

# The OSNAP Learning Community Facilitator's Handbook: *Bringing Together Out- of-School Time Programs to Create Healthy Changes*



*This handbook is designed to help individuals and organizations who are leading the Learning Community portion of the Out-of-School Nutrition and Physical Activity Initiative (OSNAP), a program designed to improve the physical activity and nutrition environment in out-of-school-time programs. Additional information is available in **The OSNAP Implementation Guide**.*



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# I. Background and Goals of OSNAP

## What is OSNAP?

The Out-of-School Nutrition and Physical Activity Initiative (OSNAP) began as a collaborative project between the Prevention Research Center on Nutrition and Physical Activity at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and local afterschool program providers in Boston, Massachusetts. The goal of OSNAP is to identify and support lasting and cost-effective policy and practice strategies that promote increased access to healthy foods and beverages, physical activity opportunities, and reduced screen time in out-of-school-time (OST) settings. The OSNAP Initiative works by bringing together afterschool program providers to learn from one another and set goals to meet the following standards:

1. Provide all children with at least 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day (include outdoor activity if possible).
2. Offer 20 minutes of vigorous physical activity 3 times per week.
3. Do not serve sugary drinks at the program.
4. Do not allow sugary drinks to be brought in during program time.
5. Serve water every day.
6. Offer a fruit and/or vegetable option at every meal and snack.
7. When serving grains for snack (like bread, crackers, and cereal), serve whole grains.
8. Eliminate commercial broadcast TV and movies.
9. Limit computer and digital device use to homework or instructional (i.e., teacher-led) time.

These opportunities for staff from different afterschool sites to come together to share with and learn from each other are called “**Learning Communities.**” In the OSNAP Learning Communities, participants learn background information and skills to promote physical activity and healthful foods/beverages; have opportunities to share barriers, strategies, and successes; and develop and refine action plans in program teams.

## Who is this handbook for?

This facilitator’s handbook provides the essential information to organize and implement the OSNAP Learning Communities. This role is typically done by OSNAP Coordinators – the people who organize and deliver the OSNAP Initiative across multiple afterschool sites. OSNAP Coordinators may work for an organization that runs OST programs (like the Y) or another agency that brings together OST programs to promote health (like a municipal or state department of public health).

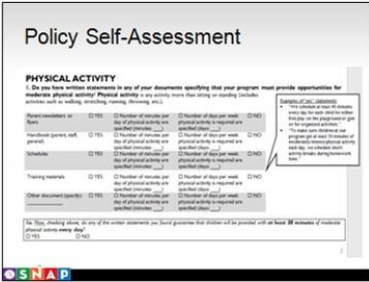
This handbook is a supplement to “The OSNAP Guide: A Step by Step Process for Improving Nutrition and Physical Activity in Out of School Settings.” The OSNAP Guide walks through the entire OSNAP approach and change process, whereas this facilitator’s guide specifically provides information on leading the Learning Community portion of the OSNAP program. As an OSNAP Coordinator, you might find it helpful to copy pages from the main OSNAP guide and use them as handouts when working with sites.

As a facilitator, it is important to familiarize yourself with this Handbook —and the complementary OSNAP Guide—before beginning the Learning Communities.

## How do I use this handbook?

The first few sections offer background information on what Learning Communities are, how they’re designed to work, and some basic logistical advice. You should read these sections as soon as you start thinking about facilitating Learning Communities.

Next are the Learning Community-specific sections. These should be read in a timely fashion relative to when you plan to offer your Learning Communities. Each of the three Learning Communities has a section labeled “Pre Learning Community # Planning.” These are timelines that help break down how you should be preparing for the upcoming Learning Community. Following that page, there is then a “Learning Community Page” that contains all of the materials that you will need to have with you to lead that Learning Community. In addition to having these resources, you will need to be prepared to give the presentation based on the corresponding PowerPoint slides. The PowerPoint slides include scripts, notes for facilitators, and any additional tips that may be relevant to leading that particular Learning Community. Be sure that you’ve enabled the notes-viewing window on your screen when you’re looking through the slides, or print out your copy of the slides using the “Notes Pages” option in your print menu. You should see text like this:



**Policy Self-Assessment**

**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

1. Do you have written statements in any of your documents specifying that your program must provide opportunities for moderate physical activity? Physical activity is any activity which raises heart rate or breathing (includes activities such as walking, swimming, dancing, bicycling, etc.).

Physical activity or sport	Frequency of activity per week	Intensity of activity	Duration of activity per week
Physical activity or sport	Frequency of activity per week	Intensity of activity	Duration of activity per week
Frequency of activity per week	Intensity of activity	Duration of activity per week	Duration of activity per week
Intensity of activity	Duration of activity per week	Duration of activity per week	Duration of activity per week
Duration of activity per week	Duration of activity per week	Duration of activity per week	Duration of activity per week

**Definition of Physical Activity**

Physical activity is any activity which raises heart rate or breathing (includes activities such as walking, swimming, dancing, bicycling, etc.).

**OSNAP**

You were asked to bring your completed Policy Self-Assessment with you to today; please take those out now.

[Note to facilitator—if any groups forgot theirs, have a few blank policy self-assessments on hand and have them complete it as best they can based on memory/knowledge of existing program documents—stress that they should complete it based on documents that they have, not just what they do in practice.]

We’re going to take a few moments now to compile the results of your self-assessment in a way that will help you see clearly which OSNAP Standards you have strong policies around, and which standards might benefit from improved policies.

