



Step It Up – The 200-Mile Challenge!



A four-week
physical activity contest
for HISD schools,
students and staff



Developed with input from Houston Independent School District students as part of the *Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools* "Change the Game" program.

Houston Independent School District



Creating a College-Bound Culture



Welcome to *Step It Up!*

Step It Up – The 200 Mile Challenge was developed with Houston Independent School District students as part of the *Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools* “Change the Game” project. “Change the Game” is a student-developed promotional push to encourage HISD students to make better food choices at school and be more physically active.

This packet provides a starting point for creating your school’s *Step It Up – The 200-Mile Challenge*. You can customize the ideas and tools in this packet so they work best for your school community.

Walking is a great form of exercise that can fit in whenever and wherever it works! We hope you will use *Step It Up* to supplement your school’s physical education program by getting as many people as possible – students, staff, even parents – walking and tracking their steps.

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The information in this packet is available at www.healthykidshealthyschools.org.

About Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools

Houston Independent Schools District’s *Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools* initiative is a “whole-system change” effort that includes support within and outside the district. *Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools* is about making the healthy choice to be the easy choice for our students and staff. HISD launched the *Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools* with support from and in partnership with the National Dairy Council and Dairy MAX, along with partners including the Houston Can Do!, Houston Wellness Association, Houston Texans, Greater Houston Partnership and others. The partnership began with a summit, bringing together community leaders, students, teachers, principals, food service professionals, parents and national leaders to further the efforts already in place and fill gaps where programs do not exist. Using the “Appreciative Inquiry” approach, this initiative engages the “whole system” with a process to create an “epidemic of wellness” in our district and community. Learn more at www.healthykidshealthyschools.org.

CONTENTS

Goal	4
Overview	4
List of Materials	4
Process/Step-by-Step Instructions	5
Incentive Ideas	6
More Tips	7
Resources	8

Reproducible Materials:

Step It Up School Log – Students

Step It Up School Log – Teachers, Staff, Parents

Individual Tracking Form for Participants

100 Ways to Add 2,000 Steps (English and Spanish-language versions)

Activity Conversion (to Steps) for Kids (English and Spanish-language versions)

Activity Conversion (to Steps) for Adults (English and Spanish-language versions)

Walk with a Purpose

Certificate of Participation (template available at www.healthykidshealthyschools.org)

For electronic copies of these materials, visit www.healthykidshealthyschools.org (click on “Health Coaches” area).



Step It Up – The 200-Mile Challenge!

GOAL

To increase daily physical activity of HISD students and the school community through a fun walking challenge.

OVERVIEW

Over a four-week period, *Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools* Health Coaches in participating HISD schools will work with students to plan and conduct a walking/pedometer challenge to increase the daily physical activity of students and adults in the school community.

MATERIALS

- Pedometers provided by *Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools* partners
- Incentives provided by *Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools* partners
- Resources
 - Printable materials in this packet:
 - Individual paper tracking forms for participants
 - School tracking logs for students and adults
 - Activities/steps/miles conversion charts
 - 100 Ways to Add 2,000 Steps – ideas for students and adults
 - Walk with a Purpose – ideas for getting your school community walking
 - Certificate of Participation template (available at www.healthykidshealthyschools.org)
 - *Fuel Up to Play 60* online tracking area for students (www.fueluptoplay60.com)
 - Links to walking challenges and online steps/miles conversion tools
 - Links to lesson plans for teachers

PROCESS

As part of your school's "Change the Game" awareness-building activities, the Health Coach can activate and motivate students and staff to move more using a pedometer and activity log to track steps. Students can help the Health Coach plan and run *Step It Up* during a four-week challenge period.

Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools partners are providing pedometers, an instrument worn by a walker or runner for recording the number of steps taken, showing the approximate distance traveled. Pedometers help participants track their physical activity and better understand how active, or inactive, they are during the day.

In addition to pedometers, *Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools* partners are providing incentives that the Health Coach can use throughout the challenge to reward participation and progress. How and when the incentives are used is up to the Health Coach.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. **Receive *Step It Up* packet.** Your packet includes:
 - a. Instructions and hand-outs for conducting your *Step It Up* contest
 - b. Pedometers
 - c. A variety of incentives to award students and staff, to be used at the Health Coach's discretion. These include: "Change the Game" backpacks and wristbands, YMCA of Greater Houston passes, Jason's Deli free meal coupons and other giveaways.
2. **Ensure in-school pedometer use permission.** Students should wear the pedometers all day, including school hours. Ensure the principal and other staff are aware of the challenge.
3. **Create friendly competition among groups.** Students are inspired and motivated by a fun competition. Encourage competition for the most steps among grades, teachers/staff vs. students, boys vs. girls, etc. – whatever will be most motivating for your school community. You may want to change the competitive groups up every week during the four-week contest.
4. **Set benchmarks.** To walk 1 mile = 2,000-2,400 steps. Set a goal of walking 200 miles in the four-week contest. Participants may walk more than that, but 200 is an achievable goal.
5. **Award incentives** at key points to increase motivation and reward effort.
 - a. Decide incentive points that work for your school (see "Incentive" suggestions below).
 - b. Be sure participants are aware of the incentive points, what they will receive, and how to obtain it.

