

school rewarded for emphasis on health

Huntington Place Elementary earns national recognition

By Drew Taylor
Staff Writer

Helping children realize the importance of making wise decisions could hold the key to guiding them toward a healthier lifestyle, one Tuscaloosa educator says.

"Our whole mindset is about teaching students how to make good choices," said Andrea Hamner, principal at Huntington Place Elementary School.

There's evidence Huntington's formula works: A national organization recently honored the school's efforts to encourage students to lead healthier lives.

The school has been recognized by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation as being one of "America's Healthiest Schools," joining the ranks of 322 schools across the country to earn the distinction.

Huntington Place, which received the organization's bronze award for the 2017-18 school year, was one of seven schools in Alabama to be recognized by the group. The alliance's criteria included schools that met or exceeded federal nutrition standards, offered breakfast daily, implemented wellness policies and provided students with at least an hour of physical education per week.

Quality of health is vital to a state's well-being and Alabama has traditionally ranked low in terms of health care, especially among children. A recent WalletHub study ranked Alabama 38th in nation

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Physical education teacher Anita Davis leads students during physical education class at Huntington Place Elementary School in Northport on Wednesday. The school was selected as one of America's Healthiest Schools and is one of only seven in the state to garner the award.

[STAFF PHOTO/GARY COSBY JR.]



Physical education teacher Anita Davis prepares students for a run during physical education class at Huntington Place Elementary School in Northport Wednesday. The school was selected as one of America's Healthiest Schools and is one of only seven in the state to garner the award. [STAFF PHOTO/GARY COSBY JR.]

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Tips for raising a healthy child

Schedule activities: Parents can help their child stay active by walking together, playing catch or playing games like hopscotch. **Limit screen time:** Take the TV and computer out of your kid's room. Set a daily or weekly limit. Experts suggest no more than two hours of TV time per day for kids. **Plan healthy meals:** Put aside time on the weekend to prepare food you can freeze now and eat later. Frozen fruits and vegetables can be added to family meals. **Make nutrition fun:** Plant a garden and eat what you harvest. Use cookie cutter to turn food into fun shapes. **Swap out unhealthy foods:** Cook with olive oil, not butter. Replace white rice with brown rice. Switch to less-sugary cereals. **Be a role model:** Set an example for your child by eating right, exercising regularly and not smoking.

Source: WebMD