[Pass out the blank OSNAP Policy Self-Assessment Areas for Improvement Policy Report sheets.]

Using your completed policy self-assessment, each program will complete this OSNAP Policy Self-Assessment Areas for Improvement Policy Report. Column 1 states the related OSNAP Standard. Column 2 tells you where to look on your policy self-assessment to find the relevant information. In column 3, based on what your self-assessment says, you will check off either yes, no, or n/a. In some cases, if you check off no, there is another set of boxes to clarify whether the “no” means that something is completely missing from your policy documents—meaning that none of the items were mentioned—or partially there, which might be the case if you had a statement about providing 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity to children, but

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Finally, there is information about what to do after the Learning Community.

## **OSNAP.org**

The OSNAP.org website contains copies of the materials referenced in this handbook. The website is designed for use by afterschool programs and other interested groups. , There is an additional section that contains materials that will be especially of use to you as a facilitator. On the OSNAP Learning Communities page, (<https://osnap.org/learning-communities/>) you will find downloadable and printable versions of the resources listed in this guide. Additionally, materials are also available within the “Resource Library” on the website.

In addition to the printable materials, the out-of-school time programs that you’re working with can sign up for free accounts that allow them to complete assessments and generate action plans using the online tools available within “My OSNAP” section of the website. Out-of-school programs can create an account, then complete the practice and policy assessments. My OSNAP will generate a report for each program based on their assessments. This report can be used to build an Action Plan directly on the website. Instead of having sites complete paper copies of these documents, you can have sites use the My OSNAP portal to complete their assessments. As a facilitator, you can track the progress of the programs participating in your learning community. The facilitator could print participants’ final documents to bring to the Learning Communities and/or ensure the participants have access to a computer, tablet, or phone to access their assessments and reports.

## II. Learning Communities Overview

### **What are Learning Communities?**

The OSNAP Initiative follows a collaborative learning model following the approach created by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement.<sup>1</sup> These sessions bring staff from different afterschool sites together to share with and learn from each other changes that support physical activity and healthy eating. The meetings between program sites, facilitated by an OSNAP Coordinator, are the Learning Communities. OSNAP is designed to have three Learning Communities over the course of one year.

In the OSNAP Learning Community sessions, participants learn background information and skills to promote physical activity and healthful foods/beverages; have opportunities to share barriers, strategies, and successes; and develop and refine action plans in program teams. These sessions walk participants through the activities and topics that are covered in The OSNAP Guide, like the creation of Action Plans (described in Part 3- Identify) and the resources available (described in Part 4 – Implement). The three sessions cover the following topics:

- [Learning Session 1: Nutrition and Physical Activity in Out of School Time Programs](#)
  - In this session, there is an overview of the OSNAP Standards and the scientific rationale behind them. The OSNAP coordinator talks about the benefits of incorporating nutrition and physical activity in OST programs and introduces the Food & Fun Afterschool curriculum. The OSNAP coordinator also describes the importance of policy when making sustainable healthy changes. Participants should come with the 5-day Practice Assessment already completed, and in the session they will score and review the assessment. Finally, program teams will develop action plans with practice, policy, and communication action steps to work towards nutrition and physical activity areas for improvement. Alternatively, if assessments are completed via the interactive OSNAP website, participants will discuss their reports and selected action plans.
- [Learning Session 2: Implementing Nutrition and Physical Activity Improvements](#)
  - In this session, the group begins by checking in on Action Plans and discussing successes and challenges that have been encountered in the process. Then the OSNAP coordinator covers specific strategies and resources for developing nutrition and physical activity policies. There is another component that focuses on promoting healthy eating and drinking. The OSNAP coordinator also demonstrates creative new ways to get kids moving, and there is time allotted at the end for revising Action Plans.
- [Learning Session 3: Sustaining Change in Out of School Time Programs](#)
  - In the third and final session, there is again time for everyone to share their stories of triumphs and challenges. The group discusses nutrition and physical activity communication and policy strategies, and how staff can be healthy role models for children. Activities from Food & Fun Afterschool curriculum are demonstrated, and healthy alternatives for celebrations and rewards are presented. Finally, strategies (including staff hiring and staff training) for sustaining changes are discussed.

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<sup>1</sup> Kilo CM. A framework for collaborative improvement: lessons from the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Breakthrough Series. *Qual Manag Health Care* 1998; 6(4):1-13)

## Who should come to Learning Communities?

Ideally, 2-3 staff members who all have a shared commitment to the program should come to the Learning Community meetings; it is most helpful if at least one of these people is in some sort of leadership role. The people in these roles are often able to make changes more efficiently and likely have more knowledge about how the program operates and what other guides, programs, policies, and practices are in place. People who know more about their program can have an easier time making action plans that are feasible and address issues that are important to the program.

The OSNAP team encourages sites to bring any interested staff members along, or if necessary, to send others in place of the site leadership personnel. Having 2-4 people from a site attend each Learning Community is useful in case someone can't make the next meeting – there are others who know what to do! Having multiple people from a site also can provide support at that site and be an extra motivation when there are multiple people with the same goal – it also makes it harder to forget!

## Logistics

The three sessions typically take place over the course of one school year and are designed to be offered in three-hour sections. For organizations seeking 10 hours of training for continuing education credits, a 10<sup>th</sup> hour can be added with an hour of training on [Food & Fun](#) to one of the sessions or as a separate session. Food & Fun training materials are available here: <http://foodandfun.org/?p=change&user=staff&category=Training>. Physical activity programs, like SPARK, can also fill this additional time.

