



Step To It Challenge School Toolkit

The Step To It Challenge for schools

Keeping children active through recess and physical education is on the radar of local schools. Research shows kids' health, social skills, and brainpower get a boost from daily play time and physical activity. Physical activity helps children—as well as adults—prevent obesity and many obesity-related diseases, including diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease. Plus children who get adequate amounts of physical activity perform better academically.

The Step To It Challenge (STIC) helps elementary schools integrate physical activity into the daily routines of students and their families. By joining STIC, students will:

- Develop confidence.
- Learn about the benefits of physical activity.
- Incorporate physical activity into their daily routine.
- Experience fun physical activity with families, neighbors, school staff, and friends!

The focus of the school Step to It Challenge is elementary schools in Hennepin County; however, middle and high schools are also welcome to participate.

Remember ...

There's the chance to win a visit from a Minnesota Twins player, TC Bear, and the team's strength and conditioning coach!

This year, three elementary schools in Hennepin County with the highest number of students and staff registered by May 3 will be the lucky winners!

To be eligible for the MN Twins visit, you must include students, staff, and school families in the challenge.

Questions? Send an e-mail to anne.nelson@hennepin.us



Thank you for your interest in the 2017 Step To It Challenge (STIC) for Hennepin County elementary schools. This toolkit has all the information you need to launch the program at your school. If you have questions, please contact Anne Nelson anne.nelson@hennepin.us

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Groundwork

There are three steps to laying the groundwork for the Step To It Challenge.

Step 1: Review the coordinator responsibilities

The school coordinator:

- Coordinates the challenge at their school.
- Acts as a liaison with the Step To It Challenge staff at Hennepin County.
- Helps build a team and support students before and during the challenge.
- Manages the school group on the Step To It Web site.

The school coordinator can also:

- View and edit member account information.
- Approve group membership requests and invite individuals to join the group.
- View step totals for the group.
- Track their school's progress.

- View STIC school group reports.

Step 2: Review the timeline

March/April:

- Explain the program to your school staff.
- Start talking about the program to students and hang the posters around the building.
- Send the parent newsletter article and/or promotional flyer home with kids. (See sample newsletter article on page 7.)

April:

- Do weekly announcements about registration, talking about the chance to win a Twins visit, how many people from your school are registered, etc. (*See sample e-mails and announcements for ideas on page 6.*)

May:

- Send a weekly motivational e-mail. (optional)
- Conduct the random drawing for the Twins tickets.

Step 3: Inform the entire school staff

Inform your staff that your school will be taking part in Step To It Challenge by using the program description below or referring them to the STIC web site www.steptoit.org.

Program description

What is the Step To It Challenge?

The Step To It Challenge is a fun, friendly physical activity program that encourages students, their families, and school staff to track their physical activity over four weeks.

Important Talking Points:

- STIC is for all students, staff, and families.
- Three elementary schools in Hennepin County **with the most people registered** by May 3 will win a visit from a Minnesota Twins player, the Twins mascot TC Bear, and the Twins strength and conditioning coach.
- Your school will also receive Twins tickets to use as an incentive.
- Information will be sent home to parents about the program in March.
- These are the important dates to remember:

April 1:	Online registration opens
May 1:	STIC starts
May 6:	Winners of the school MN Twins visit announced
May 28:	STIC ends

Promotion

Marketing materials

There are four promotional pieces to STIC:

1. Posters with TC Bear to be hung in visible locations in the school starting in March.
2. Parent newsletter/flyer to be sent home with kids in March.
3. Brochure to be available in the school office starting in March.
4. Step Log to be available in the school office starting in March.

To reduce your printing costs, we can print a limited number of each item. Just let us know.

There are also two *optional* promotional pieces to STIC:

1. Weekly school announcements to promote STIC registration during April.
2. Weekly e-mail messages that can be sent to your school's STIC participants.

Incentive information

There are four ways to win incentives for STIC participation:

Two ways are through the school:

- Three elementary schools in Hennepin County **with the most people registered** by May 1 will win a visit from a Minnesota Twins player, the Twins mascot TC Bear, and the Twins strength and conditioning coach. *To level the playing field, one visit will be awarded to schools with student enrollment of more than 575, one will be awarded to schools with enrollment of 575 or less, and one award visit is TBD.*
- Each participating school will be given a number of Twins tickets to use in a random drawing throughout the challenge.

