ideally, this influencer should be well-known within your community and by the audience of the publication, such as a doctor, researcher, teacher, school principal or superintendent, or politician.
- **Ask yourself: “Who cares?”** Make sure your piece will clearly resonate with or be meaningful to the public. Start by writing from the reader’s point of view, and express a clear opinion.
- **Keep things tight.** News outlets have limited space, so keep your op-ed to approximately 500 words. Some outlets have even shorter limits, while a few will accept up to 700 words, so check your paper’s requirements before submitting.
- **Speak conversationally.** Avoid jargon, fancy words, and slang. Your op-ed must be comprehensible to the general public, including people with no knowledge of shared use agreements or the importance of creating incentives for schools to take part in the agreements. You will also want to help readers understand how their lives could be affected if a school near them entered into a shared use agreement.
- **Get to the point.** Make your key points early and often, and back them up with facts and examples.
- **Offer a short, snappy headline.** A good headline gives readers a preview of what your op-ed has to say. (Keep in mind that some news outlets will write their own headlines, regardless of what you submit.)
- **Be prepared to be edited.** Op-ed submissions are subject to revisions, editing, and fact-checking. Editors usually do NOT need your approval to make revisions or edits to accommodate space limitations, provided they do not change the context of your position. Sources for factual statements should be listed at the bottom of your op-ed to expedite review and placement processes.
- **Include your contact information.** Be sure to include your name, title, organization (as needed), email, and phone number in case the editors want to contact you.

Two samples of op-eds are available in the appendix. A rational op-ed appeals to reason; an emotional version appeals to the heart. For example, if you choose to write an op-ed encouraging state leaders to create incentives and put in place appropriate monitoring mechanisms for schools in your community, you could ask a school principal or member of the school administration to sign an op-ed on the importance of incentives for schools to open their doors or how monitoring schools’ use would be beneficial to all parties to ensure that their contributions are successful; either of these would be considered a rational op-ed.

On the other hand, if your goal is to encourage families in your community to support incentivizing shared use programs, you could ask a local parent to write an emotional op-ed about how he/she...
wishes he/she had a safe place to take his/her children to play after school hours and how community support can help state leaders see the need to create incentive and monitoring programs.

Key Takeaways

- Choose your signer carefully. Having a local leader’s signature on your op-ed can help increase its chance of being published.
- Be brief and to the point. Five hundred words is a good target.
- Op-eds can be either rational or emotional, depending on the story you want to tell.
Mobilize: Meeting with Decision Makers
Some advocates may be willing to visit elected officials. Whether you meet with members of the local school board or take a trip to the state capitol, you can have a strong impact when you can meet with decision makers in person and answer their questions about the benefits of incentivizing schools to take part in shared use agreements, how best to monitor their use, and the help you need to make those shared use agreements happen. Decision makers want to know what is important to their constituents, so when your representative is available, take advantage of that time by scheduling an in-person meeting.

What follows are some tips to make the most of your meetings.

Save the Date
Making an appointment is easy—simply call your legislators and talk to the office’s scheduler. Here are a few things to keep in mind.

- Be flexible with the date and time. Legislators have busy schedules and meetings usually last 15 to 45 minutes.
- You may end up meeting with a staffer rather than a legislator. Many legislators rely heavily on staff to keep them informed and make decisions about issues.
- Choose one or two issues to discuss so you can talk about them comprehensively in even a short amount of time.
- Feel free to bring a colleague or an advocate with you who can also offer their insight on the issues, such as a constituent who would benefit from the change in that community—as a business owner or a resident. Be cognizant that bringing an advocate to demonstrate diversity can come across as a token appearance. Be sure to have a strong role for each person engaged in the meeting.
- Research your representative’s stance and voting history on the issues you plan to discuss, as well as opposing viewpoints, to help frame your talking points.

Essentials for Success
Bring these essentials to the meeting to help it run smoothly.

- A pen or pencil to take notes during your meeting.
- A business card to leave with your representative.
- Laptops or tablets for sharing photos of a school with open playgrounds and fields or a camera so you can take a picture with your legislator while you are visiting his or her office.
- A customized version of the decision maker fact sheet in this toolkit.
- A clear “ask” for the meeting—for instance, a site visit, newspaper column, or op-ed to move the issue forward.
  - Each of these could be a non-lobbying request, if your communication with the legislator focused on the policy goal of incentivizing and monitoring shared use agreements, and the various ways this could be achieved, rather than discussing specific legislation.

Make the Most of Your One-on-One

- Dress professionally when visiting your representative.
- Introduce yourself and talk about your position on the issues you are prepared to discuss.
- Share personal stories and examples to illustrate how the issues affect you and your community.
• Listen to your legislator's response and be prepared to answer questions. If you cannot answer his or her questions, jot a note down and get back to him or her.
• Even if you do not see eye to eye, always be respectful and polite.

Thank Your Legislator
• Thank your legislator in a brief note or email for taking time out of his or her very busy schedule. Remind them of the stories you shared, your stance on the issues you discussed, and how their actions affect people in your community.
• Based on the response to your request or “ask,” determine the appropriate steps for following up with your legislator.

Key Takeaways
• Come prepared for your meeting with fact sheets, business cards, cameras, and—most importantly—a clear “ask.”
• Always be respectful and polite.
• Remember to thank your legislator or a member of their staff and use this opportunity to reiterate your “ask.”
Mobilize: Days at the Capitol

Individual meetings can go a long way toward making a difference with your legislator—but sometimes, there is strength in numbers. If you are looking to combine a media event and a legislator meeting, you may consider hosting a day at the state capitol where advocates hold a rally and then attend scheduled meetings with decision makers.

Here are some things to think about as you plan your own day at the capitol.

Choose the Right Day

Planning a day at the capitol takes a lot of time and work—it is a large investment for one short day. Therefore, it is important to make sure you schedule the rally for when it will be most effective.

- Schedule the meeting according to when your issue is under review by the legislature. If you know when a vote is coming up or a particular committee is viewing the bill, legislators may be more focused on your issue. By talking to them at this point, you can grab their attention and remind them why this issue matters to you. If you talk about the legislation with a legislator and reflect a view on the bill, it will be lobbying.

  - If you choose to reflect a view on specific legislation in this type of meeting, make sure you have ample unrestricted dollars to cover the costs of both planning and hosting such an event. These activities will be a lobbying expense, since it involves communicating directly with legislators about specific legislation.

- The legislative calendar lends itself to slightly different opportunities for meeting. Try to attend at a time when things are slower at the capitol, not at the start of a new legislative session so that you may be able to secure more quality face-to-face time with your legislator. If there is an opportunity to connect your visit to an awareness day (for example, National Walking Day), this could lend emphasis to your visit.

  - If you focus your message more generally on the need for communities to get behind schools implementing shared use agreements, it may be possible to use non-lobbying funds for this activity. When using non-lobbying funds, you must stick to educating legislators on the problem of the financial and other concerns schools face when opening up their facilities to communities. You can also secure legislators’ general backing for your issue, obtain support for non-lobbying projects like new school playgrounds or public recreational facilities, or request their support for a particular grant application to support these items. Alternatively, if you want to use your visit to influence legislators to introduce or support specific appropriations to give schools a better opportunity to take part in shared use agreements, you must use lobbying dollars to pay for these activities.

- During your day at the capitol, consider planning an activity or event that would attract the attention of the media.

Invite the Right People

When you schedule these types of events, remember that legislators and their staff want to hear from constituents and people with direct experience with the issues at hand. It is important to bring advocates who understand the potential strain shared use agreements put on schools when their facilities undergo excess use before and after schools hours. You could also bring those who are deeply educated about and invested in bringing opportunities for more physical activity to children in the area. Bring people who can talk about the positive fiscal impact of incentives and monitoring programs. By
entering into formal shared use agreements, administrators can help our children while maximizing taxpayers’ dollars. This can be a key issue when it comes to health care, especially in under-resourced communities.

Recreational facilities are often not evenly distributed in communities, especially across low-income and communities of color. However, schools generally are. If you have existing relationships with your advocates in communities in need of additional recreational facilities, be sure to invite them. Try to find those with particularly engaging stories that include a diversity of perspectives and who can tell them well.

If you plan to include youth in your day at the capitol, be sure to have signed parental permission slips and chaperones. Consider consulting legal counsel if you need assistance developing this tool.

Help Advocates Attend
- If you have the resources, make plans to help your advocates get to the capitol, especially those with financial limitations. Consider offering gas money or assistance in paying for their plane ticket. An investment to get the right people involved can help ensure a successful visit. If the capitol is within reasonable driving distance, identify who can drive and who would like or need to carpool with others.
- If overnight travel is necessary, settle on a hotel and send out the booking information well in advance of the rally so people can get the cheapest rates (this may be another opportunity to help individuals out with the costs, if you are able). Always ask the hotel if it has group discount rates.
- Make sure your accommodations are pleasant and have sufficient space for group training meetings. They should also not be too far from the capitol. We recommend visiting the hotel in advance to make sure it is suitable for your advocates. Remember, you want people coming back next year, and comfort—even modest comfort—is important.
- Ask advocates if they have any barriers to participating, such as transportation or child care, and brainstorm ways to help overcome these challenges to ensure full participation.

Create a Schedule
Plan a clear itinerary that you distribute to advocates when they arrive; you can even place it in their hotel rooms with a welcome gift bag. An itinerary will communicate that this trip is important, purposeful, and they are going to get something out of it. On the itinerary, note the key message for advocates, emphasize what the common “ask” is, and outline next steps for follow up. Schedule time at the end of the day to receive immediate feedback and debrief on key conversations.

Build Time for Fun
Beyond meeting with their decision makers, this is an excellent time for advocates to connect. Connected advocates are often more committed and inspired to support the issue at hand. Although your advocates are connecting online, they may have few opportunities to connect in person so they can learn from each other. Make sure to schedule intentional times for this to happen in the form of meetings, as well as fun outings.
Create a Leave-Behind
Arm your advocates with tools that will help drive the point further home to decision makers. That could be the decision maker fact sheet in this toolkit or something else, such as a petition from advocates in their community or a symbol of the need to implement incentives for and monitoring of shared use agreements in their state. If your visit is a lobbying visit, materials you create specifically for the visit are likely to be considered lobbying materials; as such, developing and printing the materials must be paid for with lobbying dollars. Before you create your leave-behind, check your states gift restrictions for elected officials to confirm you are in compliance.

Follow up with Successes
After the day at the capitol, follow up with advocates about the meetings, reporting any successful interactions or resulting legislative movement. The important thing here is to let advocates know their efforts were worth it, so they will continue to be active for your cause.

Key Takeaways
• Look at the legislative calendar and pick a day that makes sense for your visit.
• Think carefully about who should be in the room, and make sure to bring people with direct experience about the issues at hand.
• Do what you can to make the process of traveling to the capitol as easy as possible for your advocates.
Appendix

Please Note: The materials provided in the following pages are meant to be general examples for you to learn from as you create your own pieces. For each tactic, please refer to the Key Messages outlined in the following pages, and craft your messages according to the specific policies most applicable to your community.
Key Messages: Pursuing Solutions to Ending Childhood Obesity

In the introduction of this toolkit, we outlined the policy objectives related to promoting shared use agreements through incentives and monitoring programs. Take some time before starting your campaign to map out the specific objectives that are right for your community, according to the policies outlined.