If you work with many programs, consider offering multiple opportunities to attend a Learning Community meeting. This way, competing demands/schedules are less likely to present significant barriers. For example, you could offer one meeting Tuesday morning, one Wednesday during lunch hours, and one Thursday evening. If you are working with just a few people, you might find it helpful to use a free online scheduling tool like the polls on Doodle.com to figure out a date and time that works for everyone.

We have found that attendance is higher when the Learning Community meetings are offered at the site of one of your participating programs. It also helps to consider accessibility. If most people will drive, is there sufficient parking? If most people take public transit, is your meeting site readily accessible? Provide clear directions so everyone knows where go.

The workshop site should have plenty of space for sites to be able to spread out and work separately without disturbing each other. Auditorium settings are not advisable, however, because of the participatory nature of the workshop.

## Facilitator Materials

In addition to this Handbook, there are several other materials that OSNAP has created to help you organize and run the Learning Communities.

### OSNAP Learning Community PowerPoint slides

There is a set of PowerPoint slides for each Learning Community. In the notes section of the slides is a script for what should be talked about. These slides are available online under “Learning Community Implementation”: <https://osnap.org/learning-communities/>

### Evaluation Forms

To accompany the Learning Communities, template evaluation forms are available for your participants fill out at the end of each meeting to gauge their impressions of the session and determine where they may need additional support. Available online at under “Learning Community Evaluation”: <https://osnap.org/learning-communities/>

Out of School Time Nutrition & Physical Activity Initiative— Learning Community 3				
Please use the scale provided to rate the usefulness of the workshop by placing an "X" in the appropriate box for each item.				
Program Segment	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not Useful	N/A
<u>Progress Review</u>				
Sharing improvements/written documents				
<u>Skills Development</u>				
Healthy eating strategies				

*Example of an evaluation form from a Learning Community*

### OSNAP Email Templates

Use the provided templates to make email invitations, reminders, and follow-ups quick and easy. There is a template for an email invitation for each of three Learning Community meetings designed to go out about one month before the meeting date. The reminder emails are intended to go out about one week prior to the meetings and then be resent the day before. Finally, the follow up emails are intended to be tailored for each site, attaching the action plan and any supportive materials that came out of the meeting. Available online at under “Learning Community Implementation”: <https://osnap.org/learning-communities>

Follow up
Hi [site director name],
Thank you so much for attending our [1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> ] learning community meeting of the year. It was great to have you there setting goals and action steps for improving the nutrition and physical activity practices and policies at your program. Attached is your action planning document. Please take a look to make sure this reflects your goals and action steps as you see them.
Below is a link to [insert any relevant links] on our Food and Fun/OSNAP website. I've also

*Excerpt of text from a follow-up email to send out following each Learning Community*



### **Certificates of Completion**

Whether you want to celebrate everyone who participated or you need to give a formal acknowledgement of participation, the OSNAP website has a template for a Certificate of Completion that you can adapt. Available online at: <http://osnap.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Certificate-of-Completion.docx>.

### **Supplemental Resources for Learning Communities**

Learning Communities focus on the value of shared ideas and discussions of strategies and solutions to everyday problems. This guide focuses mainly on face-to-face interactions, but there are more ways than ever for people to connect. Programs can also use the My OSNAP portal to complete the OSNAP assessments and create action plans. OSNAP Coordinators can create a virtual Learning community, where you can track programs participating in your Learning Community progress in completing the steps. Depending on what you think would work for the sites that you're working with, you could also consider using e-mail listserv, a social networking site (like Facebook or Google Plus), a blog, etc. to let people share ideas more frequently between Learning Communities. For example, people could send a question (e.g., "Where is the best place to buy cups?"), a tip (e.g., "Grapes are on sale for 89 cents a pound at Store X!"), or a success story (e.g., "Since it was pouring rain, we had hula-hooping contests and relay races in the hall this afternoon!") to the group. Note that these forums may not allow for the same in depth idea exchange as an in-person Learning Community, but could be valuable additions or replacement when resources are limited.

### **My OSNAP**

The "My OSNAP" portal contains a section to set up a personal My OSNAP account. With the creation of a free account, participants can digitally complete the practice and policy assessments. The website will use the assessments to generate a feedback report based on the OSNAP standards. Participants can then use the Action Plan Builder to create a personalized action plan, selecting from a variety of goals that support the OSNAP standards or creating their own. These reports and action plans will be saved and available to participants and facilitators by logging into My OSNAP.

# III. Learning Community 1

## Pre-Learning Community 1 Planning

*Once you have identified and recruited the programs that you'll be working with, you'll want to explain to them what will happen at the first Learning Community and who should attend. Below is a checklist of things to do before you gather for the first Learning Community.*

### Scheduling the Learning Community meeting

If you work with many programs, consider offering multiple opportunities to attend a Learning Community meeting. This way, competing demands/schedules are less likely to present significant barriers. For example, you could offer one meeting Tuesday morning, one Wednesday during lunch hours, and one Thursday evening. If you are working with just a few people, you might find it helpful to use a free online scheduling tool like the polls on Doodle.com to figure out a date and time that works for everyone.

