

# SPARK and the Community Transformation Grants (CTGs): A Resource Guide

SPARK is a research-based organization that disseminates evidence-based Physical Education, Physical Activity and Coordinated School Health programs targeting pre-K through 12th grade students in and out of school, and our programs have been proven to **WORK** and **LAST**.



## This document includes information that shows:

*Note: Click on any of the sections below to jump straight to the page.*

1. SPARK Alignment With CTGs Strategic Directions and Strategies ..... **Pg. 1**
2. Alignment To CDC's Long-Term Measures For Addressing Physical Activity and Nutrition ..... **Pg. 6**
3. Why Should You Partner With SPARK? ..... **Pg. 7**
4. Deliverables Aligned To CDC Prevention Outcomes ..... **Pg. 8**
5. SPARK Evaluation And Assessment ..... **Pg. 10**

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# 1. SPARK Alignment With CTGs Strategic Directions and Strategies

## Strategic Direction 2: Active Living and Healthy Eating

Goals: Prevent and Reduce Obesity, Increase Physical Activity; Improve Nutrition in Accordance with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010.

### Strategy 1:

Improve jurisdiction-wide nutrition, physical activity, and screen time policies and practices in early child care settings.

### **SPARK Alignment to Strategy 1:**

#### **Physical Activity:**

The SPARK Early Childhood (EC) program offers all of the curricula, training and other tools/resources required to provide quality physical activity in childcare settings. The SPARK EC program being disseminated today applies the lessons learned from years of rigorous research and subsequent field-testing in the “real-world.”

SPARK EC provides children ages 3-5 with high activity, academically integrated, enjoyable movement opportunities that foster social and motor development and enhance school readiness skills.

SPARK EC aligns with the following “**CDC Recommended Evidence- and Practice-Based Strategies**” outlined in the application for this grant:

- *Preventing Childhood Obesity in Early Care and Education Programs* by the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education ([Click Here](#))

For more information on SPARK EC research projects and/or program components, see the Deliverables section of this document ([Click Here](#)) or visit [www.sparkpe.org/early-childhood/](http://www.sparkpe.org/early-childhood/).

*Note: SPARK EC aligns with the Healthy People 2020 Health Outcome Targets listed for this strategy in the CTGs “Strategic Directions and Examples” section of the application.*

#### **Nutrition:**

Healthy Kids Challenge (HKC), SPARK’s Nutrition Services partner, offers an early childcare training program for providers. A full day training provides assessment of current policy, program, and practice standards currently in place and guides the development of a strategic action plan for implementing national, evidence-based best practices for nutrition in the early childcare setting.

For more information on the HKC program for early child care settings, see the Deliverables section of this document ([Click Here](#)).

*Note: SPARK/HKC aligns with the Healthy People 2020 Health Outcome Targets listed for this strategy in the CTGs “Strategic Directions and Examples” section of the application.*

### Strategy 2:

Improve nutrition quality of foods and beverages served or available in schools consistent with the Institute of Medicine's Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools.

- a) Increase access to fruits and vegetables in schools.
- b) Decrease amount of sodium in foods in schools.
- c) Reduce access to competitive low nutrition foods and beverages.

### **SPARK Alignment to Strategy 2, 2a, 2b and 2c:**

Healthy Kids Challenge (HKC), SPARK's Nutrition Services partner, takes best practices and strategies along with evidence-based recommendations of CDC, NIH, American Academy of Pediatrics and USDA to work with schools and school staff to implement quality nutrition education programs and policies. Coming fall 2011, USDA will be releasing new guidelines for the school meal program, which is expected to be consistent with the IOM Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools. The sweeping changes, some of the first in decades, will require a multi-faceted approach to implementation.

Healthy Kids Challenge has served as a trainer and support to school food service directors and their staff for thirteen years, and has worked closely with many state departments of education and the TEAM Nutrition program to provide customized simple solution sets for meeting school meal program guidelines effectively.

For more information on the HKC programs including the "Ignite a Healthy Environment" Program, see the Deliverables section of this document ([Click Here](#)).

*Note: SPARK/HKC aligns with the Healthy People 2020 Health Outcome Targets listed for this strategy in the CTGs "Strategic Directions and Examples" section of the application.*

### Strategy 3:

Improve the quality and amount of physical education and physical activity in schools.

- a) Increase the amount of time students spend in moderate or vigorous physical activity during physical education class.
- b) Increase the total number of physical activity opportunities implemented at school facilities, including daily recess, intramurals/physical activity clubs, and walk or bicycle to and from school.