Two ways are through the community that participants choose to walk for when they register for the challenge:

- Participants can also win a STIC t-shirt through random drawings conducted by the communities participating in the challenge.
- Participants can also win MN Twins tickets through random drawings conducted by the communities participating in the challenge.

Implementation and Administration

Register yourself

You must first register as an individual. (*Remember that you cannot register for the challenge until April 1.*) To register as an individual, go to www.steptoit.org, click the **Take the challenge** button on main page, sign yourself up, and click **Submit**. If you've entered all of the required

registration information correctly, you will see a message confirming the registration was successful. You will also receive an e-mail confirmation.

Join your school group

Now that you are registered, you can join your school's group. (*Hennepin County staff will create your school's group.*)

1. If you are not already signed-in to your account, sign in using your username and password.
2. Click on Groups on the top menu to expand the options. Select **Join Groups**. This will bring you to an alphabetical listing of all groups.
3. Find your school group on the list and click **Join**. You will see a notification that your request to join the group has been sent to the Administrator (Hennepin County STIC staff) of the group.
4. You can view your group membership information on your **My Account** page.
5. Once you are an active member of a group, your steps count toward the group total.

Now that you are registered for the Challenge and an active member of your school's group, you are all ready for the Challenge! Log your steps during the Challenge under the **My Activity** page. You can log your steps daily or weekly throughout the challenge. You can also choose from a variety of activities, enter the number of minutes you performed the activity, and your entry will automatically be converted into steps.

Manage your school group

As the school coordinator you can:

- Approve group membership requests and invite individuals to join the group.
- View and edit member account information.
- View step totals for the group.

To view these options, log on to the STIC Web site. Click on the **Groups** link that appears on the top navigation menu and then click on **Manage groups**.

View school reports

There are two reports you can see as a school coordinator:

1. **Group vs group.** Find this report under the Groups link in the top navigation menu. Select School from the drop down. This will show you all participating schools, ranked high to low by **total** participant steps. See high to low **averages** by clicking the table heading Average steps. Filter the list further by picking a week from the drop down menu. This report can be exported to Excel for further filtering and sorting.
2. **Group progress.** Your school participants, ranked high to low by **total** participant steps. See high to low **averages** by clicking the table heading Average steps. Filter the list further by picking a week from the drop down menu. This report can be exported to Excel for further filtering and sorting.

Support

FAQ

How will my school know if we've won the Twins visit?

If your school wins the Twins visit, we will send you an e-mail and you will be contacted by a MN Twins representative to set up a date for the visit.

Can people who don't have access to a computer participate in STIC?

Yes. They can fill out a paper registration form and mail or fax it to us. We will enter their information into the STIC database. Then they can keep track of their activity throughout the challenge on the paper tracking log and mail or fax it in to us on a weekly basis.

How can a small school compete against a large school in terms of participation?

To keep the playing field even, one Twins visit will be awarded to a school with 575 or fewer student enrollment, and one will be awarded to a school with more than 575 enrollment.

Accompanying documents

- **Promotional pieces:** *We can print a limited number of each of these for you, just let us know.*
 - **STIC poster**
 - **STIC parent flyer**
 - **STIC brochure**
 - **STIC step log**

Sample e-mail messages or school announcements for April and May

Kickoff message for school announcements

Feature the Step to it video and tailor the below message for your school announcements.

[Link to Step to it video.](#)

Join TC Bear and **NAME OF SCHOOL HERE** in getting active and building healthy habits this spring.

Register for our school's Step to it challenge team.

To participate in the challenge, all you have to do is track your activity during the month of May. All types of activities count as steps, not just walking. See how many steps you can take by playing sports, biking, dancing – anything that gets you moving.

By registering for the challenge, you could also help our school win a visit from the Minnesota Twins.

This upcoming video explains more about the challenge. Also remind your parents to read the information going home **in XYZ location**.

Week 1:

Today's the first day you can register for the Step To It Challenge! We want our school to win a visit from a MN Twins player and TC Bear, so make sure you and your family sign up for the Challenge. It's free! Go to www.steptoit.org.

Week 2:

Have you and your family signed up for the Step To It Challenge? Help our school win a visit from the MN Twins! Go to www.steptoit.org, and join!