### Picking a place for the Learning Community meeting

We have found that attendance is higher when the Learning Community meetings are offered at the site of one of your participating programs. If this isn't possible, think about other central places like libraries, conference rooms at your organization, schools, and community centers. It also helps to consider accessibility. If most people will drive, is there sufficient parking? If most people take public transit, is your meeting site readily accessible? Provide clear directions so everyone knows where go.

You will want to find a meeting place that has plenty of space for participants to be able to spread out and work in small groups. Classrooms and cafeterias are great for this – there is already a table to write on and plenty of seating. Auditorium settings are not ideal, however, because of the participatory nature of the Learning Communities.

If you're going to give a PowerPoint presentation, make sure that your meeting space has or can accommodate a computer, a projector, and a screen. If these aren't available, you can just distribute hand-outs of the slides.

### Preparation Timeline

*One month before Learning Community 1 (LC1):*

- If you haven't already, **reserve a space** to hold the Learning Community meeting.
- Tell your programs to **save the date** for LC1, review the purpose of Learning Communities and which/how many staff members you suggest attend, and ask them to RSVP. See the OSNAP email templates for Learning Community Invitations. In general, we've found that:
  - Having the site director or whoever is in charge of decision making at the site come makes it easier to plan for realistic change
  - The more staff the better—all are welcome
  - It's great to have someone who is responsible for food and/or schedule planning attend
- Distribute** the 5-Day Practice Assessment Tool and instruct people to fill them out following the attached directions. Alternately, direct them to the OSNAP website to complete the assessment by creating a My OSNAP account

We recommend waiting to distribute the Policy Assessment until Learning Community 2 but ask sites at this point to gather their documents and policies.

*At least 2 weeks before Learning Community 1:*

- Ensure** that all sites have copies of the assessments, a plan to complete them, and know to bring their completed assessments to LC1. You may also consider collecting the completed assessments yourself ahead of time, either by mail, email or in person.

*The week before Learning Community 1:*

- Remind sites when and where LC1 will be held. Send directions if necessary. You can do this via an email and/or phone call, whichever is the best way to communicate with the program staff. See the OSNAP email templates for ideas.
- Remind sites to bring their completed 5-Day Practice Assessment and documents/policies with them to LC1. Alternatively, have sites email/ send you their completed Assessments. In that case, you would bring the assessments to the Learning Community. Participants could also submit assessments via the My OSNAP portal. You can also track participants' progress in completing the assessments as the facilitator and send messages to prompt participants to complete.
- Ask sites to let you know how many staff members will be attending if it would help you to have an idea of how many people you need to prepare for (e.g. in order to make enough handouts or order food)
- Tweak the PowerPoint slides to your needs. You will want to change things like the times in the agenda, and you can add other information that might be relevant, like your contact information, at the end. Anything in {brackets} should be replaced with the information specific to you. For example, where the slides say {your organization name}, you should replace that with the correct information, like The Hogwarts School District.
- Run through a practice session of slides so that you are familiar with the order and flow of LC1.
- Create copies of all the handouts you will need. Assemble the binders for each program.

*The day before Learning Community 1:*

- Gather your supplies. See the materials list on the next page. To access the printable OSNAP materials, visit the OSNAP.org website: <https://osnap.org/learning-communities>
- Send a final reminder email.

## Learning Community Session 1

### Facilitator Materials:

- Sign in sheet
- PowerPoint file
- Laptop, power cord, connector cables
- Digital Projector
- Name tags [optional]
- Extra pens, pencils
- A few blank assessment forms (in case any groups forgot to bring theirs)
- Binder with a few copies of additional resources that some groups might find useful (e.g., water pitcher sanitation guidelines or the guide to working with food service personnel)
- Incentives/Prizes for participation [optional]
- Portable scanner/onsite access to a copier [optional- you can also use a free App for your phone called Genius Scan]
- Ideas for ice breakers and movement breaks

### Program Binders:

Prepare a binder for **each program** that contains:

- Copies of the site's completed assessments if you had them complete and submit them to you ahead of time. If you didn't collect them, sites should bring them to this meeting.
- Copies of the Tip Sheets and Fast Maps
- Two blank Action Plan worksheets
- Blank OSNAP Practice Assessment Areas for Improvement: Practice Report
- Food & Fun Curriculum, accessible here:  
<http://www.foodandfun.org/?p=learn/staff/info&subject=About>  
<http://foodandfun.org/resources/misc/ffcomplete.pdf>
- Food & Fun Handout (found on foodandfun.org)
- Snack Sense (found on foodandfun.org)
- Water pitcher sanitation guide
- Your business cards/contact information
- Evaluation form (one per person)
- Copies of the PowerPoint slides [one per person, optional]
- Wellness Innovation Grant applications [optional]
- Nutrition and Physical Activity Tracking Tool [optional] (found on foodandfun.org)
- Any additional resources you've selected from OSNAP.org

*It is a good idea to arrive at the workshop site early to set up the room and make sure your equipment works. Wear a name tag to identify yourself as a facilitator, and give participants*

### **What is your role as facilitator?**

As the session facilitator, your role is to:

- ◆ Guide sites through the session and providing ongoing, individualized feedback that facilitates skill development.
- ◆ Clarify the purpose of the session and the value participants will gain from attending.
- ◆ Present the material and engage the participants in contributing their experience, thoughts, and ideas in applying the concepts discussed.
- ◆ Keep the discussion focused on the material so that the learning objectives can be achieved within the time allotted.
- ◆ Create an environment for open exploration of ideas in which all participants are comfortable expressing their perspective.
- ◆ Emphasize the key learning points for each topic included in this facilitation guide, relating them to the participants' discussion.