### **SPARK Alignment to Strategy 3, 3a and 3b:**

SPARK's K-12 Physical Education and After School programs have been **proven to increase the quantity AND quality of physical activity** before, during, and after school, as well as increase the amount of time students spend in moderate or vigorous physical activity (MVPA).

- The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reviewed and found evidence that the SPARK program increased and maximized physical activity during PE classes ([Click Here](#) for the study).

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- SPARK was identified by the CDC as a national model for programs designed to increase physical activity and combat childhood obesity in their report [School-Based Physical Education: An Action Guide](#).
- **SPARK WORKS.** Over 45 publications have demonstrated that students who participate in SPARK improve: ([Click here for a full list of publications](#))
  - MVPA Levels (exceeding 50% of class time)
  - Fitness Levels
  - Sport Skills
  - Enjoyment of PE
  - Academic Achievement
  - Activity Levels Away from School
- **SPARK LASTS.** A 2005 paper in Research Quarterly proved SPARK sustainability/ institutionalization ([Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport, 2005](#))
- SPARK has experience partnering with SafeWalk and similar Walk to School events, and can provide guidance on policy and collaborators. ([Click here](#) for the study)
- SPARK aligns with the following “**CDC Recommended Evidence- and Practice-Based Strategies**” outlined in the application for this grant:
- [Click Here](#) for SPARK alignment with NASPE National Standards for PE
- [Click Here](#) for SPARK K-8 PECAT Reports
- SPARK is referenced in the CDC’s Report: *Strategies to Improve the Quality of Physical Education* ([Click Here](#))

For more information on the SPARK K-12 PE or SPARK After School programs, see the Deliverables section of this document ([Click Here](#)) or visit [www.sparkpe.org](http://www.sparkpe.org).

*Note: SPARK aligns with the Healthy People 2020 Health Outcome Targets listed for this strategy in the CTGs “Strategic Directions and Examples” section of the application.*

### Strategy 5:

Increase availability and affordability of healthful foods in institutional settings, workplaces, senior centers, and government facilities.

### **SPARK Alignment to Strategy 5:**

#### **Healthy Kids Challenge (HKC)**

HKC, SPARK’s Nutrition Services partner, has experience working with school administration and food service staff to assist with vendors/ purchasing for the meal program as well as implementation of healthy fundraisers, foods in school stores, concessions, and event policies. HKC is a liaison with food companies to help promote and encourage healthy, cost-effective food options. Guidelines on how to work with food vendors is a training option for school food service teams. Healthy food quantity food service purchasing practices are applied in working with senior center, institutional settings or the workplace.

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## **H.U.M.A.N. (Helping Unite Man And Nutrition) Healthy Vending**

H.U.M.A.N. Healthy Vending, SPARK's healthy vending partner, improves healthy vending in schools across America while giving 10% of proceeds back to charitable causes that fight childhood obesity. H.U.M.A.N.'s main benefits to schools include:

- A healthy vending catalog of over 5,000 healthy vending snacks, meals and drinks which meet current nutritional standards
- \$500 vouchers that can be redeemed for SPARK products & services (participating schools)
- Eco-friendly school vending machines that educate students about nutrition through video-playing, digital LCD screens on the front of the machine

To learn more about HKC or H.U.M.A.N. Healthy Vending contact SPARK.

*Note: HKC and HUMAN Healthy Vending align with the Healthy People 2020 Health Outcome Targets listed for this strategy in the CTGs "Strategic Directions and Examples" section of the application.*

### **Strategy 8:**

Increase opportunities for physical activity in communities and workplaces.

#### **SPARK Alignment to Strategy 8:**

The SPARK Wellness for Staff program is designed to promote increased physical activity opportunities in the workplace for adults. The Wellness for Staff program addresses "adult specific" health issues and offers authentic and effective prevention strategies. Healthy children are better learners and adults who maintain a work/life balance have more energy, sleep better, and serve as healthy lifestyle role models for their children and students.

Program components include physical activity, nutrition and stress reduction. To learn more about the SPARK Wellness for Staff program see the Deliverables section of this document ([Click Here](#)) or visit [www.sparkpe.org/coordinated-school-health/wellness-for-staff/](http://www.sparkpe.org/coordinated-school-health/wellness-for-staff/).