After you have determined which policies and improvements make the most sense for your organization to pursue, it is important to fold those solutions into all of the communications you produce so you can establish a consistent voice across all outreach.

Because you may advocate for different solutions at different times, we have bundled potential messaging for each approach together here. You can then use these messages in the various communications templates, including op-eds, action alerts, and blog posts, that follow.

Overarching message for expanding shared use agreements to include incentives and monitoring: Unlock the doors

The below is your “go-to” messaging, or your “elevator pitch,” for speaking about expanding shared use through incentives and monitoring. Use it to succinctly communicate your mission with clarity.

**Sound bite**

Sample sound bite: Schools should be places where kids and families can be physically active, play, and gather. But in [STATE], many schools are overwhelmed by day-to-day responsibilities and don’t have the capacity to figure out how to make their facilities easily accessible to the community outside of regular school hours. We need to support shared use programs, so schools can unlock their doors for the better health of the community.

**Key Message**

The key message is the center of your campaign. It encompasses the issue you are working to resolve and who you are enlisting to help you achieve that resolution.

Sample key message: Schools play a big role in our children’s growth and development—beyond the classroom, into the gym, and onto the playground and track. By creating shared use programs, school boards, decision makers, and parents can make it easier for schools to unlock their facilities that can give kids, families, and others in our community a place to be active outside of regular school hours.

**Visualizing Impact**

At the heart of our campaigns, we want our supporters to visualize the end result. We want them to picture a community that has been improved by their efforts, so they know what they are working toward. That’s what the “visualizing impact” will help them do.

Sample visualizing impact: Right now, some school facilities in [STATE] sit empty, unused, and idle during non-school hours. Basketball courts, fields, tracks, and playgrounds are often vacant outside of regular school hours. Expanding shared use agreements will allow schools to offer a place for entire communities to gather, play, and be active—on the basketball court and beyond.
Messaging to Decision Makers
Why: As leaders in [STATE], decision makers have an obligation to set policies in place that help kids in our communities grow up to be active, healthy individuals.
How: They can play a key role in promoting shared use agreements in [STATE] by supporting incentives and monitoring programs, as well as reporting programs that include the creation of an advisory body, to schools that want to unlock their doors to the community.

Messaging to School Districts
Why: When school districts support expanded shared use agreements, it sets the tone for all the schools in their district, as well as neighboring districts, to expand their shared use efforts as well.
How: School districts can unlock the doors to expanded shared use agreements by creating policies for reporting to the state department of education and working with community organizations to initiate more support for shared use agreements.

Messaging to Individual Schools
Why: Schools have always been valued gathering places in their communities. Kids play on the playgrounds after school, sports teams use the school gym, and community groups hold meetings in the cafeteria. But shared use of school facilities can be a burden on schools, and make them less inclined to enter into those agreements.
How: With the help of incentives and systems of accountability, schools can expand their shared use agreements and unlock their doors to a healthier lifestyle for our communities. Once those agreements are in place, schools can, and should, advocate for other schools and organizations to do the same.

Messaging to Families
Why: When schools limit access to their facilities during non-school hours, families are locked out of safe and convenient opportunities for their children to be active outside of school.
How: By getting involved in local efforts, such as with the PTA/PTO, families can encourage their schools to expand shared use programs.

Messaging to Individuals
Why: It’s not just kids and families who benefit when schools unlock their doors. In fact, the entire community can enjoy school facilities during non-school hours.
How: Those who have taken advantage of available shared use programs have a story to tell that can help encourage more shared use of school facilities throughout the community. Whether it’s a story of a safe place to be physically active or a much-needed space for a community gathering, when individuals share these experiences, it can encourage more schools to unlock their doors.

Specific policies: Sample messaging
The following paragraphs are meant to guide you as you begin to write your own content to help you achieve your policy objectives. While every geography and group will approach shared use through different policy objectives, these are strong examples of how you should consider messaging each level of the pyramid.

Each example follows the same basic structure, which has proven to be effective in communicating campaign objectives. The structure is as follows.
1. **Context for conflict**—establishes an understanding of how things should be
2. **Conflict**—describes the conflict; things are not as they should be
3. **Resolution**—instructs the corresponding audience on how they can resolve the conflict

**Policy Level**

After the last bell rings, many kids are excited to get back out on the school playground to finish the game of tag they started at recess or to practice their free throw.

But too often, schools are burdened by keeping their facilities open when school is not in session. They must already navigate complex logistics throughout the school day, and keeping gyms, playgrounds, and fields open before and after the school day can seem difficult because of additional logistics challenges, such as scheduling. Schools also fear their facilities will be treated poorly and require additional maintenance.

Schools should not have to handle it alone. As a leader in our state, we look to you to create state-level shared use initiatives, which make it easier for schools to unlock their doors. Such initiatives would include incentives like grants, funding for maintenance, and access to low-cost loans so schools don’t have to bear the full burden of costs. With these incentives, everyone wins.

State shared use laws should also include monitoring and reporting, which help to increase understanding of what shared use opportunities are available around the state and what additional hurdles must be overcome.

For the health of our children and our communities, please promote incentives and monitoring programs in [STATE].

**Systems Level**

When school districts enter into shared use agreements, especially those with strong incentives, it sets the tone for more shared use arrangements at your district’s schools.

As leaders in our school district, you have the power to promote more shared use in your community by creating policies that support shared use arrangements. One of the most important policies includes the collection and reporting of facility usage data to the state agencies or local organizations that share the burden of shared use agreements in [NAME OF DISTRICT].

By putting these monitoring programs in place, you help secure the funding for, and therefore the success of, future shared use agreements in your district and across [STATE]. Work with your colleagues today to create policies that promote more shared use in our district’s schools.

**Organizational Level**

*Per the policy objectives outlined at the start of this toolkit, there are two ways individual schools can help increase shared use in the community: 1. By expanding shared use at their own school, or 2. By promoting shared use to other schools as a means to encourage more arrangements in the community. Since these are two different messaging angles, there are two different sample messages below. Please choose the one that is right for your community.*

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Expanding shared use at their own school

Note: When encouraging a school to expand and increase access to its facilities, it is important to approach the school from a posture of gratitude for all they have done thus far. Don’t forget that opening school facilities to the public takes work from the school, so it is important to express appreciation before asking that additional resources be made available.

When your school unlocked its doors to our community, good things started happening. Kids had a safe and convenient place to play before and after school and community groups had a place to hold activities. Your school has brought our community together, and we are grateful for the use of your facilities.

Yet, there are more and better opportunities to use your facilities to help our community live healthier lives. In [NEIGHBORHOOD], we need to expand the shared use arrangement at your schools so that [INSERT NEED FOR SHARED USE THAT IS SPECIFIC TO YOUR AREA]. It’s only through the help of your school that this will be possible.

Thank you so much for all you do for our community. We look forward to more shared use opportunities through [INSERT SPECIFIED NEED FOR SHARED USE].

Promoting shared use to other schools

Our children’s education doesn’t end with the last school bell of the day. Schools have the responsibility to teach our children more than their multiplication tables and history facts—they also should teach them how to be active and healthy—and maximize the opportunity for kids to be active outside the school day. Research shows that the number of physically active kids is 84 percent higher in communities with open and supervised school yards than those without. When schools unlock their doors during non-school hours, they make a healthier lifestyle available to their communities.

Sharing school facilities isn’t always easy; there are logistics concerns to navigate, as well as additional facility maintenance to consider. But schools like yours are doing it right, and we need your help to promote shared use arrangements so other schools can unlock their doors, too.

We encourage you to reach out to neighboring schools with suggestions and advice on how they can enter into shared use arrangements in ways that are helpful to the community and beneficial to the school. The more schools unlock their doors, the healthier our community members, especially our children, will be. Please promote shared use agreements in [STATE/COMMUNITY] today.

Family level

The health of your children is more important to you than anything else. That’s why it’s so important that your children learn at a young age how to live healthy, active lives. Shared use agreements can be fundamental to teaching your children these lifelong lessons because they make it possible for schools to keep their property open to the public during non-school hours. This means that your children can play on the playground or shoot hoops with their friends; by having the freedom to use school property to stay active, they’ll learn those important life lessons.

With the help of community organizations and your state government, schools in [STATE] can enter into shared use agreements and unlock their doors so children like yours can use their facilities to stay physically active.
Speak out about shared use agreements at your next PTA or PTO meeting, or at other meetings in your community. Together, individuals like you and organizations like the PTA or PTO can be a powerful force as you reach out to state officials to provide the necessary support for their schools to implement shared use agreements.

**Individual level**

It’s not just what kids learn in the classroom that makes for a successful life; it’s the healthy choices, like being active daily that can make the real difference. Our schools in [DISTRICT] have great facilities to help kids, as well as entire communities, achieve this even outside the school day, and many of us know that those resources are available because of shared use agreements. But despite the fact that many of us benefit from schools opening their doors after hours, there are still some school resources that remain closed to the public, such as [INSERT SPECIFIC NEED FOR SHARED USE].

As members of this community, you can, and should, do something about this. After all, schools aren’t just places for kids to be active, they’re places where entire communities can use recreational facilities. When schools lock their doors, they lock out the entire community.

Many of you know from experience how vital shared use agreements are, especially for low-income communities where safe places to be physically active are often rare. Help promote expanded share use at [INSERT SCHOOL/SCHOOL DISTRICT] by sharing your story of how schools have provided your community with safe and convenient places to be active by unlocking their doors during non-school hours.
Lobbying vs. Non-Lobbying Checklist

The following questions may help you determine whether your efforts might be considered lobbying under the IRS rules, and therefore, must be paid for with separate, lobbying-approved funding. Each organization’s lobbying requirements (and the registration rules that may apply to them) may be slightly different, so make sure you consult your legal counsel to share your plans and address any questions. In general, the IRS lobbying rules apply to communications with members of Congress, state legislators, city council members, and potentially other elected officials and their staff. In some cases, communication with the general public is considered lobbying too.

✓ Will you be communicating directly with a legislator—or to legislative branch staff, executive branch officials, or any staff involved in formulating particular legislation?
   
   Note: Communicating with school boards and zoning boards does not qualify as lobbying.

✓ If so, will your communications reflect a point of view on specific legislation, such as the following?
   
   • Bills or ballot measures that have been introduced
   • Specific legislative proposals not yet introduced (e.g., “Iowa should adopt Arkansas’ law on including incentives and monitoring programs in shared use agreements”)
   • Budget bills

   Think strategically: If you are not conveying a viewpoint on specific legislation, your communications with public officials or their staff are not lobbying. For example: telling a legislator that you want to encourage the policy of shared use agreements is not lobbying unless your comments are in reference to a specific pending or proposed shared-use legislation.

✓ Will you be communicating to the general public about a view on a particular ballot measure or piece of legislation—through op-eds, social media, email newsletters, advertisements, speeches, etc.?
   
   • Any communication to the public that reflects a view on a particular ballot measure is lobbying.

✓ If so, will your communications to the general public include a call-to-action, such as the following?
   