*their own name tags as they arrive.*

## **Learning Community Session 1 Follow-Up**

After the session, read through the participant evaluations. Look for areas that you could improve on in your next Learning Community or ways that you can provide additional support outside of the Learning Community.

File away the Action Plans and sites' documents and policies that you collected. You will need to keep track of these and remember to bring them to Learning Community 2. Make copies of these documents if you collected the original from the group.

Send each site a specific follow up email, tailored for each site, attaching their Action Plan and any supportive materials (and/or links) that came out of the Learning Community. Even if the site took home a copy of their Action Plan, including a digital copy makes it even easier for them to keep track of it and find it for the next Learning Community, and we have found that it's useful to type up the Action Plans if possible. In typing up the plans, you can also note things that you might have talked about with the programs but didn't see mentioned on their action plans, as areas to bring up in the next meeting. Alternatively, if a program completed their assessments and action plans via My OSNAP, you can track progress within the portal and send messages to individual programs who are enrolled in the virtual learning community. See the OSNAP email templates for ideas on the follow-up email ([https://osnap.org/resource-library/?sf\\_s=email](https://osnap.org/resource-library/?sf_s=email)). If any programs didn't collect their policies and documents yet, remind them to do it as soon as possible.

## IV. Learning Community 2

### Pre-Learning Community 2 Planning

#### Preparation Timeline

*About a month before Learning Community 2 (LC2):*

- If you haven't already, reserve a space to hold LC2. See the "Logistics" section on page 6 for helpful tips on where to hold meetings and ideas for picking a convenient time.
- Revisit any important comments from LC1's evaluation; consider how they can be addressed in LC2.
- Contact any people who may be able to serve as speakers or additional experts that you would like to invite to LC2. Examples of some kinds of speakers are: Master PE teachers, local organizations that offer physical activity trainings, the local school wellness committee chair or the local school food service director.

*About 2 weeks before Learning Community 2:*

- Remind all sites:
  - If you don't have copies of the Action Plans from LC1, sites should bring their completed Action Plans with them.
  - To bring their binders from LC1 with them to LC2, as well as any documents/policies they have if they haven't turned copies in to you yet
  - When and where LC2 will be held. Send directions if necessary. You can do this via an email or phone call, whichever is the best way to communicate with the program staff. Have them contact you with any questions.
- Ask sites to let you know how many staff members will be attending to give you an idea of how many people you need to prepare for.

*The week before Learning Community 2:*

- Tweak the PowerPoint slides to your needs. You will want to change things like the times in the agenda, and you can add other information that might be relevant, like your contact information, at the end. Remember to replace any information in {brackets} with your specific details.
- Run through a practice session of slides so that you are familiar with the order and flow of LC2.
- Create copies of all the handouts you will need.

*The day before Learning Community 2:*

- Remind any sites that did not previously submit their Policy Assessments that they will need to bring the completed Policy Assessment with them to LC2. Remind participants that they can also complete the policy assessment via the My OSNAP portal.
- Locate the completed Action Plans from LC1, if you have copies. Make a copy of each plan so the programs will have 2 copies—one to give back to you, one to take with them. Alternatively, if you have access to a copier at the LC location, you can just make one copy at the end of the LC. Be sure to bring these LC1 Action Plans.
- Locate the documents and policies that you collected at LC1 and be sure to bring them to LC2.

- Gather your supplies. See the Materials list on the next page. To access the printable OSNAP materials, visit the OSNAP.org website: <https://osnap.org/learning-communities>

## **Learning Community Session 2**

### **Facilitator Materials:**

- Sign in sheet
- PowerPoint file
- Laptop, power cord, connector cables
- Digital Projector
- Name tags *[optional]*
- Extra pens, pencils
- Any materials needed for physical activity breaks that you may want to demonstrate
- Additional ice breaker/movement break ideas
- Incentives/Prizes for participation *[optional]*
- Resource/Toolkit Binder from LC1 with a few copies of additional resources that your organization has found helpful. Also stock the binder with extra copies of any resource that you've provided in LC1 or LC2.

### **Materials for the Programs:**

- Handouts **for each program:**
  - Resources for physical activity
  - OSNAP Guide for Writing After-School Wellness Policies
  - Copies of the LC 1 action plans for each site to be revised
  - Policy Assessment and programs' policies/documents (collected prior to or during Learning Community 1)
  - Policy Areas for Improvement
  - Evaluation form
  - Water and sugar-sweetened beverage Tip Sheets and Fast Maps *[optional]*
  - Whole grain, fruits and vegetables, and trans fat Tip Sheets and Fast Maps *[optional]*
- Copies of the PowerPoint slides *[optional]*
- Wellness Innovation Grant applications *[optional]*

## **Learning Community Session 2 Follow-Up**

Read through the participant evaluations. Look for areas that you could improve on in your next Learning Community or ways that you can provide additional support outside of the Learning Community.

Send each site a specific follow up email, tailored for each site, attaching the revised action plan (if you have a scanned/digital copy) and any supportive materials (and/or links) that came out of the Learning Community. Even if the site took home a copy of their Action Plan, including a digital copy makes it even easier for them to keep track of it and find it for the next Learning Community. See the OSNAP email templates for ideas ([https://osnap.org/resource-library/?sf\\_s=email](https://osnap.org/resource-library/?sf_s=email)).