*Note: SPARK aligns with the Healthy People 2020 Health Outcome Targets listed for this strategy in the CTGs "Strategic Directions and Examples" section of the application.*

### **Strategy 9:**

Active Living and Healthy Innovative Strategies

#### **SPARK Alignment to Strategy 9:**

Do you have an innovative strategy? SPARK has worked in many unique and customized projects and is flexible enough to work on your project also! Examples include:

- [North Carolina Statewide PE Implementation: A Public Health Success Story](#)
- [Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield & SPARK After School](#)

### Strategic Direction 3: Increased Use of High Impact Quality Clinical Preventive Services

Goals: Increase control of high blood pressure and high cholesterol; increase access to and demand for high impact quality preventive services.

#### ***SPARK Alignment to Strategic Direction 3:***

While SPARK Programs are designed around preventing childhood obesity, SPARK's partner, MEND, is focused on intervention. MEND is the world's largest provider of evidence-based family weight management programs that combine behavior change, SPARK physical activity and nutritional counseling in a community setting. Over 30,000 participants in 5 countries have already benefited from attending a MEND 7-13 Program (evidence-based healthy lifestyle program for overweight or obese youth ages 7-13 and their families.) Evidence based researched outcomes include:

- Statistically significant reductions in BMI and waist circumference
- Statistically significant increases in PA, reductions in sedentary behaviors
- Improvements in self esteem
- 90% of enrolled children reduce or maintain their BMI after completing the Program.

To learn more about how MEND and SPARK can transform your community contact SPARK.





## 2. Alignment To The CDC's Long-Term Measures For Addressing Physical Activity And Nutrition

(The number(s) shown in red indicate which SPARK program(s) align for that specific measurable outcome. See the key below for the corresponding program name.)

### SPARK Programs:

1. K-2 Physical Education
2. 3-6 Physical Education
3. Middle School Physical Education
4. High School Physical Education
5. Early Childhood
6. After School
7. Ignite a Healthy School Environment (via Healthy Kids Challenge partner)
8. Wellness for Staff (nutrition, physical activity, and stress management)
9. Nutrition Services (via Healthy Kids Challenge partner)
10. Health Education (via Healthy Lifestyle Choices partner)

### Adults

- Stabilize or begin to decrease (up to 2%) adult overweight/obesity prevalence, thus reversing long term trends. **8**
- 20% increase in the percentage of adults getting adequate physical activity, meaning 20% more adults meeting Physical Activity Guidelines. **8**
- 5% decrease in consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, for adults, a decrease of about 5 gallons per person per year. **8**
- A 20% increase in average daily fruit and vegetable consumption, an increase of approximately 1 serving. **8**
- 15% increase in the percentage of adults with a heart-healthy diet based USDA's Healthy Eating Index (HEI), meaning 15% more adults with diet including adequate fruits and vegetables and reduced intake of fats. **8**
- 6% decrease in the percentage of adults getting excess calories based on USDA's Healthy Eating Index (HEI). **8**

### Youth

- Stabilize or begin to decrease (up to 2%) youth overweight/obesity prevalence (up to age 2- 18), thus reversing long term trends. **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10**
- 35% increase in the percentage of high school students getting adequate physical activity (duration, frequency, intensity) meaning 35% more high school students meeting Physical Activity Guidelines. **4**
- 5% decrease in consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages in high school students, a decrease of approximately 4 gallons per person per year. **9**
- A 30% increase in average daily fruit and vegetable consumption among high school students, an increase of approximately 1 serving. **9**
- 15% increase in the percentage of youth (ages 2-18) with a heart-healthy diet based on the USDA's Healthy Eating Index (HEI), meaning 15% more youth with diets including adequate fruits and vegetables and reduced intake of fats. **7, 9, 10**
- 6% decrease in the percentage of youth (ages 2-18) getting excess calories based on USDA's Healthy Eating Index (HEI). **7, 9, 10**