   • Asking the public to contact a legislator
   • Identifying someone’s legislative representative
   • Providing contact information for a legislator
   • Providing a vehicle for contacting the legislator (e.g., form email, petition)
   • Identifying a legislator as being neutral on, or opposed to, the legislation or identifying the legislator as sitting on the voting committee

   Think strategically: In most circumstances, if communications to the general public do not include a call-to-action, they are not lobbying unless the legislation discussed is a ballot measure. For example, if you talk about the benefits of a specific bill pending in the legislature to create incentive and monitoring programs tied to shared use agreements, without asking readers to contact their legislators (or any other form of a call-to-action), the communication will not be lobbying.
Sample Emotional Op-Ed

Keeping children in our communities active is more important than ever before. Obesity is now a nationwide epidemic, affecting nearly one third of American children. As a parent, I work hard to teach my children healthy, lifelong habits, such as being active every day, but it takes an entire community to truly create change—to create an environment where kids can thrive.

When I was a kid, I spent my afternoons playing tag on the playground and playing baseball on the school’s diamond, all after the last school bell rang at the end of the day. Now that I have my own children, I realize just how much times have changed. Today, too many of our children spend their time indoors and inactive. Unfortunately, not every child has access to safe and convenient places where they can be active during non-school hours. We can change this by unlocking the doors to recreation and play spaces already available at our neighborhood schools. Believe it or not, 6.6 billion square feet of indoor public school space and more than 1 million acres of public school land in the U.S. could be made available to local communities when school isn’t in session—but too much of it remains unused. For me, it’s obvious that this space should be used for before- and after-school activities for our children. Additionally, research shows that the number of physically active kids is 84 percent higher in communities with open and supervised school yards than those without. When schools unlock their doors during non-school hours, they make a healthier lifestyle available to their communities.

For many schools in our state, however, sharing facilities isn’t as easy as it might seem. As much as I may want my children to have the active childhood I did, there are logistical burdens and expenses that come with sharing school facilities. Issues such as scheduling concerns and the possibility of additional maintenance are challenges schools face when implementing or expanding shared use agreements. With already full academic schedules and budget constraints, it can be difficult for schools to justify keeping their facilities open more than they already do. Because of these concerns, schools lock their doors, keeping families like mine locked out of opportunities to be active in a safe and convenient location.

But as a community, we can rally around our schools and help them overcome these obstacles. We can create a different reality for our communities and for our children. Some states are already creating incentives for and partnering with schools to help share the burden, so that schools can expand the shared use agreements they have in place. Incentives can take on many different forms: helping with the maintenance of school facilities, in-kind donations, or offering to assist in facilitating the use of school space. By supporting schools through incentives like these, we’re empowering our schools to expand existing shared use agreements and become places where our children and our community can get active and stay healthy.

What can we do to make this happen? We can push our local leaders to make shared use of facilities easier for school districts so schools can unlock their doors to provide space for kids to play before and after school hours. We need to make it clear that shared use agreements are not only a win-win for the community and school districts but, most importantly, for our children’s health. For the sake of my children, my community, and the health of all of us, I’m urging our decision makers to put these

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incentives in place for our schools and open the doors to our community. Will you join me? Visit [INSERT LINK HERE] to get involved.

Note: In the last paragraph, we chose language that made this a non-lobbying communication. By referring to “local leaders” instead of “legislators,” the request is not a “call to action” under the definition of lobbying (see pg. 8). Further, there is no mention of specific legislation. If a legislative vote were imminent, and you had the unrestricted funds to do so, you could make a strategic decision to spend lobbying funds on an op-ed that explicitly urged readers to contact their legislators to ask them to vote for the bill. Alternatively, you could save lobbying dollars by writing an op-ed like the above, which advocates for policy without including a call to action, or by writing one that includes mentions of specific legislation without a call to action.
Sample Rational Op-Ed

In the midst of our nation’s obesity epidemic, physical activity and a balanced diet are more important than ever. Yet, some [STATE] communities don’t have access to places that allow them to stay active—and it’s affecting the health of residents, particularly children. In fact, this is a problem nationwide; currently, 16.9 percent of children in the United States are obese and 31.8 percent are either obese or overweight. These children are at risk of growing into adults with coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension, obesity, or even some types of cancer.

However, some forward-thinking school districts in [STATE] have unlocked the doors to a solution that’s a win-win for both the community and schools: increased shared use of school recreational facilities. Despite the fact that 93 percent of school districts participate in some form of shared use, some of the estimated 6.6 billion square feet of indoor public school space, and more than one million acres of public school land in the U.S., remain unused. If schools were able to increase the availability of their facilities, it would be good for the entire community, especially children—nearly 84 percent of whom are more active in areas with open and supervised school yards than they would be in communities with closed facilities.

Despite this, some communities across the state encounter obstacles to moving forward with or expanding shared used agreements due to the scheduling concerns and the operations and maintenance challenges of coordinating with outside organizations. However, our leaders can make it easier for schools to enter into and maintain shared use agreements by offering funding or other targeted incentives to support construction and maintenance of shared facilities.

Our children’s future depends on their health today. Right now, we are keeping important and valuable opportunities for physical activity under lock and key. For the future health of our nation, we can’t afford to let school doors stay locked any longer after hours. Shared use agreements are a win for school districts, community organizations, and most importantly, our children’s health. It’s time to unlock the doors, [STATE].

Please join me in telling our state’s decision makers to support statewide shared use initiatives that include incentives and monitoring programs, so our schools can make their facilities more available to the community during non-school hours.

Note: This is not lobbying because there is no call-to-action. If it said “It’s time for [STATE] to adopt Arkansas’ shared use law,” that would be a reference to specific legislation (as a “specific legislative

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proposal”). But even if it referred to specific legislation, it would only become lobbying if a call-to-action (e.g., “Call your state senator”) were added to the op-ed.
**Action Alerts**

When reaching out to your advocates about a new issue area or campaign, your first message should be educational. Instead of asking people to get involved right away, spend some time sharing the facts. By laying this groundwork, you will ensure that people understand your campaign—and people who “get” your goals are more likely to take specific actions later, such as signing petitions or meeting with decision makers. Please note: These materials should be translated into the languages that are relevant in your community.

**Issue Introduction Action Alert**

Dear [NAME],

It’s not just what kids learn in the classroom that makes for a successful life; it’s the healthy, active lifestyle they live outside the classroom that can make a real difference. Unfortunately, not every kid has safe and convenient places where they can be active during non-school hours. Instead, too many of them spend their time indoors and inactive. **But schools can change this by implementing shared use agreements.** Shared use occurs when a school opens up its grounds or facilities for broader community use. Research shows that the number of physically active kids is 84 percent higher in communities with open and supervised school yards than those without. When schools unlock their doors during non-school hours, they make a healthier lifestyle available to their communities.

Yet, the scheduling concerns and operations and maintenance challenges of coordinating shared use of their facilities can dissuade schools from entering into these agreements. But, there is something that can be done to change this. When state leaders put in place clear agreements that include incentives for schools to open their gyms, fields, and playgrounds to the community, the schools win too. With the right incentives in place, such as grants or recognition programs, **schools are empowered to be safe and convenient places for communities to gather and get active.**

With 31.8 percent of children between the ages of two and 19 overweight or obese,* and with low-income communities lacking spaces for children to play safely, it’s time for action. It’s time for schools to play a role in our children’s lives beyond just challenging their minds; they also need to care for their physical well-being. Shared use agreements, especially when supported with incentives from our local leaders, make it easier for schools to keep their doors open for the community. **Join us in our efforts to give schools the support they need to open their doors to the community.**

Thank you,

[ORGANIZATION LEADER OR MAIN POINT OF CONTACT]

*You can find state level obesity rates at [http://stateofobesity.org/states/](http://stateofobesity.org/states/).

**Contact Your Legislator Action Alert**

If you want the expansion of shared use agreements to include incentive and monitoring programs implemented in your state, your elected officials need to know these programs are important to their constituents. The following message asks supporters to send letters to their state representatives, encouraging them to give schools the support they need to enter into shared use agreements.
If legislation on incentives and monitoring programs for shared use is pending in the legislature, the following alert would be grassroots lobbying because it is a communication to the public that reflects a view on specific legislation and includes a call-to-action. If there is no pending bill and the email is simply asking legislators to support a sensible policy, then it would not be lobbying and you could use non-lobbying dollars to pay for all related costs.

Dear [NAME],

In the United States, childhood obesity affects nearly one in every three children. We are writing to you today because this is a statistic that we must—and can—improve. By providing the right incentives to schools in every community to take part in shared use initiatives, schools can be the catalyst to healthier, active lifestyles for all kids.

Our children need safe, easily accessible playgrounds and fields to play and be active, and school grounds are a great place to find these. That’s why we’re asking [STATE]’s legislators to support policies that incentivize schools to implement shared use agreements.

Will you send a letter to your decision makers, asking them to find ways to encourage our schools to unlock their doors? [INSERT LINK TO ACTION]

When given incentives to enter into shared use agreements, schools have the support they need to provide the safe and convenient facilities where kids, families, and entire communities can be active. There are an estimated 6.6 billion square feet of indoor public school space and more than 1 million acres of public school land in the U.S. that could be available to the community. We should not let all that space go to waste when school is not in session.

Join us as we help schools implement shared used agreements by asking [STATE]’s leaders to promote shared use initiatives that include incentives. Click here to take action today! [REPEAT LINK TO ACTION]

With incentives, shared use agreements are a win for schools, children, and entire communities. Tell your representatives today. [REPEAT LINK TO ACTION]

Thank you,
[ORGANIZATION LEADER OR MAIN POINT OF CONTACT]

Subject Lines
The subject line on your email can help catch your supporters’ attention and encourage them to open your email. Here are some suggested subject lines to try with your audience:

- Support schools that support active kids
- You can help kids find safe places to play
- We need your help
- Take action: support shared use of schools
- Everyone wins
- Why isn’t my school gym open after hours?
Social Media Sample Messaging

The following sample messaging can help you spread the word about your campaign on Facebook and Twitter. Some examples are considered non-lobbying messages; however, others may fall under the definition of lobbying and will need to be paid for out of your lobbying funds. Be sure to include appropriate and useful links for readers to learn more or get involved.

The examples below assume the links in the tweets and Facebook postings bring users to a web page that provides information about the issue, but does not include a vehicle for users to contact their legislators. If a landing page urges users to contact their legislators about specific legislation, then a tweet or post that drives users to that landing page may itself be a lobbying communication. Due to the low cost of posting a message on social media, many organizations will choose to use their lobbying funds on social media messages that encourage supporters to contact legislators about legislation.