In your email, you may also want to request copies of anything that was mentioned in the

discussion of what they've done so far. Are there letters, policies, flyers, menus, or other things that can be shared with the rest of the Learning Community as a resource? Can they type up a short summary of their success story? Ask for permission to share these materials with other sites; these materials will make great additions to your newsletter.



# V. Learning Community 3

## Pre-Learning Community 3 Planning

### Preparation Timeline

*About a month before Learning Community 3 (LC3):*

- If you haven't already, reserve a space to hold LC3. See the "Logistics" section on page 6 for helpful tips on where to hold meetings and ideas for picking a convenient time.
- Revisit any important comments from LC2's evaluation; consider how they can be addressed in LC3.

*About 2 weeks before Learning Community 3:*

- Remind all sites:
  - If you don't have copies of the Action Plans from LC2, sites should bring their completed Action Plans with them.
  - To bring their binders containing their materials from LC1 and LC2.
  - When and where LC3 will be held. Send directions if necessary. You can do this via an email or phone call, whichever is the best way to communicate with the program staff. Have them contact you with any questions.
- You can ask sites to let you know how many staff members will be attending to give you an idea of how many people you need to prepare for.

*The week before Learning Community 3:*

- Tweak the PowerPoint slides to your needs. You will want to change things like the times in the agenda, and you can add other information that might be relevant, like your contact information, at the end. Remember to replace any information in {brackets} with your specific details.
- Run through a practice session of slides so that you are familiar with the order and flow of LC3.
- Create copies of all the handouts you will need.

*The day before Learning Community 3:*

- Locate the completed Action Plans from LC2, if you have copies. Make a copy of each plan so the programs will have 2 copies—one to give back to you, one to take with them. Alternatively, if you have access to a copier at the LC location, you can just make one copy at the end of the LC. Be sure to bring these LC2 Action Plans.
- Gather your supplies. See the Materials list on the next page. To access the printable OSNAP materials, visit the OSNAP.org website: <https://osnap.org/learning-communities>

## Learning Community Session 3

### Facilitator Materials:

- Sign in sheet
- PowerPoint file
- Laptop, power cord, connector cables
- Digital Projector
- Name tags *[optional]*
- Extra pens, pencils
- Any materials needed for physical activity breaks that you may want to demonstrate
- Additional ice breaker/movement break ideas
- Incentives/Prizes for participation *[optional]*
- Resource/Toolkit Binder with a few copies of additional resources that some groups might find useful. Also stock the binder with extra copies of any resource that you have provided so far.

### Materials for the Programs:

- Handouts for each program:
  - “A 5 Step approach to Implementing and Sustaining Nutrition and Physical Activity Change” worksheet
  - Healthy Celebrations and Alternatives to Food as a Reward sheets (See links below)
  - Getting Staff on Board (available on foodandfun.org, link below)
  - Healthy Staff/Healthy Kids Tip Sheet
  - Language for Enhancing Job Descriptions to Attract Staff Committed to Healthy Child Development/ Interview Tips & Questions for Understanding Prospective Hires’ Commitment to Healthy Child Development
  - Copies of the LC 2 action plans for each site to be revised
  - Evaluation form
- Copies of the PowerPoint slides *[optional]*

## Learning Community Session 3 Follow-Up

### Links to printable resources:

#### *Getting Staff on Board*

<http://foodandfun.org/?p=learn/staff/info&subject=Getting+Other+Staff+on+Board>

#### *Alternatives to Food as a Reward (Handouts)*

[Add link to new resource]

#### *Healthy Celebrations (Handouts)*

[update with new resource round-up]

Read through the participant evaluations. Look for areas that you could improve on in any future Learning Community meetings that could be held or ways that you can provide additional support outside of the Learning Community.

Send each site a specific follow up email, tailored for each site, attaching the revised action plan (if you have a scanned/digital copy) and any supportive materials (and/or links) that

came out of the Learning Community. Even if the site took home a copy of their Action Plan, including a digital copy makes it even easier for them to keep track of it. See the OSNAP email templates for ideas.

In your email, you may also want to request copies of anything that was mentioned in the discussion of what they've done so far. Are there letters, policies, flyers, menus, or other things that can be shared with the rest of the Learning Community as a resource? Can they type up a short summary of their success story? Ask for permission to share these materials with other sites; these materials will make great additions to your newsletter.

Follow up with and finalize any paperwork that needs to be completed for issuing continuing education credit or college credit.

If you haven't already, begin planning an end-of-year OSNAP celebration. Make sure that treats are healthy! Make certificates for everyone who completed the OSNAP program. A template is available online here: <http://osnap.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Certificate-of-Completion.docx>.

## VI. Problems and Solutions

*A list of common problems and suggested solutions are outlined in the section below.*

**Problem: Programs' Action Plans are not linked directly to OSNAP Standards.**

Solution: You can express how glad you are that they are eager to effect change and try to figure out their thinking. Ask them how they see their goals relating to the OSNAP Standards. Maybe with a little change in wording, it will be much more clear that what they would like to do does reflect the OSNAP standards. You can encourage them to go back and review the standards, and to consider how goals related to the specific OSNAP Standards could also improve their program. Remind them that these standards are evidence-based, and suggest that if there are other changes they'd like to make, they can certainly do those, but ask them to focus on the OSNAP standards for now. You may want to especially emphasize this last point if you're doing an evaluation of the program. If they report to have already achieved all of the OSNAP goals, ask them whether all of their great practices are backed by policies.

