

Kennedy Day School

Franciscan Children's
30 Warren Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02135

Wellness

Kennedy Day School recognizes the importance of promoting wellness in all aspects of the learning environment. Wellness initiatives hold particular significance for the students of the Kennedy Day School, who present with complex, multiple special needs and challenges in the areas of health, cognition, physical/motor/mobility, communication, vision, hearing, sensory integration and social/interaction. The School serves students with extensive, acute and chronic health care problems, including seizure disorder, respiratory impairment (severe asthma, tracheostomy, ventilator dependence), orthopedic, neurologic, metabolic /nutritional disorders and other congenital anomalies. Students benefit from specialized and integrative support strategies, equipment and resources to promote learning, communication and meaningful interaction within the community.

At the Kennedy Day School, specific curriculum components, as well as everyday activities, are designed to provide students with ongoing opportunities to become informed and enthused about healthy choices. Interrelated physical and mental health needs are supported through the collaborative efforts of members of the teaching faculty and specialized support services, in conjunction with families and identified community-based resources. Personal management and interpersonal considerations are examined to reduce risk and promote effective communication and safety for each student. Individualized Education Program (IEP) plans specify relevant student learning strategies, outcomes and supports. Specific areas of consideration include body systems, physical development and care, nutrition, physical activity and fitness, social skills development and safety. Special education teachers coordinate efforts on behalf of students in all age groupings from preschool through high school. Direct and/or consultative student services mold and support these endeavors and include Health Care Services, Adapted Physical Education, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Psychology, Speech Therapy, Feeding Team and Family Resource Services.

Wellness is fostered in a collaborative environment that celebrates each of us, inclusive of our differences and commonalities. Throughout the school environment and incorporated within all areas of educational planning, Kennedy Day School seeks to:

- inform young consumers,
- promote nutrition and nutritional meal planning,
- foster healthy food choices and eating practices,
- encourage participation in a variety of fun and exciting physical fitness activities,
- reduce stress,
- promote social awareness and friendship and
- holistically advocate safe practices.

Annual professional staff development and training include identified topical needs in:

- physical health,
- personal care and nutritional support,
- curriculum and instruction,
- supervision and safety,
- sensory, motor and mobility considerations,
- behavioral health strategies and
- social skills support.

The Parent Advisory Group assists the School in identifying under/unmet needs, as well as new and/or under utilized resources relative to the wellness initiative, in addition to other areas of school life. Families are able to offer the School and one another a broad view of related community-based resources and opportunities, particularly because enrolled students reside in over thirty different cities and towns within the Commonwealth. Parents share unique perspectives, strategies and experiences regarding their endeavors to support and advocate on behalf of their children with severe, multiple special educational needs and challenges. On an ongoing basis, Kennedy Day School also reaches out to representatives of those thirty or more school districts to directly confer and collaborate relative to wellness initiatives and community resources.

As a part of Franciscan Children's, Kennedy Day School draws upon expertise and support from many disciplines to enhance wellness endeavors. Individually and collaboratively, Human Resources, Employee Health and Inservice Education promote positive wellness practices among all employees, including School Faculty. Nursing, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech & Language Therapy, Nutrition Services, Audiology, Behavioral Health and Dining Services lend their specific areas of expertise to student, parent and faculty education. Franciscan Children's provides supports and strengthens ongoing collaborative efforts with our local community stakeholders.

Food Program: Franciscan Children's Dining Services is responsible to ensure that child nutrition programs comply with all federal, state and local requirements and are accessible to all children. All foods made available adhere to food safety and security guidelines. Food preparation and presentation are designed to encourage the consumption of nutrient dense foods to promote healthy eating patterns. School lunch menus are analyzed using USDA approved standards. The dietician makes current educational materials available for display purposes in the School lunchroom.

Dining Services is committed to bringing healthy food options to both students and staff. Services are explicitly designed to assist students in identifying and exploring an expanded array of healthy food options. Staff members receive inservice education relative to healthy food choices and assist students in choosing a more nutritional and well balanced diet. Students are given choices among healthy food options and are encouraged to try new food items on a daily basis. Special care is given to adhere to individual student dietary requirements, including the consistency of the food and beverages offered to students.

