



## 2023 Growing Healthy Schools Month Resource Guide

Below are examples of activities that contribute to a healthy place for students. Share activities by uploading photos or other documents in the Participation Pledge Form under General Resources.

### GENERAL RESOURCES

- [Growing Healthy Schools Month Webpage](#)
- [Participation Pledge Form](#)
- [Healthy Schools Booklist](#)
- [@OSSEDC on Twitter](#)
- [@osse.dc on Instagram](#)

### MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conduct mindfulness activities with students each day of the week</li><li>• Conduct self-care activities with students (e.g., journaling, drawing, games, outdoor time)</li><li>• Share self-care activities: have students share the ways they like to relax</li><li>• Make a commitment to mental health awareness in schools by participating in any of the professional development opportunities on the OSSE Mental Health webpage</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">51 Mindfulness Exercises for Kids in the Classroom</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Breathing Exercises for Kids</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Self-Care Classroom Activity</a></li><li>• <a href="#">OSSE Mental Health Professional Development Resources</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Today I Feel ES Worksheet (Spanish)</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Breathing Wands Mindfulness Activity</a></li><li>• <a href="#">What Does Mental Health Mean to Me Activity Sheet</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Mindful Eating Activity</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Mental Health Stigma Activity Sheet</a></li></ul>

### NUTRITION

ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have students write thank you letters or drawings for their school meals team</li><li>• Visit the National School Lunch Week (NSLW) website for more activities</li><li>• Eat lunch with your students.</li><li>• Celebrate National Farm to School Month!<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Plan nutrition education activities, such as Harvest of the Month, and feature a local food product that is in season.</li><li>○ Organize a farm tour or trip to the local farmers' market.</li><li>○ Run a taste test of local foods or produce</li></ul></li><li>• Survey students on their favorite fruits and vegetables</li><li>• Read students a book about nutrition</li><li>• Complete the Wellness Guidelines for Early Learning Facilities checklist</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">National School Lunch Week Resources</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Taste Test Guide/Template</a></li><li>• <a href="#">2023 DC Farmers Markets Map</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Choose What's in Season Poster</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Healthy Schools Booklist</a></li><li>• <a href="#">National Farm to School Month Resources</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Farm to School Month Fact Sheet</a></li><li>• <a href="#">A Toolkit for Procuring Local Foods</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Wellness Guidelines for Early Learning Facilities checklist</a></li></ul>

## OUTDOOR LEARNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY

ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take students on a field trip to visit a community garden or a farmers market.</li> <li>• Encourage students to recycle/ clean up around their school.</li> <li>• Spend outdoor time with your students in a school garden or other outdoor space</li> <li>• Encourage students to respond to the prompt:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ My school garden is a special place because...</li> <li>○ Describe a challenge you have faced in your school garden and how you addressed it.</li> <li>○ What are your dreams for your school garden?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Organize or attend a school cleanup</li> <li>• Take a virtual field trip</li> <li>• Check out events for DC Food Recovery Week</li> <li>• Subscribe to the Sprout it Out discussion group</li> <li>• Read students a book about environmental literacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">DMV Food Recovery Week</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Sprout it Out Discussion Group</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">FONA Virtual Classroom Resources</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">OSSE School Garden Guide</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">OSSE School Gardens Activity Resource Sheet</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Capital LEAF program</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">List of Recyclables and Compostable Items in DC</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Cafeteria Sorting Cheat Sheet</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">OSSE Virtual Field Trip Ideas</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">OSSE In-Person Field Trip Ideas</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Outdoor Learning Resources</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">DC Community Gardens</a></li> </ul>

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take 1-5-minute activity breaks 2-3 times per day for at least one week</li> <li>• Complete at least one physical activity with students that falls into one of the categories listed under key terms and examples provided on page 3 of the Physical Education Standards</li> <li>• Read students a book about physical education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Physical Education Standards Classroom Physical Activity Break Tracker</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Health and Physical Education Booklist</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The Washington Tennis &amp; Education Foundation</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Physical Activity Fast Facts</a></li> </ul>



## MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Mental Health and Wellbeing:

- Sleep affects almost every tissue in our bodies. When you're tired, you can't function at your best. Sleep helps you think more clearly, have quicker reflexes and focus better.
- Did you know that mindfulness meditation practices can reduce anxiety, improve attention, regulate emotions, and even improve sports performance? See if you can start incorporating one mindfulness practice into your daily life today. Journaling is just one of many great examples of a mindfulness activity! (Source: [www.highlandparktherapy.com/blog/mindfulness-facts](http://www.highlandparktherapy.com/blog/mindfulness-facts))
- Here's a quick relaxation exercise to try: Place one hand on your belly and one hand on your chest. Take a deep breath in for four counts. Then exhale slowly through your nose for four counts. Pay attention to the rise and fall of your chest and belly as you complete the exercise. Repeat as many times as needed. (Source: [www.moshikids.com/articles/deep-breathing-exercises-for-kids/](http://www.moshikids.com/articles/deep-breathing-exercises-for-kids/))
- This week is also Mental Illness Awareness Week. Mental health disorders affect 1 in 6 students between the ages of 6-17 in the U.S. each year. If you or someone you know might be struggling with feeling down, we have a lot of resources at our school to help. Did you know that staying active, eating well, and keeping a proper sleep schedule can help you maintain good mental health? What else do you do to maintain your mental health?

### Nutrition:

- Did you know that the District is home to 50 farmers markets? Have you, or your family ever visited a local farm or farmers market? What did you like most or least about that visit?

- Did you know that the cherry is the official fruit of the District of Columbia?
- October is also National Farm to School Month! Did you know that you eat produce from local farms every time you eat lunch at school? What are some of your favorite fruits and vegetables you've eaten as part of breakfast or lunch so far this year?
- Did you know that eating a healthy school lunch can improve your academic performance? What's one fruit or vegetable you love that also gets your brain working? (Source: <https://healthyeatingresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/HER-UniversalSchoolMeals-Infographic-07022021-1-1.pdf>)

### Outdoor Learning and Environmental Literacy:

- You may have seen a rain garden on your way to school this morning. Rain gardens are strategically and uniquely built for each environment to improving drainage. Rain gardens also help keep polluted stormwater out of our local streams.

[RiverSmart Homes: Rain Gardens | doee \(dc.gov\)](#)

- Who knows what DC's state tree is? Well, actually, there are five! The scarlet oak, is one of the five trees in our city with the "showiest" fall color? The other trees are ginkgo, red maple, sweetgum, and black gum. Do you think you can find one of these trees in your neighborhood?
- Here's a fun fact. The Chesapeake Bay supports more than 3,600 species of plants and animals, including 348 species of finfish, 173 species of shellfish, over 2,700 plant species and more than 16 species of underwater grasses.
- Did you know that Washington DC has the most park space among populous cities in the U.S., with 7,800 acres of parkland? Do you have a favorite park in DC? If so, what makes it so much fun for you?

### Physical Education:

- Did you know that you should get at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity each day? What's your favorite activity to do to get your heart rate up?
- Fun fact: The average human heart beats 100,000 times per day!
- Did you know that exercise increases blood flow to your brain and releases serotonin? Serotonin improves your mood and helps you think more clearly.
- Fun fact: The human body's largest organ is the skin.

Fun fact: Physical activity not only improves physical health, but also improves mental health by increasing levels of self-esteem and decreasing feelings of anxiety. (Source: <https://voicesforhealthykids.org/assets/resources/physical-education-fast-facts-10.23.2020.pdf>)



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