### 3. Why Should You Partner with SPARK?

- SPARK (originally funded by the National Institutes of Health in 1989) offers proven, research-based solutions for increasing the quantity and quality of daily physical activity as well as improving nutrition.
- SPARK was recently identified as a successful model for combating childhood obesity in the report, *“Fighting Obesity: What Works, What’s Promising”* by the HSC Foundation. The report speaks of SPARK’s history, practice, and methods. **SPARK was the ONLY program recommended for physical education AND physical activity.** [Click Here](#) for the full report.
- SPARK offers programs that extend beyond their award-winning [K-12 PE Programs](#), including [Early Childhood](#), [After School](#) and [Coordinated School Health Initiative](#) (CSHI) to include Communities Putting Prevention to Work measurable outcomes.
- SPARK’s CSHI programs support CDC’s eight-component model and consist of:
  - [Nutrition Education & Services](#)
  - [Health Education](#)
  - [Healthy School Environment](#)
  - [Health Promotion for Staff](#)
  - [Physical Education](#)
- The SPARK staff of researchers and educators have 20 years of successful experience working at state, community, and district levels in both urban and rural areas; and with a variety of cultures and demographics (including state-wide adoption and city-wide Department of Health initiatives).
- SPARK elementary physical education is the **ONLY nationally disseminated program that positively affects ALL of these student outcomes: Activity levels (moderate to vigorous surpasses 50% of class time), fitness, sport skills, enjoyment, and academic achievement. SPARK is also the ONLY NIH-researched program available providing coordinated curriculum, training, follow up support, and equipment for Pre-K through 12th grade teachers. (See SPARK alignment to national and state standards -- and -- SPARK scope and sequence at [www.sparkpe.org](http://www.sparkpe.org).)**
- SPARK has been honored as an Exemplary Program of the U.S. Department of Education; cited in the Surgeon General’s Report as a “School-based solution to our nation’s healthcare crisis;” earned a “Governor’s Commendation;” and in 2005, was awarded “Gold” (highest ranking) for their elementary and middle school PE programs in an independent study commissioned by the Cooper Institute. SPARK is the ONLY program to earn “PE Gold” grades K-8.
- SPARK’s exclusive nutrition services partner, Healthy Kids Challenge (HKC) has earned impressive accolades for their work including:
  - American Dietetic Association’s “Award of Excellence for Community Dietetics”
  - National Advertising Council “CAN (Community Action Network) Award”
  - Cooking Light named HKC one of the “Top 12 Change Makers in Nutrition” over the past 25 years
  - Cooper Clinic study “Silver” ranking for programming
  - National Dairy Council honored HKC as “Most Sustainable Grant Project”



## 4. Deliverables Aligned To CDC Prevention Outcomes For The CTG Initiative

**Prevention Outcome #1:** *Increased levels of physical activity and decreased overweight/obesity prevalence*

The following is a description of what deliverables are included in any of the SPARK Premium programs that align with this outcome (i.e., K-2 PE, 3-6 PE, Middle School PE, High School PE, Early Childhood, and After School):

*NOTE: For more information on a specific SPARK program, visit [www.sparkpe.org](http://www.sparkpe.org) and click on your program of choice.*

### **Curriculum:**

Busy teachers/youth leaders need a curriculum that doesn't require a lot of preparation, set-up, or expensive equipment. SPARK curriculum is easy to implement, yet challenging and varied enough for even the most experienced professional. Clear diagrams provide visuals of many activities and helpful academic integration tips are found throughout the document.

### **Staff Development:**

- 2 full-day workshops (12 hours total) either consecutive days or two trips
- Project coordination, prep/planning (pre, during, post) by SPARK staff and trainers
- Needs assessments, workshop, and program evaluations, compiled & provided
- Handouts and teaching materials for up to 40 attendees prepared and shipped
- Teachers eligible for unit of credit at San Diego State University (per program)

*Note:* SPARK workshops are FUN and “hands on.” Teachers/instructors learn by doing and become motivated by our dynamic staff of SPARK Certified Trainers. Research data shows that attendees teach more and better activity classes after participating in a SPARK training. Workshops are conducted any place, any day of the week, any time.

### **Materials:**

SPARK also provides you with the tools you need to implement a successful program. Can you imagine looking at a 10,000 item catalog and trying to select the right 8” foamball from 16 choices? You won't have to. SPARK content experts have created equipment sets that match each item to an activity, saving teachers and administrators valuable time. Each set consists of quality Sportime equipment and includes all the items needed to instruct everything in the SPARK manual. A select team of SPARK program developers, curriculum writers, and workshop presenters meet annually to modify the equipment sets that align perfectly with SPARK activities.

### **Lifetime Follow-up:**

- SPARK Star Training & materials (gifts for Stars, web tools, ongoing consultation)
- Lifetime support for attendees and administrators via 800 # and e-mail
- SPARK e-newsletter sent to each attendee monthly
- Monthly Webinar Series
- Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues through social media

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SPARK is unlike other programs where participants receive a book and a workshop. Programs presented in this fashion often don't last. SPARK strives to foster environmental change and institutionalization of concepts and methods. SPARK facilitates these goals by training staff members to maintain program continuity long after the workshops have ended. These SPARK "Stars" receive specialized training at the conclusion of the workshop, supplemental materials, web-based content, everything they need to ensure their site continues to provide quality physical education/activity programming into the future.

