

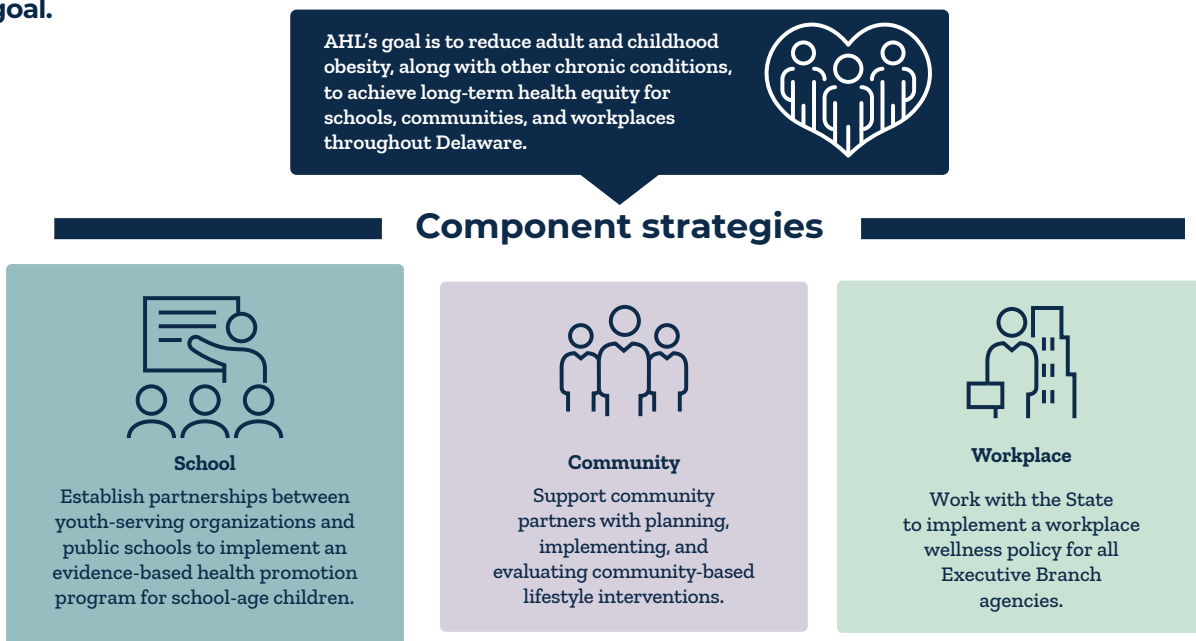
Focus on Community-School Partnerships

Background

Advancing Healthy Lifestyles: Chronic Disease, Health Equity, & COVID-19 ("Advancing Healthy Lifestyles" or "AHL") is a statewide initiative launched in January 2021 by the Delaware Division of Public Health's Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Obesity Prevention Program (DPH-PANO). DPH-PANO introduced the AHL initiative as COVID-19 exacerbated the health burdens already faced by many Delawareans. The goal of AHL is to reduce obesity and other chronic conditions to achieve health equity among all Delaware residents. Figure 1 shows AHL's goal and the three components of its strategy. This brief, the third in a [series](#), focuses on the work of partnerships between youth-serving organizations and schools.

AHL is facilitating the connection between youth-serving organizations and schools to support the health and well-being of youth and to strengthen community partnerships. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) highlighted partnerships between school and community organizations, including providers of out-of-school-time programs such as before-school, after-school, and summer programs, as a strategy to address health and educational inequities that widened during the COVID-19 pandemic. Under AHL, these partnerships focus on the link between a community-based, youth-serving organization and the health and social-emotional well-being of participating youth.

Figure 1. Serving school-age youth is one of three strategic components to achieve AHL's goal.





Fostering Partnerships to Support Youth

Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware (BGCDE) is an integral partner for reaching the large number of youth in the out-of-school-time landscape statewide. BGCDE's extensive network, variety of programs, and relationship with public, private, and charter schools is a valuable part of the effort to strengthen the health and well-being of youth in the state. The organization has a long history of delivering diverse educational programs and social activities that challenge and improve the mind and body. With over 40 sites, half of those at schools, BGCDE has the potential to reach upward of 30,000 Delaware youth ages 3 to 18.

