



Summary of ACT 1220 of 2003 and Subsequent Modifications

The Arkansas General Assembly passed Act 1220 of 2003^{*} to address the crisis of childhood and adolescent obesity. The goals of this landmark legislation are to positively change the environment within which children go to school and learn health habits everyday, to engage the community to support parents and build a system that encourages health, and to enhance awareness of childhood and adolescent obesity. Key requirements of the Act are to:

- Create a 15-member statewide Child Health Advisory Committee (CHAC)* to make recommendations to the State Board of Education and State Board of Health regarding physical activity and nutrition standards and related environment in public schools
- Employ community health promotion specialists
- Eliminate access to vending machines in public elementary schools
- Require that schools disclose contracts for competitive (i.e., non-USDA School Lunch Program) foods and beverages
- Assess annually body mass index-for-age (BMI) of all public school students (kindergarten–12th grade), with the results and an explanation of possible health effects reported to parents on school report cards (later amended to provide parents with a separate, confidential child health report)
- Create school district-level nutrition and physical activity advisory committees to raise awareness and create local policies

Amendments made to Act 1220 during the 2007 legislative session include Acts 201, 719, & 317:

- Changes periodicity of BMI assessments to every even year beginning in K through 10th grade.
- Requires written refusal from parents who wish to keep child from participating.
- Makes ADH nurses responsible for quality assurance to follow protocols.
- Adds 5 members to CHAC.
- Broadens CHAC scope to all school health.
- Eliminates physical activity requirement except for grades K–5.

^{*}Act 1220 of 2003: An Act to create a Child Health Advisory Committee; to coordinate statewide efforts to combat childhood obesity and related illnesses; to improve the health of the next generation of Arkansans; and for other purposes. Arkansas Annotated Code. 20-7-133-135, 2003.