Twitter

Non-Lobbying Messages

• What is #shareduse and why should you bring it to your neighborhood school? Learn more today: [INSERT LINK]
• By working with state leaders, [INSERT SCHOOL NAME] opened its doors when school’s out. See how your school can do the same: [INSERT LINK]
• How can schools help their students lead a healthy life? By providing them with a safe place to be active. #shareduse [INSERT LINK]
• DYK: when schools open their doors to after-hour activity, it not only benefits the kids, but the school as well? Learn why: [INSERT LINK]
• #Shareduse of school facilities can keep our children healthy and improve our schools. Here’s how: [INSERT LINK]
• [INSERT SCHOOL NAME] made a positive change in its community by signing a shared use agreement. Learn how it was able to do so: [INSERT LINK]
• DYK: incentives for schools with shared use agreements include access to low cost loans and grants? Everyone wins with #sharedusesupport
• 31% of kids ages 2 to 19 are overweight or obese. #Shareduse can improve this! Work with state leaders to bring #shareduse to your area.
• [INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME] helped [INSERT SCHOOL NAME] to open its doors after hours to help keep kids active. See how: [INSERT LINK]
• See how [INSERT SCHOOL] uses #sharedusesupport to open its fields after hours to support an active lifestyle in its community. [INSERT LINK]

Lobbying Messages

The following tweets may be considered lobbying messages if they are sent while the legislature is considering a bill related to incentives and monitoring programs of shared use agreements, or if the communication refers to a specific law or program from another state:

• .@[INSERT LAWMAKER’S TWITTER HANDLE], please support grants that help schools unlock their doors, so our kids can stay active. #sharedusesupport
• .@[INSERT LAWMAKER’S TWITTER HANDLE], schools want to open their doors to give kids safe places to play. They need your help! Support funding for #shareduse
Facebook

Non-Lobbying Messages

• 65% of adolescents are not getting the recommended 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity each day—often because their communities lack safe space for them to run and play. Shared use agreements can change that! [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION]

• With childhood obesity on the rise, state leaders need to find ways to increase the number of opportunities for physical activity in places where children live, learn, and play. Incentivizing schools to implement shared use agreements during non-school hours can be the solution. [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION]

• School administrators can unlock the doors to solutions that help halt the rise of childhood obesity. By entering into formal shared use agreements, administrators can help our children while maximizing taxpayers’ dollars. [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION]

• With shared use agreements, everyone wins! Find out about the incentives your school can receive by implementing these agreements and opening its schoolyard, playground, or track before and after school so that kids, families, and communities have a place to be active. [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION]

• We support shared use of schools’ gyms, playgrounds, and fields because all children deserve a safe place to be active and an easy way to stay healthy. If you support shared use initiatives, state leaders should know! [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION]

• EVERY community should get behind smart ways to get kids active, and shared use is one of the best ways. When state regulators put incentives in place so schools can accept shared use agreements, they maximize taxpayers’ dollars, enhance school facilities, and help reverse childhood obesity. [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION ON TAKING ACTION]

Lobbying Messages

The following Facebook posts are considered lobbying messages if they are sent while the legislature is considering a bill related to expanding shared use agreements to include incentive and monitoring programs, or if the communication refers to a specific law or program from another state:

• [STATE] has an opportunity to address childhood obesity and improve the health of kids throughout the state by implementing shared use initiatives that include incentives for schools and monitoring programs. Send a letter to [INSERT LAWMAKER’S NAME] to encourage school districts to accept these initiatives to unlock their doors and help make physical activity possible for all children.

• The number of physically active kids is 84% higher in communities with open and supervised school yards than in communities with locked school yards. Tell [INSERT LAWMAKER’S NAME] to make this happen in every community by creating state shared use initiatives that open doors to activity for every child.

• Did you know it’s not just community members that benefit from shared use agreements, but schools as well? Contact [INSERT LAWMAKER’S NAME] to ask [HIM/HER] to support incentives for shared use agreements. Make unlocking the doors to help kids stay active an easy choice for both school administrators and lawmakers. [LINK TO FACT SHEET/WEBSITE WITH MORE INFORMATION OF INCENTIVES FOR SHARED USE AGREEMENTS]
Newsletter Blurbs

Newsletters can keep your advocates engaged and up-to-date about the issues that matter to your organization. If you currently send out a newsletter on a regular basis, use it as a platform to help promote your work for the expansion of shared use agreements.

Below are two sample newsletter blurbs to get you going. They should serve as teasers for longer, more detailed information about incentive and monitoring programs located on your website. Depending on the familiarity of your audience with this topic, you may want to provide some basic education on the issue of shared use expansion.

Unlock the doors to a healthy lifestyle for kids (informational)

Shared use agreements provide a mutually beneficial way for the community to make use of schools’ facilities. These agreements allow after-school programs and neighborhood kids in areas of limited availability, such as lower-income or rural localities, to play and exercise in a safe and convenient environment before and after school. Not only that, but with the appropriate incentives and systems of accountability put in place, these agreements acknowledge and reward the schools that implement them. With shared use agreements, everyone benefits.

The incentives schools receive are critical to ensure that everybody wins in the shared use of school facilities. They need the resources, and support, to be able to open their doors during non-school hours. State decision makers can play a big role in this—by allocating funding to support and encourage shared use agreements, and local leaders and community organizations can take part by encouraging these state leaders to put incentive programs into place. It takes the entire community to give kids the facilities they need to stay active.

Click here for more information about incentives for shared use of school recreational facilities today, and learn how you can make a difference for children in [STATE].

Join the cause for safe recreational facilities where everybody wins! (advocacy)

There are an estimated 6.6 billion square feet of indoor public school space and more than 1 million acres of public school land in the U.S. But what are schools doing with some of these invaluable resources when school isn’t in session? Too many schools are locking their doors and closing their gates, shutting out the community from using all that space to play and be active during non-school hours.

Today, many kids in the U.S. are overweight or obese and more than 65 percent of children are not getting the recommended amount of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity each day. Through shared use agreements, especially when community groups or state governments support schools in the effort, schools can unlock their doors and help inspire physical activity in their community. Research has found that the number of physically active kids is 84 percent higher in communities with open and supervised school yards than in those with locked school yards. Let’s help kids in every community get active—tell decision makers to support shared use of school facilities!

Some suggest that liability concerns make shared use agreements less appealing. However, many states have clarified the laws to limit the liability of school districts for recreational facility use. Now, state legislatures need to develop incentives, monitoring, and reporting programs so that schools unlock their
doors, and can do so without incurring all the burden and none of the reward. Let’s help schools make physical activity accessible for all families.

Learn more about the importance of shared use of school facilities today and reach out to your decision makers to let them know you support helping schools bring shared use agreements to your community.

Join us in this important effort. Take action today!

Note: This blurb would be non-lobbying because it talks about supporting shared-use programs generally without referring to any specific incentive or monitoring programs. Further, this example refers only to “decision makers,” not to “legislators,” so there is no “call-to-action”—and there wouldn’t be one, even if it did refer to specific legislation. However, if there were pending or proposed legislation regarding incentives and monitoring for shared use, and the message referenced legislators instead of the more general “leaders,” it would be considered a communication to the public that reflects a view on specific legislation and includes a call-to-action—and thus would be lobbying.
Sample Blog Post: Letters to the Editor

FEATURED ACTION: Help unlock the doors to [STATE] schools’ playgrounds and gyms during non-school hours by submitting a letter to the editor! (LTE)

If your organization has its own blog, customize the post below and use it as part of your campaign. The sample post below asks advocates to write letters to the editor of a local newspaper, but you can substitute this with any action you would like advocates to take.

Across the nation, schools are often seen as community hubs: they’re where children play before and after the school day; they’re gathering places for community groups; and they’re practice locations for club sports teams. After the school bell rings at the end of the day, many kids are excited to get outside and play. They race to the school playground to win the game of tag they started at recess or head to the school gym to practice their free throw. Yet in our state, that’s not the case for many of our schools because of the logistical burdens associated with keeping facilities open to the public during non-school hours. This makes it a challenge for many people to get active in [STATE], particularly for children when school isn’t in session. When school facilities are locked, it means many of our children spend more time indoors with little physical activity.

This stationary lifestyle is becoming a big problem—especially at a time when 31.8 percent of children ages two to 19 are overweight or obese.* But we believe there are solutions, such as incentives and monitoring programs, which can make it easier for schools to unlock their doors to enable more shared use of their facilities.

Since schools can’t shoulder the responsibilities that come with increased use of their facilities on their own, support from state leaders can play a big role in getting facilities open for community benefit. They can put in place incentives for schools with shared use agreements that come in the form of funding from state agencies, such as the board of education or public health departments, or grants. After entering into these agreements, school districts are often held accountable for monitoring and reporting their progress—ensuring all schools with shared use agreements are having a positive impact on community health.

Sixty-five percent of children do not get the recommended amount of physical activity they need. With so many public schools having indoor and outdoor places to get active, we shouldn’t let safe spaces go to waste just because schools worry about the costs of opening school yards when school isn’t in session.

We need your help to make sure more schools in [STATE] open their school yards to the community before and after school. To get involved, you could:

- Post information about incentives and monitoring programs for shared use on your blog, Facebook, or Twitter, or email your friends and family and ask them to support this effort.
- Write to your key community leaders and public officials. [LINK TO AN ACTION ALERT]
- Write a letter to the editor (LTE) of our local newspaper. It has the chance to reach hundreds, if not thousands of people—and it’ll help create new supporters for shared use in [STATE].
If you would like to draft an LTE, we have provided an outline below to help you get started. Before you start writing, here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- Visit your local newspaper’s website to learn how to submit your LTE. If necessary, give your editor a call and ask how he/she prefers to receive letters.
- Make sure you leave your name and contact information (including phone number) when you submit. The newspaper will need to contact you before publication to verify you truly submitted the letter.
- LTEs should be short. Try to keep your message around 100 words. Some newspapers may have specific length guidelines.
- Share your story! If you have a story about staying active or why our students need physical activity to perform better academically and maintain good health, consider sharing it here so you can make a personal connection from the start.
- Make sure you include the purpose of your letter: to get public officials and other community leaders to support shared use agreements.
- Back up your intent with facts about shared use.
- Make sure to direct readers to [YOUR WEBSITE URL] so they can learn how they can get involved.

*You can find state level obesity rates at http://stateofobesity.org/states/.
Case Studies
The following case studies spotlight successful ways that communities have supported schools by offering incentives for implementing shared use agreements around the country. They can help serve as models for your own program or provide inspiration for new ways to approach your work.

Building New Joint Use Gymnasiums: Garvey Elementary School District and the City of Rosemead

Project: Garvey Elementary School District and the City of Rosemead, CA
August 2008

Garvey Elementary School District (GESD) recently constructed new joint use gymnasiums at both of its existing middle school campuses. The construction costs associated with these gyms were financed in part by joint use funds from OPSC’s now exhausted Lease-Purchase Program. To comply with the State’s funding requirements, the district brought on a joint use partner, the City of Rosemead. GESD and the City entered into a joint use agreement that permits the City to use these gymnasiums at no cost during non-school hours for city-sponsored programs. Currently, the City provides after-school youth athletic programming at both gyms.

Local Context
Located in an older suburban portion of east Los Angeles County surrounded by other suburbs, GESD covers four square miles that includes a portion of unincorporated LA County and the cities of Rosemead, San Gabriel, and Monterey Park. GESD’s 10 elementary schools and two middle schools serve more than 6,000 students, 84 percent of which are eligible for free and reduced lunch. The district’s 2007 API score was 759.

Program Drivers
GESD and the City of Rosemead, located within Los Angeles’ inner-suburban ring, have no room to expand out and lack available land that can support new recreational opportunities. Prior to building two joint use gymnasiums, district recreational facilities were not sufficient to meet the needs of students and city facilities were stretched to capacity. In addition, gangs have been an ongoing problem in Rosemead. The city is attempting to nurture a general sense of community, combat gang turf issues, and provide youth with alternatives to joining gangs (Scott 2008).

