In 2007, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provided funding to initiate development of a national strategic plan for increasing physical activity in the U.S. population. To guide the process, national-level organizational partners were recruited and their representatives formed a Coordinating Committee, which led a public-private coalition. In early 2008, the Coordinating Committee held its first in-person meeting to make decisions regarding the vision, mission, and goals of the National Physical Activity Plan (NPAP) as well as determine the organizational scheme of the NPAP.

Organizational Partners and Affiliates

Organizations that provided a one-time financial contribution to the development of the NPAP had the opportunity to select a representative to serve on the NPAP Coordinating Committee and participate in regular conference calls and in-person meetings. These Coordinating Committee-level organizations were recognized as NPAP Organizational Partners. Organizations interested in staying informed on the development of the NPAP but that did not participate at the Coordinating Committee level had the opportunity to select a representative to receive regular communication about the NPAP. These organizations were recognized as Organizational Affiliates.

National Physical Activity Plan Alliance

In 2013, the informal coalition that was led by the Coordinating Committee created the National Physical Activity Plan Alliance (NPAPA), a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. The Organizational Partner representatives that had served on the Coordinating Committee became the NPAPA Board of Directors. Individual Board members were selected to serve as officers in
the roles of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Board of Directors adopted formal bylaws for governance of the NPAPA.

**Management**

Throughout its history the NPAP Coordinating Committee and NPAPA have been managed by a team based in the Arnold School of Public Health at the University of South Carolina (USC). This team, working under the direction of Russell Pate, has been comprised of USC staff members and graduate assistants who have committed varying percentages of effort to the organization. Key staff members have included Dan Bornstein, Janna Borden, Morgan Clennin and Kate Olscamp. Financial support for management staff has come from CDC, from conference-related income, and from resources provided by Organizational Partners. Financial management services have been contributed by the American College of Sports Medicine. A number of grants supporting NPAP special projects have been funded by CDC, and in all cases those grants have been awarded to and managed by the University of South Carolina.

**Committee Structure**

Much of the work of the NPAPA has been accomplished by standing committees that function under the direction of the NPAPA Board of Directors and its officers. Committee membership has been made up of volunteers with expertise in the subject matter that each committee is intended to address.

The NPAP is organized around nine societal sectors: Healthcare; Education; Business and Industry; Transportation, Land Use, and Community Design; Sport; Faith-Based Settings; Mass Media; Public Health; and Community Recreation, Fitness, and Parks. Each sector represented in the NPAP has a committee comprised of 8-12 members with expertise related to initiatives to promote physical activity in the sector to which he or she is appointed. The NPAP standing sector committees perform a number of NPAP functions including prioritizing sector strategies, suggesting revisions to the NPAP, and identifying metrics for evaluation of Plan implementation. In addition,
committees are called upon to provide guidance on special projects undertaken by National Physical Activity Plan Alliance Board.

Additional standing committees include the Plan Executive Committee, Communications Committee, and Colleges and Universities Committee. The purpose of the Plan Executive Committee is to review the recommendations of the Standing Sector Committees. In addition, the committee will revise the overarching strategies of the NPAP to reflect the updates to the Plan. The NPAPA Communications Committee was established to advise the NPAPA Board on matters pertaining to communicating with policy makers and the general public about physical activity. The purpose of the NPAPA Colleges and Universities Committee is to explore opportunities for implementing the NPAP on college campuses and integrating lessons on the NPAP in course curricula.

Plan Development

2010 National Physical Activity Plan

The first U.S. National Physical Activity Plan was released in 2010 to complement and extend the impact of the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. In July 2009, the first NPAP conference was held in Washington D.C. to facilitate development of the Plan and highlight the evidence supporting policy change that could ultimately lead to increases in population levels of physical activity. In May 2010, the first U.S. National Physical Activity Plan was released. It included a comprehensive set of evidence-based policies, programs, and initiatives designed to increase physical activity in all segments of the American population. The Plan was guided by a vision, “One day, all Americans will be physically active, and they will live, work and play in environments that encourage and support regular physical activity.”

2016 National Physical Activity Plan

The 2016 Plan builds on the first U.S. National Physical Activity Plan. Like the original Plan, the 2016 Plan was developed through a process that
engaged hundreds of professionals, researchers, and leaders from public and private organizations. The revised NPAP was organized into nine societal sectors and Overarching Priorities to increase physical activity. Two sectors were added, Faith-Based Settings and Sport. To guide in the revision process, the NPAPA hosted a national conference that highlighted important developments and opportunities in physical activity and public health. Sector Expert Panels presented suggested updates to the Plan based on the most current state of science, policy, and practice. The revised U.S. National Physical Activity Plan was released on April 20, 2016 at the National Press Club in Washington D.C.

