

### FOR PRACTITIONERS & POLICY MAKERS

- Schools and their staff implement student health interventions **better** when **implementation strategies** are used to support them.
- Providing implementation support may yield **small improvements** in the effects of intervention on student's **physical activity** and **healthy eating**.
- There was **little evidence** that the use of strategies to implement interventions in schools has any **adverse effects** on students, teachers or schools.

### KEY MESSAGES



#### What are **implementation strategies**?

These are techniques designed to change practice patterns within specific settings to improve the 'implementation' of evidence-based health interventions.

In schools this can include education and training, feedback, prompts and reminders, and educational resources.

### FOR RESEARCHERS

There is a need for **more**:

- **High quality implementation studies** in schools, particularly those focused on **alcohol prevention**.
  - Research looking at **economic benefits and adverse effects**.
  - **Studies conducted outside of the USA and Australia**.
- More investment** is needed to develop **robust measures** for assessing implementation outcomes.



### WHAT IS THIS REVIEW ABOUT?

- This review aimed to find out which strategies are effective in supporting the implementation of school-based interventions to address **diet**, **physical activity**, **unhealthy weight gain**, **tobacco** and **alcohol use**.



- It also looked at the **impact** of implementation strategies on student health, the **cost-effectiveness** of implementation strategies and **adverse effects** on schools, staff or students.

### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

School-based health interventions can improve student's diet and physical activity levels, and prevent unhealthy weight gain, tobacco use or harmful alcohol use.

**But these interventions cannot improve student health if they are not implemented well.**

We need to understand more about strategies that support successful implementation of interventions in schools.

### WHAT DID WE DO?

We updated a previous search for studies that compared the use of strategies to support intervention implementation to not using a strategy, or using an alternative (different) strategy. We rated our confidence in the evidence based on study methods and size.

### WHAT WAS INCLUDED?

**38 studies**

**11 new**



Most trials examined strategies to implement interventions that addressed **healthy eating (17)**, **physical activity (12)**, or **both (4)**.

Includes studies published up to April 2021

### WHAT DID THE UPDATE FIND?

Strategies to support implementation may result in:



▲▲▲ **Large increases in the implementation of interventions in schools**  
(low certainty evidence)

▲▲ **Slight improvements in student healthy eating and physical activity**  
(low certainty evidence)

▲ **Little to no effect on obesity**  
(moderate certainty evidence)

? **Uncertain effects on tobacco use**  
(very low certainty evidence)

Few studies assessed the economic benefits of implementation strategies or any potential adverse effects for schools, staff or students.