Lack of sufficient space to meet demand for school/after-school recreational programming:
GESD’s two joint use gymnasiums fill recreational gaps for both GESD and the City of Rosemead. Rosemead is surrounded on all sides by suburban development, with no space to expand. Therefore, the city has limited space and opportunity to develop new parks or recreational facilities. In addition, while GEDS’s middle school grounds are expansive, these schools had limited recreational facilities. Prior to constructing GEDS’s two new joint use gymnasiums, no indoor physical activity areas existed on the District’s middle school grounds. On rainy days, students were forced to remain in classrooms leaving them with no place to play. In addition, prior to the construction of the two joint use gymnasiums, Rosemead’s two gymnasiums—a high school gym and an old city owned gym in need of significant upgrades—were already heavily used by the student and general populations. The City of Rosemead’s Parks and Recreation Department reports significant demand for community recreation programs, especially programs targeted at youth (Scott 2008).
Student/Youth Safety:
In addition to addressing land-use/space concerns, City staff stressed the importance of partnering with schools on joint use projects to provide safe places for school-age children to be physically active. According to the City of Rosemead’s Director of Parks and Recreation, David Montgomery Scott, providing students with after-school recreational opportunities on school grounds makes parents feel more comfortable, observing that parents tend to view school grounds as safer than any other facility. This is especially important in an area where local gang activity is a major concern.

Implementation
Prior to constructing the joint use gymnasiaums, GESD and the City of Rosemead had developed a joint use agreement for the Jess Gonzalez Sports Complex, a baseball and multi-purpose field on district property. This relationship and the existing agreement served as the basis for the joint use agreements that were ultimately developed for the new gyms. In addition to having an established relationship with Rosemead, state funding for joint use facilities made GESD’s next joint use venture feasible.

Through her network of professional contacts, GESD’s former Superintendent of Business Services was informed that state funding was available for building joint use facilities. In 2004, GESD applied for and ultimately received nearly $1 million in state grant funding for each of the new gymnasiaums. By signing on as a joint use partner, the City helped GESD obtain state funding. The remainder of the costs were covered by local school construction bonds. The joint use agreement between GESD and the City provided Rosemead additional recreational facilities at no (capital or maintenance) cost to the City. As a joint use partner, the City is entitled to use these joint use facilities as outlined in the joint use agreements.

GESD and the City of Rosemead crafted joint use agreements for each of the two middle school sites. Each middle school has its own joint use agreement between GESD and the City of Rosemead (see Appendix II). These agreements (pre-requisites to obtaining state joint-use funding) state that while the district will have “exclusive use of the Property during regular school attendance hours,” the City of Rosemead “may use the District’s...gymnasium facilities, and equipment within the facility” provided that “the City’s use of the Property shall not interfere with the District’s use of the Property for public school purposes.” These joint use agreements state that the City may “organize, administer, and operate inter-scholastic sports, inter-mural sports, and after-school recreation programs” as well as “operate the property for community recreation programs...at no cost.”

Responsibilities
Nearly every aspect of preparation, construction, and operation of these two joint use gymnasiaums was or is GESD’s responsibility. The District assembled the grant proposal for state joint use funding, obtained all of the pre-construction permits, hired contractors, gathered and distributed funds, and oversaw both facilities’ construction. Now that these gymnasiaums are built, while the City will pick up debris left during the programming it hosts in these gymnias, GESD staff is responsible for cleaning and maintaining the site. The result is that both facilities were built and are now maintained to the District’s specifications and to its satisfaction.

Physical and Programmatic Design Features
GESD staff pointed out two important design features in the gymnasiaums that help facilitate the joint use programming: facility security and timing of program implementation.
Security
In an attempt to reduce vandalism and unauthorized use of its facilities, GESD’s joint use gymnasiums are surrounded by locked gates. To ensure that only those enrolled in the City’s gym-based programs can access the facilities, the entry gates surrounding these gyms are locked after program participants arrive (by bus) and locked again once they leave.

Timing of Program Implementation
City use of the joint use gymnasiums was initially implemented during the school year. Because school staff is on-site during the school year, they were present to notice and report any concerns and issues associated with the city’s use of the gymnasiums to GESD staff. Once these concerns were reported, appropriate adjustments were made.

Administration and Operations
In contrast to the San Francisco case study, GESD has taken on nearly all of the responsibility associated with operating the joint use gymnasiums in Rosemead. While the City of Rosemead plans and administers programming in these facilities during non-school hours and is responsible for what occurs as a result of these programs, GESD has taken on the responsibility associated with maintaining the site.

Liability
The joint use agreements for the gymnasiums include indemnity clauses for both the City and the District. Both entities hold each other harmless from any and all claims arising out of any criminal or negligent act done by the other party. Because GESD is responsible for maintaining the facility, it carries the bulk of the potential liability risk associated with these facilities.

Both the City and the District carry general liability insurance. The City is insured through the California Joint Powers Insurance Authority (CJPIA). GESD carries an insurance policy with the Alliance of Schools Cooperative Insurance Program (ASCIP). GESD’s insurance rates did not increase as a result of building and operating these joint use facilities.

Maintenance
The school district takes responsibility for costs associated with site utilities, cleaning, and maintenance. However, according to the facilities’ joint use agreements, “any damages to the facility by City use shall be repaired to the District’s standards at City cost.” Requiring that district standards are met gives the district control over the site and its ongoing upkeep. According to district staff, upholding this standard and remaining in control of how these facilities are maintained is essential to reducing the district’s liability risk.

Staffing
The City and District provide staffing, supervision, and security for their own programs and events. The City assigns a minimum of two staff per day to supervise its after-school recreation programs.

Costs
The school district assumes all costs associated with operating and maintaining the joint use gymnasiums. All facility maintenance and utilities are covered by GESD. According to district staff, this arrangement ensures that the property is maintained to district standards. The District views these costs as a tradeoff for obtaining joint use funds from the State. Without the City’s participation in this joint use effort, it is not clear that these gymnasiums would have been built.
Electricity and custodial costs have increased for the school district since these gymnasiums were built. However, GESD has neither tracked this increase nor how much is due to City use of the facilities.

**Scheduling**
The City provides the District with a schedule of anticipated usage of the gym for the upcoming school year by August 15. District and city staff meet regularly to discuss facility use required by both sides.

**Security**
The gates surrounding the gymnasium are locked and unlocked to allow program participants to enter and leave the facility.

**Communication**
District staff is in close communication with school principals and is in close proximity to school grounds. If problems arise (gates left unlocked, graffiti, etc.) they are addressed quickly by the responsible party at the appropriate level.

**Accomplishments and Challenges:**

**Accomplishments**
The City of Rosemead and GESD have built a positive working relationship with one another that has led to an expanding array of joint use programs and facilities. The partnership began with a joint use agreement that focused on city use of an existing school facility and has spread to constructing joint use additions to existing schools. The initial joint use partnership created the climate necessary for these two entities to take advantage of state funding that helped pay for the construction of two joint use gymnasiums that now serve both school and city functions.

**Challenges**
The challenges associated with joint use programming in GESD/Rosemead focus on the difficulties of meeting the diverse needs of the community and include creating “traditional” recreation programs of interest to a technology-saturated youth and keeping youth “off the street,” out of trouble, and safe from gangs (Scott 2008).

**Arkansas: Partnering for Healthy Communities**

**Project:** [Arkansas Joint Use Agreement Grant](#)

The Arkansas Joint Use Agreement (JUA) Grant is a competitive application process made possible and supported by Arkansas’ Governor Mike Beebe and the Arkansas Tobacco Excise Tax created by Arkansas Act 180 of 2009. These funds aid schools in adoption and implementation of joint use policy and forming collaborative partnerships with local community resources with the intent of maximizing resources while increasing opportunities for physical activity. Funds are available each fiscal year based on Tobacco Excise Tax appropriations or until funds are expended. The JUA is a collaboration of the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) and the Arkansas Center for Health Improvement (ACHI).
Joint use agreements are formed to meet shared goals and community needs while focusing on maximizing resources and increasing opportunity for physical activity. A JUA allows schools and communities unique opportunities for children and adults to be healthier individuals. A JUA refers to a school forming an ongoing partnership with one or more entities, organizations, or cities to share indoor or outdoor space/s to meet shared goals and community needs. Through the shared use of space, schools and communities save money while providing more amenities and services to both students and community members.

According to the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE), health and success in school are interrelated. Strong school based policies have the ability to impact student health. Policies regarding the encouragement and implementation of joint use play an essential role because often times the schools recreation facility is the only existing facility available in an area or within walking distance of neighboring residential areas.

Joint use policies and practices can provide schools and communities with access to safe and attractive indoor and outdoor recreation facilities for physical activity and are an important obesity prevention strategy in communities that lack access to safe places to be physically active. The State’s efforts will lay the ground work to advance state and local policies that increase community access to school physical activity and recreation facilities outside of the regular school day.

For more information, please contact:

Jerri Clark, School Health Services Director
Office of School Health Services
Arkansas Department of Education
Four Capitol Mall
Mail Slot #14
Little Rock, AR 72201
Phone: 501-683-3604
Fax: 501-683-3611

Link to other Joint Use Resources

- Joint Use.org http://www.jointuse.org
- National Policy & Legal Analysis Network http://www.nplanonline.org/
- Public Health Law & Policy (PHLP) http://www.phlpnet.org

Joint Use Agreement Grant Recipients

- 2010-2011 Joint Use Agreement Grantees
Content Article
The following articles are examples of media coverage around shared use agreements. Read on to learn more about these programs, as well as the types of articles some journalists have written about shared use.

NYC.Gov: Mayor Bloomberg Launches the PLANYC School Yards to Playgrounds Initiative
July 2, 2007

*Initiative will open 290 School Yards Citywide For Recreational Use by the General Public, 69 Playgrounds Open Today*

*First Step Towards Achieving the Mayor’s Goal of Every New Yorker Living Within a Ten Minute Walk of a Park or Playground*

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg today launched the first phase of “The School Yards to Playgrounds Initiative” which will eventually open 290 school playgrounds citywide for use outside of school hours, 69 playgrounds are open today. Today begins a $111 million investment from the Bloomberg Administration towards the improvement of school yards, which will significantly advance the Mayor’s PlaNYC goal of having every New Yorker live within a 10 minute walk of a park or playground. The Mayor was joined at the announcement by Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott, Parks & Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe, Trust for Public Land President Rose Harvey, Councilmember Gale Brewer, and I.S. 220 Principal Loretta Witek.

To read more, [click here.](#)
Index of Potential Allies

- Safe Routes to School National Partnership
- Active Living Research
- America Walks
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
- Berkeley Media Studies Group
- Bridging the Gap
- ChangeLab Solutions
- Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities
- KaBOOM!
- MomsRising
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- National Council of La Raza
- National PTA
- The Notah Begay III Foundation
- PeopleForBikes
- The Pew Charitable Trusts
- The Praxis Project
- Salud America!
- YMCA of the USA
Potential Allies

Safe Routes to School National Partnership
The Safe Routes to School National Partnership’s (the National Partnership) mission is to advance safe walking and bicycling to and from schools, and in daily life, to improve the health and well-being of America’s children and to foster the creation of livable, sustainable communities. With a diverse staff spread across the country, the National Partnership shares its expertise and knowledge to inspire and encourage action in local communities, advancing policies that support physical activity, healthy community design, active transportation initiatives, and infrastructure improvements, especially in underserved communities.

