Ten Key Things About School Health Advisory Councils (SHACs)

1. If your SHAC is just getting started, or maybe floundering a little, focusing on specific issues or even some of the state mandates might get things moving in the right direction. Finding a local issue that has the community’s attention can jumpstart a SHAC.
   
   If there is not a SHAC in your district and you want to start one, go to the web sites below for some basics.

   • [http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/sdhac.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/sdhac.shtm)
   • [http://www.austinisd.org/advisory-bodies/shac](http://www.austinisd.org/advisory-bodies/shac)

2. A majority of SHAC members must be parents in the district that are not employees of the School District. Other members to consider would be:
   
   - School Personnel (teachers/administrators)
   - Civic/Non-Profit Organizations
   - Faith Community
   - NEW-Local Domestic Violence Program
   - Students
   - Extension Agents
   - Business
   - Medical Community
   - Government
   - Social Services
   - Law Enforcement
   - Senior citizens

   **The School Board must appoint these members.** Administration can make recommendations but the School Board appoints SHAC members. This is a District level advisory group. Campus Wellness teams are a good idea but not mandated.

3. **SHACs advise and make recommendations to the District and school board on issues that impact student health.** Issues are based on a coordinated school health program which include the eight components of school health as defined by the Center for Disease Control:
   
   - Health Education
   - Physical Education
   - Nutrition Services
   - Health Services
   - Health Promotion for Staff
   - Healthy School Environment
   - Counseling/Psychological/Social Services
   - Family/Community Involvement

4. Find out which coordinated school health program (CSH) your District uses for elementary and middle schools. **CSH should be implemented in grades K–8 beginning in 2007.** The Texas Education Agency has approved four programs listed on the TEA web site at:
   
   [http://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Schools/Safe_and_Healthy_Schools/Coordinated_School_Health/Coordinated_School_Health_Requirements_and_Approved_Programs/](http://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Schools/Safe_and_Healthy_Schools/Coordinated_School_Health/Coordinated_School_Health_Requirements_and_Approved_Programs/)

5. If your District participates in the federal meal program, breakfast, lunch or snack, they should have implemented a **Wellness Policy in place by SY2006.** Ask how it is being monitored and implemented.

6. Check to see if your district has the following information published in the student handbook or on the web site. This should have been done starting fall 2006:
   
   - District policy on insuring all students get 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week of physical activity.
   - A statement of the number of times the SHAC met during the year.
   - Whether the District has adopted/enforces policies to ensure campuses comply with Agency vending and food service guidelines.
   - Policies on tobacco use on campus.

7. Find a **champion on the school board.** If you have a friend on the school board it makes it much easier to work with the school administration.

8. Find a **parent champion.** In fact, find TWO parent champions! If you can identify two parents who have a passion for healthy children, they will help promote school health and ensure your SHAC issuccessful.

9. Work with existing groups and structures like **PTA, CAC, youth groups** to help recruit good members, find support for initiatives and educate the community on issues and solutions.

10. Be patient, plan for short-term goals and long term goals and **celebrate success!**

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Where Can I Learn More?

SHAC Guide  
www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/sdhac.shtm

Texas School Health Advisory Committee  
www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/shadvise.shtm

Texas Education Agency, School Health  
http://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Schools/Safe_and_Healthy_Schools/

Texas Education Code, Chapter 28.004  
www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.28.htm

Texas Child Nutrition Policy:  
www.squaremeals.org/

Texas Education Laws and Rules:  
www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=2147509089

Healthy Lifestyles Chair, Texas PTA  
www.bxpta.org/programs/healthy-lifestyles

Other Resources:

State School Health Policy Database  
www.nasbe.org/healthy_schools/hs/

CDC School Assessment Tool – School Health Index: Elementary, Middle and High Schools  
http://nccd.cdc.gov/DASH_SHI/default/Login.aspx

Coordinated School Health /Whole-Child–CDC  
www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/cshp/

Improve School Food and Beverage Environment Guide  
http://www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/ImproveSchoolFoods.html

Parent/School Wellness Resources  
http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/what-we-do/parents-for-healthy-kids

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