

Active Living Research

Alliance for a Healthier Generation

American Association of School Administrators

American Heart Association

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum

ChangeLab Solutions

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Joint Use Task Force

FAME Corporation

Kaboom

Mississippi Department of Education

NAACP

National Association of State of Boards of Education

National Congress of American Indians

National League of Cities

National Recreation and Parks Association

Ohio Department of Health

Prevention Institute

Public Health Law Center

Safe Routes to School National Partnership

Salud America

Tennessee Recreation and Parks Association

YMCA of the USA

The National Shared Use Task Force (“Task Force”), a network of national and regional community-based organizations, advocacy groups, faith-based organizations, and professional associations recognizes the importance of shared use as a strategy to increase opportunities for physical activity, particularly in under-resourced communities and communities of color. In an era of limited resources and high rates of chronic disease, the Task Force believes it is imperative to seek solutions that maximize the use of existing community assets and provide families and individuals with safe places to play and be physically active.

Shared use – also called “joint use” and “community use” – occurs when government entities or other organizations agree to open or broaden access to their property and/or facilities for community use, such as recreational activity. Partnerships can be formal (e.g., based on a written legal document) or informal (e.g., based on historical practice). Formal arrangements are often documented through an agreement that sets forth the terms and conditions for the shared use of the property or facility. Successful partnerships generally rely on the pooling of resources to expand community access and utilize public space more efficiently.

Studies conducted across a diverse range of communities indicate that shared use is an effective strategy to promote physical activity among children and adults. Across all communities, children who have access to an open schoolyard are significantly more physically active than children who do not. Additionally, providing physical activity programs significantly increases the use of open schoolyards. A study of seven under-resourced school districts in Los Angeles County found that community members used open facilities at schools where programs were offered (e.g., swimming, aerobic dance classes, walking clubs, etc.) 16 times more often than they used open schools without activity programming.

For communities of color, who suffer disproportionate rates of chronic disease, access to neighborhood-based opportunities for physical activity supports increased levels of activity across all ages. Moreover, costs and staffing issues are often obstacles to securing recreational space, and shared use can be an effective, low-cost solution to maximize existing resources. Shared use of schoolyards and public property can also allow communities to “reclaim” their community space, address issues of violence, and create greater cohesion.

Communities across the nation are pursuing shared use policies and agreements successfully. To support their work and to help more localities navigate shared use effectively and efficiently, the National Shared Use Task Force has identified various stakeholders, both within and outside of government, that can help make shared use a reality.



<p><b>School Administrators and School Board Members</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutionalize shared use within school districts’ key policies and planning efforts and inform state-level discourse on sustainable funding for shared use (e.g. school bonds)</li> <li>• Provide leadership around adoption and implementation of shared use practices</li> <li>• Encourage states and cities to include shared use in long-range school planning efforts to maximize public resources</li> <li>• Identify schools’ liability concerns and other challenges; obtain training and technical assistance on how to overcome these barriers</li> <li>• Encourage and support shared use in local school wellness policies</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Community-based Organizations</b></p>	
<p>Faith-based Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support shared use and encourage other groups, communities, and institutions to employ shared use</li> <li>• Adopt and implement shared use within faith-based facilities and spaces</li> <li>• Participate in the shared use discourse</li> <li>• Consider faith-based institutions as a part of the physical activity landscape, as having facilities that can be used to implement shared use practices</li> <li>• Engage faith-based communities and ministries to provide oversight and/or programming at shared use facilities (e.g. Zumba, aerobic classes, gardening instructions)</li> <li>• Engage with leaders at faith-based institutions in under-served communities to increase their understanding of the value and impact shared use can have</li> </ul>
<p>Family and Neighborhood Groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for shared use to school, city and county agencies</li> <li>• Advance policies locally and in neighborhoods with the most need</li> <li>• Participate on share use advisory groups or committees</li> <li>• Recruit community members to support shared use locally</li> </ul>
<p>Youth Development and Advocacy Groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultivate a culture among youth to articulate shared use as a practice they want implemented in their community</li> <li>• Train youth advocates to advocate for shared use implementation and policy adoption</li> <li>• Collaborate with after school providers to acknowledge that shared use provides space for after-school program providers</li> </ul>

## Other

### Academic and Higher- Learning Institutions

- Develop and include evaluation measures in shared use to policies to help build an evidence base that supports shared use and to improve shared use practices

### Funders, Philanthropies and Grant- Making Institutions

- Advance momentum for shared use by encouraging grantees to pursue it as a strategy to increase physical activity and maximize community resources
- Prioritize funding for shared use efforts, including shared use pilot projects and efforts that provide training and technical assistance to schools, cities and community –based organizations so they can adopt and implement shared use
- Fund research to grow the evidence base
- Diversify the funding pool to include, capital, operational, and some programmatic cost to support shared use