2323 Broadway, Suite 109B
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 342-3699
www.saferoutespartnership.org

Positioning
The National Partnership stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on expansion of shared use incentives and reporting based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to physical activity, childhood obesity, and public health
- Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely local school districts and state and local governments
- Strength of communications channels
- Past public support of shared use agreements
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and curbing childhood obesity through physical activity
  - Maintains the Shared use Clearinghouse, a compendium of resources, factsheets, model policies, examples of policy agreements, and other tools to assist shared use practitioners
  - Provides a wide array of resources through its website, which features state policies, best practices, local success stories, and additional resources
  - Sets out strategies to boost bicycling, walking, and safe routes to school as fully funded transportation priorities of the state in A Primer for Governors and State Agency Leaders, and offers case studies of successfully implemented state-level programs
  - Hosts a monthly/bimonthly technical assistance webinar series on shared use, complete with audio recording, slides, and downloadable resources
o Coordinates the National Shared use Task Force
o Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Media Coverage

The Power of the Partnership
Mikaela Randolph
School Planning and Management
March 1, 2014

The National School Plant Management Association and the Safe Routes to School National Partnership (National Partnership) are working together to create healthier school environments by increasing physical activity opportunities through shared use of school facilities. Through the National Partnership’s collaboration with Voices for Healthy Kids on Active Places, the National School Plant Management Association leadership is actively engaged in increasing access to parks, playgrounds, school gyms, walking paths, and other opportunities to be physically active.

Just as in Compton, opening up school facilities or school grounds to the community through a shared use agreement can help improve the community’s built environment and public health. Making use of school facilities that would otherwise not be used after-school hours allows for a more efficient use of public space and money, and is a proven strategy against childhood obesity.

Owned Media

Shared use and Street Scale Policies In Action
By Margaux Mennesson
Safe Routes to School
July 10, 2013

Voices for Healthy Kids, a collaboration between the American Heart Association and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is an initiative that aims to engage, organize, and mobilize people to improve the health of their communities and reverse the childhood obesity epidemic. The initiative has six key strategy areas, and the Safe Routes to School National Partnership will focus on increasing physical activity through shared use and street-scale improvements through Voices for Healthy Kids: Active Places.
Active Living Research

Using Evidence to Prevent Childhood Obesity and Create Active Communities

Active Living Research (ALR) provides action-oriented research results that address the root causes of childhood obesity and physical inactivity. With a focus on communities, active transportation, schools, and parks and recreation, ALR works with advocates, practitioners, policymakers, and other organizations interested in reversing the childhood obesity epidemic and promoting active living. ALR is administered by the University of California, San Diego and led by a trans-disciplinary program team with a background in public health, planning, transportation, and parks and recreation.

University of California, San Diego
3900 Fifth Ave., Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92103
(619) 260-5534
www.activelivingresearch.org

Positioning

ALR stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on shared use incentives and expansion based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to childhood obesity, physical activity, and public health
- Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely state and local departments of health
- Strength of communications channels
- Past public support of shared use agreements
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and curbing childhood obesity through physical activity
  - Shared a study, Shared use of School Facilities: A Systematic Observation of Facility Use and Physical Activity, that compares facility use of physical activity settings in schools with shared use physical activity settings to schools without shared use agreements to examine whether a shared use policy was predictive of children and adults’ likelihood to engage in moderate and vigorous physical activity
  - Shared a webinar, Shared use - Introduction and Practical Guide, that explains the basics of shared use agreements, offers tips for reaching out to schools and governments to create them, and provides insight into navigating local laws and regulations to properly craft them
James F. Sallis, director of research at UC San Diego's Active Living Research, cited research that found that people in parks with baseball fields sit more than they play, whereas those in a park with a running track far outnumber the sitters. "It's not magic and it's not a pill," he said of the design solutions. "People really don't understand or acknowledge that activity is one of the driving forces in obesity."

He said as a bike enthusiast, he is "petrified" to bike anywhere outside Mission Bay because of the danger from passing motorists. The result is only one percent of San Diegans' trips are by bike, whereas in the cold of Minneapolis, bike use is four times greater. That's just a big wakeup call to me to show, again, how far behind we are," Sallis said.

The shared use of school recreational facilities holds the potential to offer activity opportunities for many people, especially those in low-income, minority, and under-resourced communities. School facilities are usually easily accessible and offer safe, free or low cost, and convenient recreation and sport opportunities. However, a number of barriers—including fear of liability, maintenance issues, vandalism and crime concerns, scheduling conflicts, and costs of operation—exist that are keeping facilities from being shared. The purpose of this article is to discuss the benefits of shared use of school recreational facilities with partner organizations and to provide examples of such partnerships, potential barriers, and recommendations for addressing challenges. This article describes the creative process that led to this work's success.
Positioning

America Walks stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on shared use incentives and expansion based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to physical activity and community development
- Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely state departments of transportation
- Strength of communications channels
- Past public support of shared use agreements
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and curbing childhood obesity through physical activity
  - Promoted the Everybody Walk! collaborative letter writing campaign calling for improved access to parks and green spaces and development of shared use agreements
  - Convened a webinar series on the shared use agreements between schools and parks

Media Coverage

The Infrastructure of Inequality
By Jana Lynott
AARP Blog
October 21, 2013

I applaud Kaiser Permanente, America Walks, and the other organizers of the Walk Summit for placing equity front and center on the agenda as they build a movement toward creating environments where walking is safe, easy, and routine for people of all abilities. To begin, we, as a society, need to put pedestrian accessibility on equal footing with funding for other transportation improvements. With more than 8,000 boomers hitting retirement age every day, we cannot delay.
American Academy of Pediatrics
The mission of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is to attain optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults. To accomplish this, AAP supports the professional needs of its members. AAP works to advance child health and well-being with the understanding that pediatricians are the best qualified to provide child health care.

141 Northwest Point Blvd.
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007
(847) 434-4284
www.aap.org

Positioning
AAP stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on shared use incentives and expansion based on the following:

• High impact in policy related to childhood obesity, physical activity, and community development
• Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies
• High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
• Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely local physicians and state and local governments
• Strength of communications channels
• Past public support of shared use agreements
• Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
• Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and curbing childhood obesity through physical activity
  • Working on an initiative, Increased Access to Safe and Attractive Places for Physical Activity, which is designed to increase access to facilities for physical activity in communities, including school facilities and community centers by extending hours
  • Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Owned Media
American Academy of Pediatrics Writes a Prescription That Can’t Be Filled
Prevention Institute Press Release (via Reuters)
June 11, 2009

"While much of the obesity discussion has centered on food, the Academy found that children cannot access safe places where they can be active," explains Dr. Richard Jackson, a consultant on the AAP policy statement and chair of the UCLA Department of Environment Health Sciences. "The Academy’s landmark recommendation addresses this reality head-on and encourages physicians and parents to advocate for better access to playgrounds, parks, and green spaces."
Active Healthy Living: Prevention of Childhood Obesity Through Increased Physical Activity
Pediatrics
May 1, 2006

The current epidemic of inactivity and the associated epidemic of obesity are being driven by multiple factors (societal, technologic, industrial, commercial, financial) and must be addressed likewise on several fronts. Foremost among these are the expansion of school physical education, dissuading children from pursuing sedentary activities, providing suitable role models for physical activity, and making activity-promoting changes in the environment. This statement outlines ways that pediatric health care providers and public health officials can encourage, monitor, and advocate for increased physical activity for children and teenagers.

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan sister organization to the American Cancer Society. ACS CAN works to make cancer a national priority. Specifically, it advocates for better access to care, cancer prevention and early detection programs, cancer research funding, regulation of tobacco, and better quality of life for cancer patients, and attempts to raise awareness of and reduce cancer disparities. Members include cancer survivors, caregivers, patients, volunteers, and students, including Colleges Against Cancer.

555 11th Street, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20004
(202) 661-5727
www.acscan.org

Positioning
ACS CAN stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on shared use incentives and expansion based on the following:
• High impact in policy related to cancer prevention, nutrition, and childhood obesity
• Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies
• High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and policymakers
• Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely state departments of education
• Strength of communications channels
• Past public support of shared use agreements
• Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and curbing childhood obesity through physical activity
  - Addressed the need for shared use recreation facilities to teach youth the importance of healthy lifestyles in *How Do You Measure Up?*, state legislative progress reports
  - Worked with the [Public Health Law Center](http://www.publichealthlawcenter.org) to speak on the importance of shared use
  - Coordinated successful shared use campaigns in [Rhode Island](http://www.healthykidsri.com) and [Mississippi](http://www.mississippi.gov)
  - Ongoing participation with [Voices for Healthy Kids](http://www.voicesforhealthykids.org)

**Owned Media**

*Vermont legislative session ends with progress on cancer fighting measures*

VTDigger.com
June 6, 2013

To address the obesity epidemic in Vermont, ACS CAN advocated for a penny-per-ounce excise tax on sugar-sweetened beverages. The tax was voted favorably out of the House Health Care Committee but was defeated in the House Ways and Means Committee by a close margin of a 6-5 vote. The organization will continue its efforts in the next legislative session, along with advocating for shared use agreements in Vermont schools which encourage districts to make school property available to community members outside the school day for non-school recreational activities.

“ACS CAN will continue to champion the importance of reducing the consumption of sugary beverages and fight for shared use agreements as measures to prevent obesity, a preventable cause of cancer,” said Grant.

**Berkeley Media Studies Group**

Berkeley Media Studies Group (BMSG) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding advocates’ ability to improve the systems and structures that determine health. BMSG is a project of the Public Health Institute. BMSG conducts research to learn how the media characterize health issues. Through media advocacy training and consultation, BMSG helps advocates harness lessons from that research and develop the skills they need to shape journalists’ coverage of health issues so that it illuminates the need for policies that improve the places where people live, learn, work, and play.

2130 Center Street, Suite 302
Berkeley, CA 94704
(510)204-9700
[www.bmsg.org](http://www.bmsg.org)
Positioning
BMSG stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on shared use incentives and expansion based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to children’s health, family health, and food and activity environments
- Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely local school districts and local governments
- Strength of communications channels
- Past public support of shared use agreements
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and curbing childhood obesity through physical activity
  - Speaks to the need for expanded use of public school infrastructure to benefit students and communities in the Partnership for Joint Use research report
  - Participate as a partner of the American Heart Association’s Voices for Healthy Kids

Owned Media
Talking about: Joint use
Berkeley Media Studies Group Talking About Series
July 30, 2010

Too often, kids find the gate to their school’s blacktop or basketball court locked after school hours, locking them out of opportunities to be active. Closing off recreational facilities after school leaves many children and families struggling to incorporate physical activity into their daily routines. They may live in an area without a safe park nearby or be unable to afford exercise equipment or a gym membership.

Joint use agreements can help address these problems. Joint use makes physical activity easier by providing kids and adults alike with safe, conveniently located, and inviting places to exercise and play. Besides making sense from a health perspective, joint use agreements make sense financially because they build upon assets a community already has. Sharing existing space is cheaper and more efficient than duplicating the same facilities in other parts of the community.
Bridging the Gap

Bridging the Gap (BTG) was created in 1997 to assess the impact of policies, programs, and other environmental influences on adolescent alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use and related outcomes. BTG examines these factors at multiple levels of social organization, including schools, communities, and states. In recognition of the high rates of obesity among children, adolescents, and adults, BTG expanded its efforts in 2003 to include research on the policies, programs, and other factors that contribute to physical activity/inactivity, dietary behaviors, and obesity.