**Problem: Programs aren't finishing their Action Plans.**

Solution: If most or all programs are struggling to finish, you should re-examine your agenda and consider how you could allocate more time to this process. More typically, however, you will find that some programs simply are faster than others. For programs that are moving more slowly, assess whether participants are having difficulties working well together (see above). Address these problems as needed. If they are struggling with ideas, refer them to the resource binder and the Tip Sheets and Fast Maps for ideas about concrete steps they might consider. You can also make it a point to sit down with any of the slower groups at the next Learning Community and provide them additional support. Consider bringing an additional facilitator who could continue to circulate through the other programs answering questions while you provide targeted support.

**Problem: Programs are not completing or bringing their assessments.**

Solution: Provide more personalized communication between the Learning Communities. Are they simply forgetting to bring the sheets with them? In that case, arrange for those programs to fax, scan and email, or mail you their assessments when they complete them, or you could offer to come pick them up. If programs are failing to do the assessments, underscore the importance of the assessments to figuring out what their programs' strengths and challenges are and how these assessments will be the building blocks for a healthier program. Brainstorm alternate people that might be able to help complete the assessments, or a way to set aside a specific block of time to do the assessment.

**Problem: Participants are not present for the entire Learning Community series.**

Solution: Encourage each program to bring multiple staff members to the LCs. Then, if someone is absent, there will still be someone who is able to remember the prior session and plans. If CEU credit is offered, remind everyone about the participation requirement.

**Problem: Participants show up tired at the end of a long day.**

Solution: Keep participants engaged and take activity breaks. Try to keep the tone of the Learning Community cheerful. For variety, move around the room while speaking and try to minimize “lectures” and focus on involving participants in discussions.

**Problem: Participants are not working well together.**

Solution: “Not working well together” can be defined in multiple ways. In some cases, participants will prefer to work separately from one another, thus eliminating meaningful discussions. In other cases, one participant will dominate with his/her ideas or opinions, while others remain silent. In yet other situations, site participants will disagree strongly with one another about the best course of action. You should encourage staff members to work as a team to brainstorm and try out solutions. Remind groups that “shared responsibility” benefits both the children and staff members. If people have very different ideas about the appropriate step in an action plan, you can suggest that they each try out different strategies and then report back. In groups where the discussion seems imbalanced, you— as the facilitator—can linger with a that group for a little longer, making an effort to ask quieter participants about their ideas or helping to jump start the discussion with questions if everyone is working separately.

**Problem: Participants react negatively to a facilitator.**

Solution: Your age, gender, nationality, appearance, experience, and/or behavior can sometimes be the focus of negative reactions from participants. As a facilitator, it is important to understand these potential pitfalls, and to adjust your approach accordingly. Regardless of the specific issue, the key is to anticipate these potential problems, to seek background information on the cultural practices of participants’ countries in advance of the workshop, and to be willing to adjust your approach as needed.

**Problem: Programs are moving through the material too quickly.**

Solution: It is possible that these programs are being dominated by a single member, thus curtailing meaningful discussion. Alternatively, all participants from a certain site might be treating the discussions too superficially. As a facilitator, it is your role to assess these issues and intervene appropriately. If nearly all programs are working ahead of schedule, it is possible that your agenda allows too much time. If this is the case, ask participants for ideas on what it would be useful for them to discuss. If, on the other hand, only certain programs are working ahead of schedule, you should assess whether these participants are discussing fully each topic. If it seems like there are groups that are thorough and fast, then have those groups that finish first share with one another (before reporting back to the larger group) while giving the rest of the sites a chance to finish planning.

**Problem: Programs’ Action Plan items are not feasible.**

Solution: There is a balance between ambitious change and possible change, and especially as sites begin the change process, feelings of success can be really encouraging. In some cases, programs will create Action Plan items that are not reasonable, given their resources (time, position in the organization, funding). They might feel excited to “do it all” on the first try or they might have an unrealistic perception of their limitations. As a facilitator, you should assist programs to choose Action Plan items that are feasible. If possible, try to get a good understanding of each site’s available resources and listen to their plans with their unique situation in mind. Encourage sites to be realistic about barriers and then spend time discussing how to overcome those challenges so that goals can be achieved. If a program is

committed to a big goal, make sure they're thinking about smaller, incremental steps that are needed to reach this big goal. Be sure to touch base with the program at the next Learning Community.

**Problem: There are significant language barriers.**

*Solution:* In situations with significant language barriers, remember to speak slowly, and avoid complicated sentence structure and/or vocabulary. Providing as much written material as possible (e.g., copies of the PowerPoint slides) might be helpful in allowing participants to go back and forth through the material at their own speed. Some of the Food & Fun materials are provided in Spanish and Chinese. If possible, you might also recruit a co-facilitator who speaks the language. If you've done OSNAP before, you could reach out to an outstanding former participant and ask if they would like to be a co-facilitator. This co-facilitator, in addition to providing general additional support to the whole Learning Community, can be especially helpful in working one-on-one with groups during work with the action plans.

## VII. Offering Continuing Education, Professional Development, or College Credit

### Continuing Education/Professional Development

You may be in a situation where offering continuing education or professional development credits for attending your Learning Community meetings is an option—and a powerful incentive! Full participation in Learning Communities can equal 10 credit hours if you supplement the Learning Community sessions with an additional one-hour training in order to reach 10 hours. A specific training in one of the curricula, like Food & Fun Afterschool, or physical activity programs, like SPARK, can fill this additional time.