BGCDE selected the **Triple Play** program to implement with elementary-school-age youth. This healthy lifestyle program focuses on the three components of the self: mind, body, and soul. The program has demonstrated effectiveness in improving participating youth's outcomes in health and social well-being. The goals of the program are to:

1. Improve youth's knowledge of healthy habits, good nutrition, and physical fitness
2. Increase the number of hours per day youth engage in physical activity and
3. Strengthen youth's ability to interact positively with others and form healthy relationships.

School Partners

"In spring 2022, BGCDE deployed the Triple Play program at three Delaware schools—Richardson Park Elementary in Wilmington, Sunnyside Elementary in Smyrna, and H.O. Brittingham Elementary in Milton—in each county. Schools were selected based on the number of students, readiness for program implementation, and BGCDE's existing relationship with the schools. The schools vary in their student diversity and geographic setting. Piloting Triple Play in both rural and urban locations will build a case for the utility of the approach in different settings across the state (page 3).



Richardson Park Elementary School

District: Red Clay
County: New Castle
Enrollment: Over 550 students
Demographics: An urban school with most students identifying as a minority. Roughly half of the students identify as Hispanic or Latino, and nearly a quarter of students identify as Black.

Sunnyside Elementary School

District: Smyrna
County: Kent
Enrollment: Over 550 students
Demographics: A rural school with just over half of the students identifying as White and over a quarter of students identifying as Black.

H. O. Brittingham Elementary School

District: Cape Henlopen
County: Sussex
Enrollment: Over 400 students
Demographics: A rural school with nearly three-quarters of the students identifying as White and about one in 10 students identifying as Black.



Source: Delaware Department of Education



Programs for Community-School Partnership: Triple Play and Wowzers!





Wowzers! is the teen workforce initiative run by BGCDE. Wowzers! participants are hired and trained to run programs and lead lessons for younger club members. After two trainings and eight sessions working with younger members, the teen members receive a stipend. Wowzers! allows teens to fit valuable work experience into their busy schedules and enables younger members to participate in enriching activities. By including Wowzers! in the delivery of Triple Play, teens model curriculum-defined behaviors to younger students. In addition, student interns from local universities and colleges (University of Delaware, Goldey-Beacom College, Wilmington University, Delaware State University, and Delaware Technical Community College) will provide extra adult supervision during afternoon hours.



Implementation Progress




To date, three BGCDE locations have implemented two 10-week Triple Play cycles. The teams delivered the Triple Play curriculum once a week, with lessons on physical activity, healthy eating, and mental wellness. The Wowzers! and interns delivered the lessons, supervised activities, and collected data for the evaluation. Over the course of two cycles, 148 youth participated in the Triple Play program at the three locations (Table 1).

Table 1. Triple Play program participation, Delaware, 2021

	GENDER	Total
	Boys	74
	Girls	74
	AGE	
	5-6 year olds	28
	7-8 year olds	62
	9-11 year olds	58
	RACE AND ETHNICITY	
	White	64
	Black	49
	Hispanic or Latino	16
	Two or more	19
	PROGRAM SITE	
	Richardson Park	33
	Sunnyside	69
	H.O. Brittingham	46

Source: Boys and Girls Clubs of DE Monthly Statistical Report (MSR)

Table 2. Triple Play lessons: examples

	Category	Activity	Session Objective	Skills Developed	Duration
	Nutrition	Categorizing Food with MyPlate	Through an “around the world” card activity, participants will be able to name the five MyPlate food groups and place foods in the appropriate category.	Improve youth’s ability to choose healthy foods	60 min.
	Physical health	Collaborative Choreography	Participants will integrate many locomotor and dance skills by creating a group dance. This activity allows ample time to integrate the social-emotional skill of teamwork.	Improve youth’s locomotor, acrobatic, and teamwork skills	60 min.
	Mind/social Emotional health	Identifying Emotions and Empathy	Using a Mood Meter and emotion words, participants will be able to express their own feelings and begin to recognize and understand others’ feelings.	Improve youth’s abilities to identify others’ emotions and to promote empathy	50 min.



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