For all programs, the entire SPARK team assists with physical education/activity questions or concerns. SPARK provides lifetime consultation and support via 800 number, e-mail, website, and informative monthly webinars and eNewsletters.

**Prevention Outcome #2:** *Improved nutrition (e.g. increased fruit/vegetable consumption, reduced salt and trans fats)*

### **Ignite a Healthy Environment Program:**

- 1. Formative Assessment:** The SPARK/HKC process begins with a thorough analysis of your current CSH program, and an effort to learn more about your particular needs, challenges and barriers. Our content experts use this data to work with you and develop a vision, plan, and timeline; then recommend targeted resources and services that align with your goals.
- 2. Materials:** Wellness Solutions Toolkit-includes 3 Take Healthy Action Team Guidebooks and a set of 7 Healthy Works booklets.

[Click Here](#) for more information about this toolkit.

- 3. Training:** SPARK/HKC offers an Ignite a Healthy Environment workshop to put your vision into action! The 1-day (6-hr), on-site training introduces your staff and community members to CSH concepts and components through an interactive, team-building style. The training also addresses what SPARK has identified as the "3 P's" of CSH development:

### **Wellness for Staff Program:**

- 1. Needs Assessment:** SPARK will conduct a thorough needs assessment (phone call with site leader[s] and survey for all workshop attendees) then modify the training components to maximize effectiveness.
- 2. Training:** A SPARK Trainer will visit your site and conduct an interactive, 6-hour (full-day) workshop. The workshop content is presented in three 2-hour modules: Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Stress Reduction.
- 3. Equipment**

### **Nutrition Services**

- 1. Needs Assessment:** A thorough needs assessment (phone and survey) is conducted prior to any professional development session. This information is used to focus the workshop to the particular needs of the students served and the teachers attending.
- 2. Curriculum:** HKC Balance My Day-Nutrition Education Curriculum (grades K-2, 3-5 or 6-8) is available through SPARK.  
[Click Here](#) for more information and to view sample content.
- 3. Training:** SPARK and HKC offer two training options for you to choose from: "Balance My Day" Training or a Nutrition-Themed Workshop. [Click Here](#) for more information on the training options.
- 4. Distance Assistance Program:** Individual school teams recommended but can work with district teams as well. Best use of this program is as a follow-up after a Balance My Day curriculum training or Ignite a Healthy Environment training! [Click Here](#) for more information on the Distance Assistance Program.

## 5. SPARK Evaluation and Assessment

Are there tools SPARK provides to help me evaluate the project?

*SPARK Standard and Premium programs include the following four evaluative efforts and free consultation on their use:*

1. **Formative/Needs Assessment:** SPARK workshops are modified and targeted to meet the needs of each school or agency. To accomplish this goal, SPARK staff conduct a phone interview to understand the vision and direction of the participating school, district, or agency. During the interview important questions on activity quantity and quality are also posed. Additionally, SPARK disseminates a survey to each workshop attendee to analyze current offerings, ascertain program strengths/successes, and what they would like to focus on during staff development. These tools are compiled and given to the host agency, and presented to the SPARK trainer as a critical component of her/his presentation preparation.
2. **Inservice Evaluation:** SPARK Trainers have each attendee complete an inservice evaluation after a workshop. These measure the effectiveness of the training session. Evaluations are compiled and presented to the host.
3. **Program Evaluation:** SPARK Project Coordinators send a Final Debriefing Form for the district to administer near the end of the school year to all SPARK workshop attendees. This survey poses questions regarding teacher/youth leader utilization of the program (quantity and quality) and their impressions of its effects on student achievement. This data is shared with the host district/agency.
4. **Lesson Quality Assessments (LQA):** SPARK provides and instructs participating teachers in the use of their LQA, which is an evaluative tool that measures SPARK compliance and instructional effectiveness. There is a different LQA for each SPARK program. LQA's may also be used as data collection tools as part of a research project and/or as a more in-depth effort to collect data to show change in teacher effectiveness.

## Next Steps:

Contact SPARK at 1-800-SPARK PE or [spark@sparkpe.org](mailto:spark@sparkpe.org). A Program Consultant will ask you a few questions, learn about your current program, and listen to your vision for creating a healthier community. Together, we'll create a program that will WORK and LAST.

The SPARK Programs  
1-800-SPARK-PE (772-7573)  
[spark@sparkpe.org](mailto:spark@sparkpe.org)  
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