6. **Promote *Step It Up – The 200-Mile Challenge*.**

- a. Create a PA announcement and posters for your school. “Change the Game” graphics are available at www.healthykidshealthyschools.org. Be sure to mention possible incentives (including use of a pedometer!) in your promotions. Recruit students to help with promotional activities.
 - b. Have students and staff (even parents!) sign up to participate. Distribute pedometers and individual tracking forms. (Remind students also to track their physical activity on www.fueluptoplay60.com to earn points for themselves and your school in the *Fuel Up to Play 60* national competition.)
 - c. Use the school log forms (provided in this packet) to track participants and weekly progress.
 - d. Create a large display chart to hang in a visible location that tracks of steps by grade, classroom, students vs. teachers, etc.
 - e. Highlight top walkers weekly.
7. **Track steps, report results.** Have students/staff use pedometers and the daily individual log sheet and activity: mile conversion charts to track their daily steps. Have them report their weekly results and record on the school log forms provided. At the end of the contest, report overall school participation to *Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools* program office (www.healthykidshealthyschools.org) to qualify for school recognition and rewards.
8. **Award participation.** Use the incentives provided by *Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools* partners and other resources you may have available. Remember that recognition is a great incentive, in addition to prizes!

INCENTIVE IDEAS

Possible incentive points:

- Grade and/or individuals reaching the 50/100/150/200, 300 mile mark first, second, third
- Grade and/or individuals walking the most miles first week, second week, third week, fourth week
- Grade with the most participants
- Individual walking the most miles, total
- Student with greatest improvement from number of miles walked week 1 to number of miles walked week 4

With the incentives, make sure:

- Participants know what rewards will be from the beginning at kick-off.
- Participants are reminded of rewards during entire competition.
- Participants believe anyone can win including them or their grade.
- All participants are given something – at least a certificate of participation.
- Announcements over PA, articles in school newspaper with their pictures, presentations at an assembly, etc. are also good ways to recognize participation
- All registered students are eligible.
- The more students record physical activity steps and/or miles the better their chance of winning.

MORE TIPS

- Start your students/staff on a VIRTUAL JOURNEY with a collective goal of:
 - Walking across the United States;
 - Moving across / along an historic trail such as moving down the Mississippi or following the Lewis & Clark Trail;
 - A trek across Texas;
 - Campus-to-campus journey
 - A destination journey.
- Grade/Department competitions (based on either departments or smaller teams trying to log the most steps or miles per participant);
- School challenge. Can your entire school walk one millions steps?

RESOURCES

Internet resources to support and extend your *Step It Up* challenge:

- Walking Challenges
 - <http://walking.about.com/cs/measure/a/webwalkingusa.htm>
 - www.presidentschallenge.org/the_challenge/presidential_champions.aspx
 - <http://walkacrosstexas.tamu.edu/about/health-links-and-resources.php>
- Online Tracking
 - www.fueluptoplay60.com (online tracking form for students)
- Step Conversion Chart
 - www.takesteps.univerahealthcare.com/stepChartPop.jsp
 - http://walkacrosstexas.tamu.edu/wat_group/wat_mileage_equivalents.asp
- Lesson Plans
 - http://walkacrosstexas.tamu.edu/wat_schools/lesson_plans/index.htm
 - www.lessonplanet.com/search?grade=All+Grades&keywords=pedometer&media=lesson&page=2&rating=3&x=0&y=0
 - www.pecentral.org/lessonideas/ViewLesson.asp?ID=3649
 - http://walkacrosstexas.tamu.edu/wat_schools/lesson_plans/index.htm
- Walk-to-School Resources
 - KidsWalk-to-School from U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/
 - National Center for Safe Routes to School: www.saferoutesinfo.org/
 - Texas Safe Routes to School: www.txdot.gov/safety/safe_routes/default.htm
 - Walking School Bus from Partnership for a Walkable America: www.walkingschoolbus.org/