

# Center Portfolio

AN OVERVIEW OF CURRENT PROJECTS



**PennState**  
PRO Wellness





# Committed to Inspire Healthy Behaviors

Prevention efforts are critical to battling chronic disease and have been the focus of Penn State PRO Wellness for over 14 years. The center provides prevention strategies to over 1,000 schools across Pennsylvania, as well as communities and corporate business partners. Advised by over 40 corporate, government and academic representatives, PRO Wellness is highly visible in the health and wellness arena and has a solid history of helping schools and community groups implement wellness solutions.

As an integral component of Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center's community service mission, the center's approach of prevention, research and outreach provides schools, communities and like-minded organizations with program development and implementation, assessment and evaluation, capacity building, technical assistance, collaborative partnerships and access to proven wellness interventions.

The center's funding portfolio continues to grow, with projects supported by national organizations, including Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute, Merck, and the Boy Scouts of America, as well as local partners and philanthropists, like Faulkner Nissan. As a result of these and other existing funding opportunities, the PRO Wellness team has continued to grow in size and skills. Now over 10 individuals strong, PRO Wellness is better equipped to meet the health and wellness needs of children, families and communities both locally and across the state.

Of course, this important work cannot be done alone. Please do not hesitate to ask how you can participate in the Center's efforts, either with time, talents or philanthropy. Together, we can make a difference in helping improve the lives of those around us – one child, one family and one community at a time.



PARTNERING WITH OVER  
**350 ORGANIZATIONS**  
THROUGHOUT THE COMMONWEALTH TO  
**INSPIRE HEALTHY BEHAVIORS**



# Building Healthy Schools

In 2013, the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) engaged Penn State PRO Wellness to facilitate programs focused on healthy eating and physical activity in 15 identified school districts (85 schools) across the Commonwealth through the Building Healthy Schools (BHS) grant program. This initiative focuses on providing personalized technical assistance (TA) over a two-year period to help districts build capacity to:

- implement policies and practices that create a supportive nutrition environment;
- develop, implement and evaluate comprehensive school physical activity programs (CSPAP); and
- identify opportunities to create or enhance community access to places for physical activity.

The BHS grant program has taken place over a five-year period. Invited districts were divided into three rounds and enrolled for two-year cycles. Thirteen participating districts (69 schools) represent 12 Pennsylvania counties. Two additional districts (16 schools) are participating in a condensed version of the program, the BHS Affiliates grant program, focusing primarily on the development, implementation and evaluation of CSPAP and enhanced family and community engagement.

In addition to developing the grant program, PRO Wellness provides hands-on TA that supports each awarded district in establishing a framework for continued wellness success.



**\$165,000** | **MADE AVAILABLE ACROSS 15 SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN PA**





# Building Healthy Lebanon Schools

With support from Kohl’s Department Stores, Penn State PRO Wellness is able to apply lessons learned and expand upon the BHS program supported by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. The Kohl’s Building Healthy Lebanon Schools (BHLS) grant program specifically targets Lebanon County due to a higher than average rate of obesity (30%) and decline in the county’s 2017 health ranking outcomes—the only county within the Penn State Health’s Community Health Needs Assessment catchment to experience this.

BHLS seeks to make sustainable, evidence-based wellness changes in all six Lebanon County school districts. PRO Wellness is guiding schools through a two-year initiative to identify district need, develop an action plan and implement sustainable nutrition promotion, physical activity and family and community engagement programs by assisting with the following strategies:

- Establish an active wellness council at each district to identify and address gaps in wellness policies and practices to improve obesity prevention strategies.
- Engage ≈18,000 students in Lebanon County in daily physical activity breaks through dissemination of evidence-based programming during the school day.
- Improve nutrition of ≈9,275 elementary-aged students through wellness programming and signature events focused on healthy eating and nutrition.
- Create a bridge between community and schools to address comprehensive student wellness and celebrate and share successes with school districts across the region.