In addition to a midday meal, opportunities to explore healthy breakfast and snack food options are provided. Specific education is provided to all members of the school community regarding the components of a complete and healthy breakfast and lunch, as well as considerations in selecting healthy snack options. Instruction and support are provided regarding the interrelationship between physical activity and healthy eating practices to support health and wellness in a positive interactive environment.

Standards Based Nutrition Education: The Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks provide standards for nutrition education. Key components of multisensory learning experiences offer students mechanisms to:

- Explore a variety of foods that support healthy bodies.
- Recognize, choose, sample and/or consume a variety of wholesome foods.
- Explore food choices for snacks and meals from each category of the USDA Food Guide. Match food choices to the categories of the USDA Food Guide Pyramid.
- Recognize, portion and or consume nutritious foods in serving sizes that meet personal needs for body health and growth.
- Recognize, choose and/or consume meals that are nutritionally balanced.
- Visit local food producers and/or sample local food products.
- Link food items to sources and/or food webs.
- Prepare and/or sample a variety of healthy food choices that reflect regional seasonal changes.

- Recognize and/or demonstrate personal hygiene and practices for safe food handling, preparation and storage, as precautions against possible food contamination and related illness, including (1) clean hands, utensils and surfaces, (2) separation of ingredients preparation to guard against potential cross contamination and (3) temperature control in cooking, chilling and defrosting of food.

Standards Based Physical Activity and Fitness Education: The Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks provide standards for physical activity and fitness education. Learning experiences are geared to help students acquire and refine a variety of manipulative, locomotor and non-locomotor movement skills and to utilize principles of training and conditioning related to biomechanics and exercise physiology, in order to support wellness throughout their lives. To enhance motor skills, students:

- Orient toward and make physical contact with adapted physical education, fitness and recreation materials for increasing periods of time.
- Manipulate materials to explore and gain important sensory information and utilize to engage in an adapted physical education.
- Request activity continuance in accordance with preferences and anticipate turn as a group member or when presented with materials
- Choose among presented materials/activity alternatives and extend length of time and/or number of consecutive trials of an activity
- Match materials to corresponding activities and follow activity steps sequentially
- Apply movement concepts by throwing and catching different objects, kicking and hitting a target and using a variety of manipulative, locomotor and non-locomotor skills as individuals and in teams
- Perform rhythm routines, including dancing, to demonstrate fundamental movement skills
- Evaluate personal performance and levels of satisfaction relative to an activity
- Engage in adapted physical education, fitness and recreation activities in and out of the school venue

Monitoring and Evaluation: The Director of Dining Services at Franciscan Children’s joins with the Program Director and Health Care Coordinator of the Kennedy Day School to assume responsibility for ensuring that the School’s Wellness Policy is in compliance with applicable federal and state mandates, and that the policy is fully implemented. The School Psychologist, Family Resource Coordinator, Special Education Service Coordinator and Adapted Physical Education Teacher additionally provide crucial input relative to all aspects of Wellness Program development, monitoring and evaluation.

The following monitoring and evaluation measures provide assessments of the Kennedy Day School Wellness Program:

- Quarterly consultation with Franciscan Children’s Nutritionist to review the Kennedy Day School menu, food offerings, and any alterations/changes indicated.
- Annual School faculty evaluation of staff inservice offerings related to the Kennedy Day School Wellness Program
- Annual Kennedy Day School faculty survey of the school's nutrition promotion and education, wellness and physical activity program elements
- Annual curriculum review
- Annual parent survey of School initiatives

The results of these assessments are shared with faculty, students, parents, professional colleagues and community constituents and utilized to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas of the Wellness Program in need of further development.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Kennedy Day School
Summary of 2015 Wellness Program Activities
Monitoring and Evaluation

The Director of Dining Services at Franciscan Children's joins with the Program Director and Health Care Coordinator of the Kennedy Day School to ensure that the School's Wellness Policy is in compliance with applicable federal and state mandates, and that the policy is fully implemented. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. The School Psychologist, Family Resource Coordinator, Special Education Service Coordinator and Adapted Physical Education Teacher provide crucial input relative to all aspects of Wellness Program development, monitoring and evaluation.