If you are unsure whether the time in Learning Communities is eligible for professional development credits, we encourage you to contact whoever is responsible for managing the professional development process for your organization. This could be a school district, which often works with partnering organization and agencies that provide professional development. Since policies vary, you should contact the district to see if it's possible for participation in the Learning Communities to count toward professional development requirements. Some localities simply have a form that staff fill out to request professional development credit for a particular activity.

Another option is to apply to an agency that licenses afterschool programs and become a registered course that provides continuing education units (CEUs). In Massachusetts, for example, MAAEYC governs this process.

You could begin by looking for The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) affiliate in your state here: <http://www.naeyc.org/affiliates/offices>.

There may be fees associated with offering a course. You may also be expected to have certain credentials as an instructor, and you may have to prepare a syllabus or some other description of the course.

We provide an example of **attendance tracking materials** and **evaluation forms** that were used in offering a professional development course. Available online here:

<https://osnap.org/learning-communities/>

### College Credit

In the past, the OSNAP Initiative has worked with local colleges to offer course credit for attending and fully participating in the series of Learning Communities. If you have a local partner who works in higher education, you may wish to explore this as a possibility, especially if you know that members of your staff are enrolled as students. If you don't have an existing partner, you could consider surveying your staff to see how many would be interested in pursuing college credit and get their suggestions for partner schools

## VIII. Online Resources

- ✓ Alliance for a Healthier Generation: <http://www.healthiergeneration.org>
  - A joint venture between the American Heart Association and the Clinton Foundation with a mission to reduce childhood obesity to empower kids nationwide to make healthy lifestyle choices
- ✓ Prevention Research Center on Nutrition and Physical Activity at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health (HPRC): <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/prc/>
  - The HPRC works with community partners to develop, implement, evaluate, and disseminate cost-effective strategies that will improve population nutrition and physical activity, prevent excess weight gain and chronic disease, and advance health equity.
- ✓ Let's Move: <https://letsmove.obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/>
  - Michelle Obama's initiative to provide parents with the support they need to make healthy family choices, provide healthier school foods, help kids to be more physically active, and make healthy, affordable food available
- ✓ Nemours Foundation's Center for Children's Health Media: <http://www.kidshealth.org>
  - Doctor-approved information for families that includes sites for parents, children, and teenagers and provides a variety of health information, including nutrition and fitness topics. Also has Spanish resources available!
- ✓ The Nutrition Source: [www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource)
  - An online nutrition news and resource center
- ✓ U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) resources for child care providers:
  - Healthy Meals Resource System, <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/afterschool-snacks>
  - Child and Adult Care Food Program, <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp>
  - MyPlate, <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/>
- ✓ Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition (We Can!): [www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/)
  - Resources for families & communities to help prevent childhood overweight



## IX. Nutrition and Physical Activity

### Glossary of Terms

**Commercial Broadcast TV/Movies** is any screen time shown primarily for entertainment purposes; this includes shows or movies without commercials but shown for entertainment purposes.

**Digital Devices** includes computers (desktop, laptop, tablets like iPads, etc.) cell phones, handheld game systems, iPods, and televisions.

**Groups of children** are those that are formally designated by the program, i.e., groups that are determined by age, grade, gender etc. for activities. Questions that refer to “groups of children” do not refer to smaller, more informal groups of friends formed by the children themselves.

**Instructional Computer/Digital Device Use** is time on a digital device (usually a computer) for educational purposes. An instructor must be overseeing and guiding what students are doing on the computers, and educational computer use emphasizes academic enrichment and instruction. For example, this type of computer use could involve games that promote acquisition of math skills, or use of a word processing application to write a paper or story. In general, unsupervised time on the internet or playing computer games is considered *recreational* computer use, not instructional computer use.

**Moderate physical activity** is any activity requiring more movement than sitting or standing (including activities such as walking, stretching, running, or throwing).

**Out-of-School Time (or OST)** programs can happen before school, after school, during vacation periods, or during the summer.

**Outside drinks and food** are items that are brought in from home, outside restaurants or convenience stores, purchased from vending machines on site, or distributed by program partners during activities. This would include any food or drink that is not part of the afterschool snack program, including foods used in celebrations.

**Screen Time** includes time watching television and DVDs, using computers, and/or playing video games. This includes time on hand-held electronic devices like phones,

**Sugary drinks** are drinks with sugar added to them. They include soda, sweetened iced teas, fruit punches, fruit drinks (e.g., lemonade), sports drinks, sweetened water (e.g., Vitamin water), and any 100% juice greater than 4 ounces (a half a cup) in size.

**Trans fats** are in any food items that contain "partially hydrogenated vegetable oil" on the list of ingredients.

**Vigorous physical activity** is any activity requiring more energy than walking (including activities such as playground free play, jogging, or swimming).

**Water served** refers to drinking water that is distributed as part of the program snack, either via pitchers, bottles, or a cooler or water jug in the snack area. This does NOT include water children drink from a water fountain or from coolers outside of the snack room and snack time.

**Whole grains** are foods that contain a whole grain as the first ingredient on the label. Examples of whole grains are whole wheat, whole corn, barley, oats, and rye.

### *A final note...*

We are always interested in how these materials are used in the field. If you have success stories, comments, or suggestions for us, please let us know!

Contact us at: [hprc@hsph.harvard.edu](mailto:hprc@hsph.harvard.edu)