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**18,000**  **YOUTH GRADES K-12  
POSITIVELY IMPACTED**

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# Healthy Champion Schools

PRO Wellness has extensive experience in developing and implementing promotional campaigns through the management of its Healthy Champions school program, which reaches 300 or more Pennsylvania schools annually—nearly 600 over the five-year history of the program.

To enroll in Healthy Champions, schools complete an online assessment and are awarded “stars” based on assessment results. Schools set goals for attaining the next level star ranking in the following years. A maximum of five stars can be awarded based on answers to questions regarding physical activity, food and beverage environments, healthy messaging and active living and healthy eating among employees while at work.

Once enrolled, schools receive a complimentary welcome kit, which includes a banner, infographics and event posters, access to an online resource portal, monthly newsletters, customized school reports and tools and resources to host and promote four signature awareness events: Apple Crunch, Walk to School Day, Go for the Greens and Move it Outside. In addition, PRO Wellness provides special incentives for enrolling through established partnerships. Through collaboration with the Hershey Bears Hockey Club, actively enrolled schools in nine south-central counties are provided an opportunity for each student to attend a Hershey Bears hockey game.



**300 SCHOOLS**  
**185,397 STUDENTS**

**ENROLLED IN**  
**2017/2018**



## Penn State Children’s Hospital Event Outreach

Through our wellness messaging and collaborative efforts, we strive to educate and inspire youth and their families to incorporate healthy lifestyle choices daily. We grow and support healthy champions by increasing public awareness through regional event participation—providing families, schools and community-based organizations with materials related to nutrition, physical activity and other wellness topics.

With support from Faulkner-Nissan Harrisburg, PRO Wellness is able to attend school and community outreach events in a co-branded mobile unit while engaging children and their families in health education. We deliver educational materials and promotional takeaways by attending or hosting any of the following types of events:

- school athletic events and field days;
- school open house events;
- after-school programming;
- on-site dealership events; and
- community trade shows and expos.



**150,000 INDIVIDUALS**  
REACHED AT MOBILE UNIT EVENTS WITHIN ONE YEAR





## Boy Scouts of America: Summer Camp Revamped

In 2015, Jeanne Donlevy Arnold, philanthropist and advocate for whole child health, was tasked by former Boy Scouts of America's (BSA) National President Dr. Robert Gates to lead a Presidential Task Force to address childhood obesity. Penn State PRO Wellness partnered with Jeanne and BSA to develop the Scouting COMPASS program, which encourages healthy eating and active living.

More specifically, PRO Wellness has partnered with 28 summer camps nationwide to implement Summer Camp Revamped, which combines evidence-based practices and healthful changes to the camp environment in an effort to encourage Scouts and adults to make healthier choices. As part of this program, PRO Wellness is:

- assisting with the implementation of healthier dining hall menus;
- recommending healthier inventory for the camp snack bar;
- suggesting dining hall food and traffic arrangements to nudge healthy choices;
- conducting on-site camp visits to ensure program success;
- helping to implement price point advantages in camp snack bars, while still turning a profit; and
- encouraging more physical activity through a Step-Up Challenge.

Troop leaders and Scouts have expressed overwhelming support for Summer Camp Revamped with favorable results realized in improved nutrition content of dining hall meals, satisfaction with food choices, increased activity, and snack bar sales. Recognizing that every camp and council is unique, PRO Wellness has developed a packaged Summer Camp Revamped toolkit and is testing the adaptability of this initiative in a variety of camp settings across the nation.

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**28 CAMPS | 73,854 SCOUTS**  
IMPACTED BY SUMMER CAMP REVAMPED

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## Better Together: Lebanon County

After discovering that many local organizations were addressing community health, but operating independently, Jeanne Donlevy Arnold envisioned a collaborative process utilizing networks and partnerships. Working together, these groups could pool resources, focus on priority areas and improve community wellness in her hometown. Penn State PRO Wellness partnered with Jeanne to realize this vision in Better Together: Lebanon County—an initiative bringing multiple sectors of the community together to improve the health and quality of life for its residents.

