

Balance First (USA)

<http://school.discoveryeducation.com/balancefirst/>

Section I: Summary

America On the Move, Discovery Education and the Smart Spot program from PepsiCo have partnered to create Balance First™, a multimedia, standards-based program that focuses on the balance between food choices and physical activity. Balance First™ helps students develop health-promoting habits that will enhance their lives. The program teaches students about energy balance — balancing the foods we choose with regular physical activity, a simple concept that can help students understand and manage their own health.

Section II: Statement of purpose

Balance First is an educational program aimed at elementary schools created by the [America on the Move Foundation](#), [Discovery Education](#), and [PepsiCo](#) that focuses on the "balance between food choices and physical activity." The program was initiated in response to the fact that according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- Sixty-five percent of Americans are now overweight or obese. Obesity is increasing in every age, ethnicity and in both genders.
- Over the past two decades, the percentage of overweight adolescents has tripled.
- Nearly half of American youth ages 12 to 21 are not vigorously active on a regular basis.
- Fourteen percent of young people report no recent physical activity.

Launched in 2005, Balance First seeks to empower young people by helping them understand and manage their health-related choices. We know that balancing what you eat with regular energy expenditure is key to lifelong health.

America On the Move, Discovery Education, and the Smart Spot™ Program from PepsiCo have joined together to create Balance First,™ a multimedia, standards-based program that focuses on the balance between calories in and calories out. Balance First™ has been created to help your students develop health-promoting patterns that will enhance their lives. The kit components work together to teach your students about energy balance—balancing the foods we choose with regular physical activity. Energy balance

is a simple concept that can help students understand and manage their own health.

The culminating activity in Balance First™ asks students to make small, manageable changes to their own eating and physical activity patterns based on what they've learned. They're encouraged to assess their current patterns honestly and to make their own choices about what and how much they'd like to change.

To sustain these changes, students need support from the important adults in their lives, including teachers and parents. By modeling these eating and activity behaviors, you can positively influence your students' future health. For information and support on getting started, visit www.americaonthemove.org. America On the Move and additional resources are listed on page 17. To help extend this message to those at home, a letter to parents or guardians is included on page 16.

Teachers are encouraged to make a real difference in the lifelong health of your students. By bringing Balance First™ into your classroom helps students start on a path to a healthier life. The Balance First materials help students consider making a better balance between what you choose and how you move. The program The Balance First(TM) kit that middle school teachers will be receiving contains a 16-page Teacher's Guide with five standards-based lesson plans that focus on physical activity and food choices, a classroom poster, 50 student magazines and the Discovery School Health CD-ROM from Discovery Education. Teachers can also download the lesson plans and other materials at Discovery Education's DiscoverySchool.com Web site (<http://www.discoveryschool.com/balancefirst>).

Section III: Outcomes

Section IV: Additional resources

<http://school.discoveryeducation.com/balancefirst/pdf/teachersGuide.pdf>