






Introduction to SWITCH

Switch™ is an innovative, evidence-based program designed to help families establish healthy lifestyle habits in their children. Maintaining healthy eating and physical activity habits during childhood and throughout life can help prevent illness and increase overall well-being. The program is designed for use by school or community wellness coalitions. The slogan of the program (**Switch what you DO, VIEW, and CHEW!**) highlights the three key goals – changing habits related to physical activity, screen time, and nutrition. The specific goals of the program are to:

-  Switch UP to 60 minutes or more of physical activity a day.
-  Switch DOWN to 2 hours or less of screen time (TV, internet, video games etc..) a day.
-  Switch UP to 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day.

The program is managed through participatory research agreements with schools. Once registered, schools are able to set up and manage their own SWITCH programs. Information is provided below.

School Registration

The SWITCH program provides schools with an evidence-based, obesity prevention program designed to help elementary grade students adopt healthy lifestyles. The program honors the legacy and structure of the original SWITCH program but it has been refined and adapted for **web-based programming** (see www.iowaswitch.org).



Once enrolled, schools will receive support and assistance in setting up the SWITCH program in their school. A site coordinator at the school would be able to electronically manage all steps involved in program implementation (e.g. promotion / communication / tracking) and the system also includes separate administrative levels to facilitate district or regional coordination. The overall project is coordinated through a participatory network that makes it possible to share information and to refine and improve the programming over time. By working together, we can help ensure that children (and parents) in Iowa establish healthy lifestyles that decrease risks of becoming overweight later in life.

For additional information contact Dr. Greg Welk (gwelk@iastate.edu)

For information about the SWITCH team, visit our collaborative lab web page (www.physicalactivitylab.org).

For information on links with the Iowa FITNESSGRAM Initiative visit www.iowafitnessgram.org