Successful community-wide health initiatives engage the community throughout the planning process. To accomplish this, a Better Together steering committee was formed and includes representation from the local community, hospital systems, grocery stores, restaurants, schools, non-profit organizations and policy makers. This committee assists with the planning, goal setting and outcomes of the Better Together: Lebanon County initiative, including an annual community-wide summit. The goal of the summit is to collect input from multiple sectors of the community to minimize duplication of efforts and ensure greatest community needs are addressed. Based on expertise, attendee interests and available resources, four action teams have emerged from priority areas identified to date.



**FAMILY AND  
COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT**



**PHYSICALLY ACTIVE  
COMMUNITIES**



**HEALTHIER FOOD  
CHOICE AVAILABILITY**



**MENTAL  
HEALTH**

PRO Wellness continues to facilitate action team meetings and summit meetings, and provides content expertise, technical assistance and strategic planning to the group.



## Public Health 3.0: Dauphin County

Public Health 3.0: Dauphin County is part of a state-wide initiative led by the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) and designed to bring together different sectors of communities (businesses, housing, education, transportation, etc.) to create conditions that support healthy living. Using a hub-and-spoke model, counties across the commonwealth are building partnerships and creating synergy to address priority health topics. Penn State PRO Wellness serves as the hub for Dauphin County. Goals of this initiative are to:

- network, partner, and align efforts strategically;
- establish an organized voluntary approach for moving toward a healthier community;
- create economies of scale and avoid investing in duplicative initiatives; and
- create a regional partnership that aids in the utilization of resources. This will be accomplished through supporting/aligning existing interest groups or creating new, when needed.

Representatives of health-focused Dauphin County organizations have identified three priority topics and PRO Wellness is working with spoke organizations to facilitate action teams to address these topics.



**OBESITY/PHYSICAL  
INACTIVITY**



**SUBSTANCE USE**



**ORAL HEALTH**





# LiveHealthyPA

LiveHealthyPA is a diverse resource website supporting the collaboration of schools, communities, and health teams while offering a platform for idea generation and information exchange to address health across the state. LiveHealthyPA's mission is to improve health outcomes for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The website includes resources for a wide variety of topics, such as smoking, cancer, and parks and recreation.

PRO Wellness works with the Pennsylvania Department of Health as an external review facilitator for all Healthy Living Practices submitted through the web application process on the LiveHealthyPA website. These practices are submitted by the community and published for sharing. Incoming practices are reviewed by PRO Wellness staff for validity and then forwarded on to external volunteer reviewers if further guidance is required.

The PRO Wellness team is uniquely positioned for this role due to the wide range of expertise on the team and commitment to sharing practices that are safe, healthful, and beneficial to the community. At this time, accepted submissions include best practices (promising through evidence-based), sustainable programs, community outreach, health promotion and events applicable to public health workers and the general population.

*For more information or to submit your practice for inclusion on the Pennsylvania Department of Health site, visit [www.LiveHealthyPA.com](http://www.LiveHealthyPA.com).*



100+

COMMUNITY-BASED  
PRACTICES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE



# School-Based Approach to Enhancing Vaccinations

With support from Merck, Penn State PRO Wellness is taking a school and community-based approach to improve parental intent to vaccinate and increase recommended vaccination among school-aged students.

PRO Wellness is working with regional schools to offer the following:



**SCHOOL NURSE TOOLKIT  
ON VACCINATION PROMOTION**

**STUDENT-FOCUSED STEM  
CURRICULUM ON HOW  
VACCINES WORK**



**SOCIAL MARKETING TARGETING  
STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

**COMMUNITY "FRONT PORCH  
GRAND ROUNDS" TO RAISE  
PARENTAL AWARENESS OF THE  
IMPORTANCE OF VACCINATION**



In addition, the project team is meeting with parents, teachers and clinicians to answer questions that will help to inform this work.



## Penn State Health Employee Wellness

To accomplish a goal of improved employee wellness at Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, Penn State PRO Wellness is delivering services, in collaboration with Human Resources, utilizing a three-armed approach of:



**INDIVIDUAL  
BEHAVIOR CHANGE**



**GROUP  
EDUCATION**



**ENHANCING  
WELL-BEING**

Penn State PRO Wellness is establishing a wellness committee comprised of campus groups and individuals who have demonstrated interest and passion in facilitating improved wellness on campus. This committee will assist with defining marketing and program implementation strategies, and will serve as a think tank and action team for identified health and wellness initiatives.