Week 3:

Show everyone how physically active you are by joining the Step To It Challenge! Whatever you do—walking, playing, biking, chores—can all be logged on the web site and counted towards your steps! Go to www.steptoit.org.

Week 4:

Have you and your family signed up for the Step To It Challenge? Make physical activity a part of your day! Go to www.steptoit.org and sign up. It's free!!

Week 5:

Are you ready to move more? Shake your sillies out? Hop, skip, and jump? Run, play, and dance the day away? We hope so! The Step To It Challenge begins Sunday, May 1. Ready, Set, Step To It!

Week 6: *(We will inform you of which two schools won the MN Twins visit and you can decide if you want to announce it to your students and staff).*

If you want to participate in the fun of the Step To It Challenge it's not too late to join! Just go to www.steptoit.org and sign up!

Week 7:

Right now our school has _____ number of steps in the challenge! Woo hoo! We want to keep that number high, so make sure you and your family log your activity. Whether it's walking, playing, or doing chores, it all counts.

Week 8:

Have you ever been told that you watch too much TV or that you need to exercise more? One way to be more active is to exercise during commercials! You can try sit-ups during food commercials, push-ups during car commercials, jumping jacks during household cleaner commercials, and running in place during beauty product commercials. Make your own list and encourage your family to join you. Then, remember to log all the activity on the Step To It Web site.

Week 9:

The Step To It Challenge is coming to a close; it ends May 28. We hope you had fun and that you'll continue to be active! Walk, bike, run, play, do chores ... just keep moving!

Tips for STIC messaging:

- Use the school reports on the Web site to inform participants of school step totals.
- If your school does any STIC activities, put that information into the messaging.
- Highlight some of the students, staff, or families who actively log their steps.

Newsletter article for parents

Join our school's Step to it challenge team

NAME OF SCHOOL HERE is joining TC Bear in building healthy habits this spring.

We're encouraging students and families to join our school's Step to it challenge team.

Hennepin County's Step to it challenge is a four-week physical activity program during the month of May that encourages people of all ages and abilities to move more.

The challenge is a great way for kids, parents and families to spend time together and become more active. As part of the challenge, participants log their activity. Anything counts as steps, from dancing to biking, manual wheelchair use to Zumba.

By registering for the challenge, you could also help our school win a visit from the Minnesota Twins.

See the attached materials for more information.

Visit steptoit.org to join the challenge.

Note: Attach the Step to it poster and/or brochure to this article.

STIC school activity ideas

School yard clean up (each minute is equivalent to 145 steps)

Make an after school activity of cleaning up the school yard. Get a couple of trash bags and have the students gather up litter, sticks, rocks, etc. Remind them to log the activity on the STIC Web site.

Screen free night

Designate one evening during STIC for your students and their families to be free of TV, computers, cell phones, etc., for at least 15 minutes. Families can instead do something physically active together.

Five Classroom Activity Bursts (each minute is equivalent to 106 steps)

1. Sports Break (2 minutes)

Each segment will be done continuously for 30 seconds

Swing an imaginary baseball bat. Wind up and pitch a baseball. Catch a fly ball.

Dribble an imaginary basketball through legs, behind back, jump, and shoot.

Hit an imaginary tennis ball with a forehand swing, a backhand swing, a serve, and a volley.

Throw an imaginary football for a long pass and kick a field goal.

2. Basic Boot Camp (2 minutes)

Each segment will be done continuously for 30 seconds

Wall push ups
Jump rope with an imaginary rope
Side bends, alternating right and left side
Jumping jacks

3. Jump To It (2 minutes)

Each segment will be done continuously for 30 seconds

Jump with arms reaching up for the sky
Jump up from a leg squat position
Hop on one foot
Hop on other foot

4. Animal Actions (2 minutes)

Each segment will be done continuously for 30 seconds

Swim like a fish
Prance like a horse
Hop like a frog
Walk like an elephant

5. Blast Off (2 minutes)

Each segment will be done continuously for 20 seconds

Very slowly bring knees up, alternating legs
Blast Off! Same movement as fast as you can
Very slowly jog in place
Blast Off! Jog in place as fast as you can
Very slowly punch fist up in air, alternating arms
Blast Off! Same movement as fast as you can