1747 West Roosevelt Road
Chicago, IL 60608
(312) 413-2367
www.bridgingthegapresearch.org

Positioning

BTG stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on shared use incentives and expansion based on the following:

• High impact in policy related to diet, physical activity, obesity, and tobacco use among youth
• Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies
• High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and academia
• Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely local schools and state and local governments
• Past public support of shared use agreements
• Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
• Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and curbing childhood obesity through physical activity
  o Speaks to the importance of using local land to facilitate physical activity in the BTG Research Brief from March 2012
  o Focuses on policy and environmental factors likely to be important determinants of healthy eating, physical activity, and obesity among youth in the BTG Community Obesity Measures Project
  o Participates a partner of the American Heart Association’s Voices for Healthy Kids

Owned Media

Joint Use Agreements: Creating opportunities for physical activity
Bridging the Gap Research Brief
February 2012

Today, two-thirds of adults and nearly one-third of children and teens in the United States are overweight or obese—and lack of physical activity is a leading contributor to the epidemic. Providing access to recreational facilities is a critical strategy for helping people of all ages be more active.
Having access to parks and recreational facilities is associated with lower body mass index among children and increased physical activity among adults. Research also shows that families and children who live in lower-income communities and communities with higher proportions of Black, Latino, or other racial and multicultural populations at high risk for obesity have significantly less access to recreational facilities than those in higher-income or predominately white communities.

ChangeLab Solutions believes that, to achieve the common good, everyone must have nourishing food; safe places to live and play; opportunities to bike, walk, or take transit; fresh water and clean air. Throughout the nation, ChangeLab Solutions works with neighborhoods, cities, and states to transform communities with laws and policies that create lasting change. ChangeLab’s unique approach, backed by decades of research and proven results, helps the public and private sectors make communities more livable, especially for those who are at highest risk because they have the fewest resources.

2201 Broadway, Suite 502
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 302-3380
www.changelabsolutions.org

Positioning
ChangeLab Solutions stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on shared use incentives and expansion based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to childhood obesity and community development
- Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely local school districts and state and local governments
- Past public support of shared use agreements
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and curbing childhood obesity through physical activity

  - Co-created a toolkit that provides different strategies for financing shared use programs, including incentives
  - Provides Model Joint Use Agreement Resources, downloadable templates for joint use agreements and offers case studies for successful shared use programs
  - Helps communities become healthier places for children to grow and thrive through the National Policy & Legal Analysis Network to Prevent Childhood Obesity (NPLAN) project, which is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Owned Media

**This Land Is Our Land: Turning Public Land into Recreational Space**
ChangeLab Solutions
July 2013

More than one-third of the land in the United States is owned by federal, state, and local governments. This report assists individuals and communities in understanding the complexity of public land ownership and some of the related legal and policy issues that may arise when partnering with public entities to create opportunities for physical recreation.

**Opening School Grounds to the Community After Hours**
ChangeLab Solutions
May 30, 2012

In recent years, increasing access to recreational facilities that already exist at schools has emerged as one of the most promising strategies for building more opportunities for activity into neighborhoods. This promise is rooted in the realization that even the most poorly designed and underserved neighborhoods include schools. In an era of never-ending budget shortfalls, maximizing access to existing facilities—rather than trying to construct new ones—is the most efficient and economical use of public resources.

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities (Healthy Kids) is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, whose goal is to implement healthy eating and active living policies, and environmental-change initiatives that support healthier communities for children and families across the U. S. Healthy Kids places emphasis on reaching children who are at risk for obesity based on race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and geographic location. The program seeks to catalyze community efforts to address childhood obesity through integrated changes in policies, norms, practices, social supports, and the physical environment.

400 Market Street, Suite 205
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
(919) 843-2523
[www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org](http://www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org)

Positioning

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on expansion of shared use incentives and reporting based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to physical activity, childhood obesity, and community development
- Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
• Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely school districts, community organizations, and state and local governments
• Strength of communications channels
• Past public support of shared use agreements
• Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
• Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and curbing childhood obesity through physical activity
  o Promotes shared use agreements in communities like Central Valley, CA that use school yards after hours to promote physical activity
  o Conducts research on creating environments and policies in communities to promote physical activity for children and their families

Media Coverage

**Childhood obesity: Healthy kids, healthy communities**

By Sue Scheff
Examiner.com
June 26, 2010

Jacksonville has been chosen as one of 50 communities across the country to receive a grant to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic. Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities, made possible with a grant through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) based out of New Jersey, will focus on "neighborhoods where obesity is exacerbated by issues like acute unemployment and poverty, crime, dangerous traffic, or too few grocery stores...."

What you can expect to see in Jacksonville:
• Establishing a food policy council to make recommendations for expanding access to the city's food system
• Connecting farmers’ markets to corner stores, churches, parks sites, schools, and public housing, and enabling food stamps to be used to purchase fruits and vegetables at those markets
• Establishing joint use agreements to allow the public access to school recreation facilities outside of school hours
KaBOOM!

KaBOOM! is a national nonprofit dedicated to saving play for America's children. The group's mission is to create play spaces through the participation and leadership of communities. KaBOOM! exists to solve the play deficit. American children play less than any previous generation and this lack of play is causing them profound physical, intellectual, social, and emotional harm. As part of its nationwide advocacy efforts, KaBOOM! strives to equip communities and community leaders with the resources, inspiration, and support they need to bring more play to their neighborhoods, schools, and towns. Ultimately, KaBOOM! envisions a place to play within walking distance of every child in America.

4301 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite ML-1
Washington, DC 20008
(202) 659-0215
www.kaboom.org

Positioning

KaBOOM! stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on expansion of shared use incentives and reporting based on the following:

- High impact in physical activity and community development
- Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely local school districts and state and local governments
- Strength of communications channels
- Past public support of shared use agreements
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and curbing childhood obesity through physical activity
  - Created a toolkit that provides strategies for financing shared use incentives programs
  - Publishes case studies and best practices for shared use of community spaces where children can play and be active
  - Developed tips for parents and schools on how to save and promote playtime at school
  - Offers grants for communities to construct recreational facilities intended for shared use in urban centers and communities with large population
Media Coverage

**WWE giving back greatly to community during WrestleMania Week**

*The Miami Herald*

April 2, 2014

WWE, KaBOOM! and more than 200 volunteers will team up to build a new playground (#PlayMatters) at Woodland West Elementary School. WWE and KaBOOM! launched their first-ever partnership to promote the importance of play in children’s lives.

Earlier this year, WWE and KaBOOM! hosted a Design Day at Woodland West Elementary School where children brainstormed and designed their dream playground. The children will have the final design come to life on Friday, April 4, when WWE Superstars, executives, employees, and community volunteers help build the playground of their dreams and leave a lasting impact on children in the New Orleans area.

**KaBOOM! Helps Bring Play to San Jose**

By James P. Reber

*San Jose Inside*

January 9, 2014

Play is a powerful thing. It has the ability to transform children from sedentary and bored individuals to a physically, mentally, and socially active group. KaBOOM! inspires and encourages people to take action for play in their own communities. The success of the program is due to a well-tested formula of (1) finding a community in need; (2) finding a sponsor; (3) having a nonprofit host; and (4) working with a committed volunteer group to do the actual construction. The playground is then built in about six hours!

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**MomsRising.org**

**MomsRising**

MomsRising is a transformative online and on-the-ground multicultural organization of one million members and more than one hundred aligned organizations working to increase family economic security, to end discrimination against women and mothers, and to build a nation where both businesses and families can thrive. MomsRising addresses critical issues facing women, mothers, and families, by mobilizing massive grassroots actions. The group strives to bring the voices and real world experiences of women and mothers straight to the nation’s leaders, and to amplify women’s issues in the national dialogue and in the media. MomsRising also accelerates grassroots initiatives on Capitol Hill and at state capitols across the country and is committed to holding corporations accountable for fair treatment of women and mothers, and for ensuring the safety of their products.

1010 Grayson Street, Second Floor
Berkeley, CA 94010
(917) 407-3018
www.momsrising.org
Positioning
MomsRising stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on shared use incentives and expansion based on the following:
- High impact in childhood physical activity, nutrition, and public policy at the community level
- Activism aimed at promoting physical activity
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely Congress, local school districts, and state and local governments
- Strength of communications channels
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to curbing childhood obesity through physical activity
  - Expressed support of efforts to bolster school physical activity programs with support from the First Lady’s “Let’s Move! Active Schools” campaign
  - Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is the nation’s oldest and largest civil rights organization. The NAACP brings its voice to assist in the eradication of racial and ethnic disparities, with a focus not only on disease prevention, but on the social and environmental factors that affect health and wellness. In addition, the NAACP is engaged in the workforce development movement to increase the number of minorities represented in the medical and public health profession, and a leading presence on governmental advisory workgroups and national coalitions developed to provide counsel on cultural competency in the health care system.

4805 Mt. Hope Drive
Baltimore, MD 21215
(410) 580-5777
www.naacp.org

Positioning
NAACP stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on shared use incentives and expansion based on the following:
- High impact in community development and reversing racial and ethnic health disparities
- Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely Congress, the FDA, and communities of color
• Strength of communications channels
• Past public support of shared use agreements
• Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
• Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and curbing childhood obesity through physical activity
  o Endorses shared use agreements that allow school facilities to be used by the community after hours in the NAACP Childhood Obesity Advocacy Manual
  o Serves as a member of the National Shared use Task Force
  o Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Media Coverage

Fighting Childhood Obesity, One Community at a Time
By Shavon Arline-Bradley
Senior Director of Health Programs, NAACP
Ebony
October 9, 2013

Exercise is also an important piece of the puzzle. We have got to get our kids running, jumping, playing, moving. By taking an additional 2,000 steps per day, an individual can begin the process of stopping weight gain. Our children need safe environments to facilitate exercise. We have to improve community walkability and public transportation, enhance recreational spaces, and allow for better access to school playgrounds outside of school hours.

Owned Media

NAACP Childhood Obesity Advocacy Manual
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

For the first time in U.S. history, the current generation of young people could be the first to live sicker and die younger than their parents’ generation. Childhood obesity is plaguing African-American populations at a rate that is disproportionately higher than the rest of the country. The NAACP is focusing on three policy areas to address the root causes of childhood obesity.

• Built environment: The need to improve community walkability and public transportation, enhance recreational spaces, and allow for better access to school playgrounds outside of school hours.
• Food environments: Communities need better access to healthy, affordable foods in corner stores and local grocery stores.
• School-based policies: Schools must emphasize increased physical activity during the school day and provide more nutritious school foods and drinks, including what is available at meals, in vending machines, and at concessions.
National Council of La Raza

The National Council of La Raza (NCLR), the largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States, works to improve opportunities for Hispanic Americans. Through its network of 300 affiliated community-based organizations, NCLR reaches millions of Hispanics each year in 41 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. NCLR develops and implements health education and prevention programs and conducts health advocacy activities in partnership with its affiliate network to protect the health and well-being of the Latino community. NCLR is committed to advancing policies that give Latino and all American children the best opportunity to experience healthy development and sustain behaviors that contribute to success throughout life.

1126 16th Street, NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20036-4845
(202) 785-1670
www.nclr.org

Positioning
NCLR stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on shared use incentives and expansion based on the following:

- High impact in education, health, and childhood obesity in the Latino community
- Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical target stakeholders, namely Congress and Latino communities
- Strength of communications channels
- Past public support of shared use agreements
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and curbing childhood obesity through physical activity
  - Works to reverse childhood obesity in the Latino community, through the Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools program, by promoting healthy behaviors and implementing culturally adapted community-based programs
  - Promotes shared use agreements through the Hispanic Education Coalition
  - Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids
Media Coverage

NCLR Conference tries to tackle it all
By Michael Lopez
MSN Latino
July 31, 2013

From childhood obesity to Latino buying power and the DREAM Act, the annual gathering of the National Council of la Raza took on most of the community's big issues. The annual gathering of the National Council of la Raza (NCLR), which came to an end recently in New Orleans, was a star-studded event that included media celebrities, political figures, and corporate leaders. First Lady Michelle Obama was one of the event's headliners. The official White House site made mention of the conference this week, highlighting Mrs. Obama's lecture. Speaking to a crowd of 1,800 attendees, she focused on health and the importance of monitoring childhood obesity in the Latino community.