PRO Wellness, in collaboration with a campus wellness committee and Human Resources, will establish and manage quarterly lunch-and-learns to address physical, mental, financial and spiritual health.

The center plans to develop health messaging and promotional materials to be displayed in public areas such as campus shuttles, cafeterias, elevators, stairwells and restrooms. These messages will demonstrate a culture of wellness on campus.

Additionally, PRO Wellness will:

- host health challenges with incentives for winners;
- collaborate with food service and vending contractors to negotiate healthier offerings and promote healthy decisions in all cafeterias; and
- identify and publish resources for employees and department-level wellness interest groups.





## PaTH to Health: Diabetes

Obesity is one of America's primary health concerns and is a risk factor for type 2 diabetes, which affects over 29 million people and is associated with serious complications. Although these complications are preventable with proper medical and lifestyle management, including weight loss, nearly half of patients with diabetes do not have adequate glycemic control. Primary care clinics may be an ideal setting for weight control interventions.

The PaTH to Health: Diabetes team is looking at Electronic Health Record (EHR) and claims data across three states to see if obesity counseling has improved weight and diabetes outcomes, following improved coverage due to recent policy changes and health insurance expansion by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid. Beneficiaries who screen obese are eligible for up to 20 face-to-face visits for weight counseling in the primary care setting. However, whether or not this new benefit has actually helped patients lose weight and better control their diabetes is unknown.

The PaTH to Health: Diabetes team is working closely with a stakeholder body, comprised of patient partners, clinicians, and regional and national diabetes and obesity prevention organizations. By engaging in key research activities, this partnership not only strengthens the research but ensures researchers are studying questions patients and stakeholders care most about.

Partner institutions alongside Penn State College of Medicine and Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center include:

**UPMC**

 **JOHNS HOPKINS**  
SCHOOL of MEDICINE

 **HEALTH**  
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

**Geisinger**



**University of Pittsburgh**



**School of Medicine**  
TEMPLE UNIVERSITY\*

For more information about PaTH to Health: Diabetes, visit [www.PaTHDiabetes.org](http://www.PaTHDiabetes.org).



# Start up Assistance for Research Success (STARS)

Currently, Penn State College of Medicine provides the tools and resources investigators need to navigate their way through the pre and post award stages of research. However, an important segment is missing—project management and investigator support for the day-to-day operation and implementation of research.

The STARS program provides quality project management and coordination to both junior and senior investigators who require research project startup assistance. Startup services range from supporting research proposal design through development and training of a research team. Other services include temporary staff support in the areas of recruitment, data analysis, marketing and promotion, project close-out and long-term support for pilot projects.

In addition, the STARS program intends to support research project staff through network building, skill development and professional development for greater than 50 Project Managers across the College of Medicine.

Staff from PRO Wellness will be instrumental in the launch of the STARS program—selecting startup and ongoing research projects to both support the research and evaluate the structure and utility of the program.



## About Penn State PRO Wellness

Prevention efforts are critical to battling chronic disease and have been the focus of Penn State PRO Wellness for over 14 years. We are committed to educating and inspiring youth and their families to eat well, engage in regular physical activity and become champions for bringing healthy choices to life. Our approach of Prevention, Research and Outreach provides approximately 1,000 schools across Pennsylvania, as well as communities and corporate business partners, with educational programs, collaborative partnerships and access to proven wellness interventions. Advised by over 40 corporate, government and academic representatives, PRO Wellness is highly visible in the health and wellness arena and has a solid history of helping schools and community groups implement wellness solutions.



**PennState**  
PRO Wellness

Penn State PRO Wellness  
90 Hope Drive, Mail Code A145  
Hershey, PA 17033

For more information please call:  
Phone: 1-717-531-1440

[med.psu.edu/PROwellness](http://med.psu.edu/PROwellness)