The following monitoring and evaluation measures are designed to provide ongoing assessment of the Kennedy Day School Wellness Program:

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As part of the Franciscan Hospital for Children, Kennedy Day School has welcomed the new Director of Dining Services. Meetings have focused on menu planning and service to students, in keeping with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Office for Nutrition, Health and Safety Programs.

Inservice offerings related to the Kennedy Day School Wellness Program have recently included:

- Philosophy, Organization, Practices and Goals of Service
- Interdisciplinary Planning and Collaboration
- MA Curriculum Frameworks, IEPs & Instruction

- School Meals & Nutrition
- Student Allergies: Precautions, Management
- Updates In Tube Feeding Protocols
- Safe and Healthy School Environment

- Social Skills Development/Friendship
- Assistive Technology For Learning, Communication and Sensory Experiences
- Safe Computer and Internet Use
- Mental Health Fair
- Safeguards for student emotional, physical and psychological well-being
- Strengths and Humor In Child Development: Research and Practice> What We Know and Where We Can Grow

Faculty members are offered a minimum of twenty-two hours of inservice annually for professional development. The first seven topics delineated above are a subset of the topics updated and presented

annually. The last six offerings reflect initiatives in the broader view of health and wellness and were particularly well received. The most recently requested addition to inservice education in the area of wellness is: *Best Practices in Providing Ongoing and Interdisciplinary Feeding Support for Students with Significant Multiple Disabilities*.

On a daily basis, faculty input is solicited regarding nutrition promotion and suggestions for improvements on current offerings. It is noted that flavor has improved and new items have been added to menus. Suggestions have been made regarding food texture and expanded menu options.

An interdisciplinary team approach is utilized to address the individual needs of students in all areas, including adapted physical education. Given the broad range and complexity of the special educational needs of enrolled students, skills, materials and methodology, both within and among groups, are individualized. Groups are well-paced, fun and cooperative, imbedding individualized goals to build skills and support generalization across settings.

Some activities involve combining class groups to enhance the overall learning environment for students, so they can practice and perfect skills among an extended peer group. Adapted physical education activities have been expanded to include a broader range of fitness activities, skills and team sports. Skills are creatively linked and combined to provide predictable routines that help students learn through repetition and consistency. Range of motion and flexibility for fitness are elements of every session. Faculty members actively listen and consistently seek cooperative consensus and a sense of community.

During the upcoming school year, Kennedy Day School will continue to focus on building and documenting the adapted physical education curriculum, integrating the use of assistive technology and sensory-based activities to enhance student access and meaningful participation, and working collaboratively with other school-based disciplines for ongoing skill development and generalization.

All parents of children enrolled in the Kennedy Day School are invited throughout the year to participate in Parent Advisory Group activities to provide a forum for sharing information among and between parents and school representatives, including feedback, support and ideas regarding school policies and program implementation. Parents advise the school on matters that pertain to the education, health, and safety of students enrolled in the program and serve as a clearinghouse for information concerning special education and related services for individuals with disabilities. Parent participants are joined by members of the Kennedy Day School staff for meetings and presentations on a variety of parent identified topics. During the school year, parents learned more about the Family Ties of Massachusetts project of the Federation for Children with Special Needs, as well as the "Franciscan Helps Families Connect (FHFC) Project" at Franciscan Children's and the Massachusetts Sibling Support Network. Parents shared their perspectives on accessible recreation resources on campus and beyond, providing extremely positive feedback regarding Kennedy Day School student participation in the Adapted Baseball and Adapted Bike programs on campus. Individually, parents have sought more input on ways to provide feeding support to their children with significant and complex special needs and more menu options that are in keeping with the individual needs and preferences of their children. Collaboration is ongoing and beneficial, as there is always more that can be accomplished on behalf of the students of the Kennedy Day School.

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