National PTA

National PTA comprises millions of families, students, teachers, administrators, businesses, and community leaders devoted to the educational success of children and the promotion of parent involvement in schools. PTA prides itself on being a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families and communities, and a strong advocate for public education. The goal of PTA's health and safety programming is to be a resource for PTA leaders in partnering with schools to create safe environments that encourage healthy, safe choices and social and emotional support for all students.

1250 N. Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 518-1200
www.pta.org

Positioning

National PTA stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on shared use incentives and expansion based on the following:

- High impact in childhood health, safety, and education
- Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely Congress and the U.S. Public Health Service
- Strength of communications channels
- Past public support of shared use agreements
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
• Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and curbing childhood obesity through physical activity, including:
  o Providing teachers and parents with resources to help support student health and well-being through the Healthy Habits Program in collaboration with the National Education Association and the CDC
  o Co-signing a letter to the Surgeon General that advocates for the creation of more play spaces through shared use agreements

Owned Media

Local Wellness Policies in the Child Nutrition Act
National PTA Issue Brief
January 2011

PTA and its coalition partners fought successfully for the inclusion of language mandating the creation of local school wellness policies in the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004. These wellness policies gave parents, students, school nutrition representatives, school board members, school administrators, and the general public the opportunity to formulate local policies that are tailored to the specific needs and of their communities.

The Notah Begay III Foundation

Created by Notah Begay, III in 2005, the Notah Begay III Foundation (NB3 Foundation) was established as an answer to an overwhelming statistic—one in two Native American children born since 2000 will develop Type 2 diabetes in their lifetime. The Foundation’s mission is to prevent Type 2 diabetes and its leading cause, childhood obesity, through sports and health and wellness programs that are based on proven best practices. This holistic approach to programming and evaluation addresses Native Americans’ nutrition, physical fitness, and community-building needs, with the goal of producing measurable, long-term change in the health of tribal communities.

290 Prairie Star Road
Santa Ana Pueblo, NM 87004
(505) 867-0775
www.nb3foundation.org

Positioning

The NB3 Foundation stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on shared use incentives and expansion based on the following:

• High impact in physical activity, childhood obesity, and community development focused on the well-being of Native American children
• Activism aimed at promoting physical activity in Native American communities
• High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
• Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely Congress and state and local governments
• Strength of communications channels
• Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
• Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly aimed at increasing physical activity and curbing childhood obesity in the Native American community
  o Partnered with the Obama Administration and the Indian Health Service to launch the Let’s Move! In Indian Country (LMIC) program, as part of First Lady Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move! initiative
  o Outlines the challenge of addressing childhood obesity and Type 2 diabetes through sports, health and wellness programs, healthy foods access, community leadership development, and advocacy for Native American children in the Turning the Tide for Native American Children report
  o Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

PeopleForBikes
PeopleForBikes is the leading movement to improve bicycling in the U.S. By collaborating with individual riders, businesses, community leaders, and elected officials, PeopleForBikes unites Americans to boost bicycling nationally for results that can be seen locally. Launched in 1999, PeopleForBikes includes an industry coalition of bicycling suppliers and retailers, as well as a charitable foundation. By connecting the bicycle industry and individual riders, PeopleForBikes generates clout that secures a seat at the congressional table for people who benefit from bikes. Through these efforts, federal investment in bicycling has quadrupled since the group’s inception.

207 Canyon Blvd., Suite 202
Boulder, CO 80302
www.peopleforbikes.org

Positioning
PeopleForBikes stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on expansion of shared use incentives and reporting based on the following:
• High impact in policy related to physical activity and biking
• Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies
• High visibility and credibility with its target audiences and thought leaders
• Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely local governments and biking industry leaders
• Strength of communications channels
• Past public support of shared use agreements
Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion

Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and promoting physical activity in children

- Stays on top of federal bicycling issues by bringing awareness to bike-friendly initiatives and lobbying to maximize bicycle funding through the efforts of the Government relations team
- Provides funding for important and influential projects, through the Community Grant Program, that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling in communities across the U.S.
- Possesses ongoing connections with local and state legislators and organizes grassroots action that demonstrates the business and public support for bicycling

The Pew Charitable Trusts

The Pew Charitable Trusts (Pew) helps states ensure that all foods served in U.S. schools are healthy. With a long history of informing policy, Pew supports states in improving the nutrition of meals, snacks, and beverages available to students across the country. Pew applies a data-driven, analytical approach to developing strategies that make government more effective. The institution’s initiatives have delivered results at national, state, and local levels.

One Commerce Square
2005 Market Street, Suite 2800
Philadelphia, PA 19103-7077
(215) 575-9050
www.pewtrusts.org

Positioning

Pew stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on shared use incentives and expansion based on the following:

- High impact in public health and policy
- Activism aimed at influencing policy and public health through research
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely local school districts, and state and local governments
- Strength of communications channels
- Past public support of shared use agreements
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to research that informs public policies that address childhood obesity
  - Published research on the role of government in reversing childhood obesity
Media Coverage

Childhood Obesity Target Of Campaign Urging U.S. Government To Improve School Resources For Healthy Students
By Susan Heavey
Reuters (via The Huffington Post)
May 9, 2013

A coalition of health advocacy groups on Wednesday urged the U.S. government to put more resources into school-based efforts to improve health and fight obesity among youth. The recommendations by the Healthy Schools Campaign and Trust for America’s Health were backed by more than 70 groups including the American Cancer Society and the National Education Association. In a report, they urged the Department of Education to offer grants to promote healthy living initiatives, fund staff training to include wellness programs, support school efforts aimed at nutrition and exercise, and track results of such programs.

The Praxis Project

The Praxis Project is a nonprofit movement and an institution of color that supports organizing efforts and change work at local, regional, and national levels. Focused on movement building for fundamental change, the Project’s mission is to build healthy communities by changing the power relationships between people of color and the institutional structures that affect their lives.

7731 Alaska Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20012
(202) 234-5921
www.thepraxisproject.org

Positioning

The Praxis Project stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on expansion of shared use incentives and reporting based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to community health and development for communities of color
- Activism aimed at reducing childhood obesity and improving the health of communities of color through public policy
- Past public support of shared use agreements
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and curbing childhood obesity through physical activity
  - Provides grants to local organizations, through Communities Creating Healthy Environments, to improve access to healthy foods and safe places for communities to play and exercise
  - Draws on best practices in the development of local policies to transform communities into healthy, thriving places for its residents through the Transforming Communities project
  - Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Owned Media

Communities Ramp Up Efforts to Address Childhood Obesity
Communities Creating Healthy Environments
May 25, 2011

Twelve community advocacy organizations across the country have been awarded grants totaling $3 million from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Each of the 12 organizations will receive up to $250,000 over three years through Communities Creating Healthy Environments (CCHE), an RWJF national program that helps advance the Foundation’s efforts to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic by 2015. The organizations are leaders on a wide range of social justice issues, including workers’ rights, education, and climate change. Groups funded through the CCHE program will leverage their organizing savvy to build public support for policy changes that will help families lead healthier lives.

Salud America!
The RWJF Research Network to Prevent Obesity Among Latino Children

Salud America! (UT Health Science Center San Antonio)
Salud America! is a national online network of researchers, community group leaders, decision-makers, and members of the public working together to support healthy policy and environmental changes that can help reverse the Latino childhood obesity epidemic. Salud America! serves as a clearinghouse—with news, research, maps, videos, resources, and successful stories of change—on making healthy changes in Latino communities across the nation.

The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
7411 John Smith, Suite 1000
San Antonio, TX 78229
(210) 562-6500
www.salud-america.org

Positioning
Salud America! stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on expansion of shared use incentives and reporting based on the following:
  - High impact in policy related to physical activity, childhood obesity, nutrition, and community development
Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies

High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media

Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely Latino communities, local school districts, and state and local governments

Strength of communications channels

Past public support of shared use agreements

Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion

Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to shared use agreements and curbing childhood obesity through physical activity

- Produced a research brief on shared use agreements to support physical activity in Latino communities
- Highlighted the need for safe places for Latino children to be physically active in an Issue Brief on Active Spaces and Latino Children and with an infographic
- Frequently shares success stories of shared use initiatives already in place
- Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Media Coverage

**Playgrounds seen as key to maintain child health**
By Daniella Diaz
*San Antonio Express News*
July 27, 2013

Obesity—which has been linked to diabetes, heart disease, and other health issues—affects 43.6 percent of Hispanic children and 15.6 percent of Anglo kids nationwide, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. An important first step to combat it would be for more schools to leave their outdoor facilities open, said Amelie Ramirez, who directs the Institute of Health Promotion Research at the UT Health Science Center, which includes the nonprofit group Salud America that conducted the study.

**Owned Media**

**Research: Latino kids lack access to safe ‘active spaces’**
SaludToday Blog
July 3, 2013

Research from Salud America! found that 81 percent of Latino neighborhoods did not have a recreational facility, compared with 38 percent of white neighborhoods. Fewer schools provided public access to their physical activity facilities in 2006 (29 percent) than did in 2000 (35 percent). Shared use agreements—formal contracts between entities that outline terms for sharing public spaces for physical activity—have increased access to active spaces in Latino communities.
YMCA of the USA
The Y is one of the nation’s leading nonprofits strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Across the U.S., 2,700 Ys engage 21 million men, women and children – regardless of age, income or background – to nurture the potential of children and teens, improve the nation’s health and well-being, and provide opportunities to give back and support neighbors. Anchored in more than 10,000 communities, the Y has the long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change.

101 N. Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60606
(800) 872-9622
www.ymca.net

Positioning
The Y stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on expansion of shared use incentives and reporting based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to physical activity, childhood obesity, and community development
- Activism aimed at expansion of shared use incentives and reporting between public schools and local government agencies
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, including 21 million members, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely local school districts and state and local governments
- Strength of communications channels
- Past public support and success on securing hundreds of shared use agreements to expand access to places and spaces for physical activity
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on shared use incentives and expansion
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to the promotion of shared use agreements
  - Provides Active Living Strategies (accessed here and here) support policies that increase facilities for physical activity in communities, including school facilities after hours
  - Partners with local school districts and gyms to improve access and physical activity (example from Kentucky outlined here and Virginia outlined here)
  - Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Media Coverage
San Diego High Schools Will Share New Pools With Community
By Kyla Calvert
KPBS
May 29, 2013

San Diego Unified trustees voted Tuesday to build the district’s first 10 publicly funded school swimming pools as joint-use facilities. Proposition Z funds will pay for pool construction and high school teams will get priority to use them. But an outside group such as the YMCA will operate and maintain the pools.

Y.M.C.A. Adopting Health Policies for Youth
By Sheryl Gay Stolberg
The New York Times
November 29, 2011

The Y.M.C.A., one of the nation’s largest child-care providers, intends to announce Wednesday that it is adopting new “healthy living standards,” including offering fruits, vegetables, and water at snack time, increasing the amount of exercise, and limiting video games and television for youngsters in its programs.