A complete timeline of the history of the NPAP (2007-2018) is provided at the end of this document.

Communications Activities

Newsletter and Social Media

Over the last ten years the communication efforts of the NPAPA have focused on the vision outlined in the NPAP. Communication efforts have sought to increase awareness and utilization of the NPAP by organizations and communities working to promote physical activity in the American population. Therefore, the audience of NPAPA communication efforts is broad, ranging from researchers, practitioners, policymakers, community leaders, and educators. NPAPA has worked to reach these audiences through an email newsletter, social media engagement, and promotional videos.

- **Newsletter:** The NPAPA e-newsletter is distributed to over 4,000 individuals each month and includes updates from the Alliance, stories from the field, news articles, and a list of upcoming webinars and conferences.
- **Social Media:** The NPAPA twitter and Facebook profiles allow the Alliance to connect with nearly 1,500 followers and share information related to partner activities, upcoming events, news stories, and resources. Messages using the hashtags #NPAPSectorSaturday and #NPAPTacticTuesday highlight specific aspects of the Plan itself. While
#NPAPinAction and #VoicesofNPAPA focus on the programs and individuals helping to make NPAPA a success.

- **Promotional Videos:** The NPAPA [YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com) is home to recordings of several NPAPA in-person release events, as well as an [introductory video](https://www.youtube.com) that outlines the vision and history of the Alliance.

### Commentaries

The NPAPA began publishing commentaries in 2015. Commentaries are brief written pieces designed to highlight timely and thought-provoking physical activity issues of interest. NPAPA has published [14 commentaries](https://www.npapa.org) by experts in a variety of physical activity related fields. Commentaries are presented in one of two formats – op-ed style or question and answer.

### Dissemination Projects

NPAPA has utilized its communication networks in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to disseminate several important documents and reports. These opportunities serve to elevate awareness of both the Alliance and the Plan.

- **2013:** The *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans Midcourse Report: Strategies to Increase Physical Activity Among Youth* identifies evidence-based interventions that may be used to increase physical activity in children ages 3 to 17 years. Intervention strategies are organized around 5 settings – school, preschool and childcare, community, family and home, and primary health care.

- **2015:** *Step it Up! The Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities* encourages all Americans to be more physically active through walking, and urges communities across the nation to improve walkability by providing safe and easy opportunities for pedestrian activity for people of all ages and abilities.

- **2018:** The *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition* provides evidence-based recommendations for Americans ages 3 years and over and advises on how physical activity can help promote health and reduce the risk of chronic disease. In addition to
disseminating the Guidelines through the usual NPAPA communication channels, Russ Pate, Chairman of the NPAPA Board, participated on an expert panel during the in-person release event, and the NPAPA hosted an informational webinar on the Guidelines soon after the release.

**Special Projects**

**U.S. Report Cards on Physical Activity in Children and Youth**

Under the leadership of Peter Katzmarzyk (Pennington Biomedical Research Center), the NPAPA has produced and disseminated three U.S. Report Cards on Physical Activity in Children and Youth (2014, 2016, 2018). The primary goal of the Report Cards is to assess the levels of physical activity and sedentary behaviors in American children and youth, facilitators and barriers for physical activity, and health outcomes related to physical activity.

**U.S. Report Card on Walking and Walkable Communities**

The primary goal of the 2017 United States Report Card on Walking and Walkable Communities is to assess the extent to which the U.S. population and U.S. communities meet selected standards for participating in walking and providing physical and social supports for walking behavior. The 2017 Report Card is the first comprehensive, national assessment of walking and walkability in the U.S. Factors assessed include both individual and community level factors.

**Walking and Walkable Communities Plan**

In 2018, the NPAPA released *Promoting Walking and Walkable Communities – Cross-Sector Recommendations from the National Physical Activity Plan Alliance*. The Recommendations outline a strategy for increasing walking in the U.S. population. The Recommendations suggest a new conceptual framework with six components including: policies, places, programming, cross-sector collaborations, data and monitoring, and resources and funding. The Recommendations include overarching
strategies for each component, and a selection of supporting priority tactics. The strategies and tactics call for changes in multiple societal sectors including transportation and community planning, public health, business and industry, education, and healthcare.

Communities of Practice

The NPAPA developed an evaluation framework for communities of practice (CoPs) in the physical activity and public health field. The primary activities of this project involved conducting a literature review of CoPs, identifying and working with an advisory committee, and interviewing key informants involved in CoPs. While the final deliverables for the funded project were submitted to CDC, the NPAPA plans to release user-friendly documents to provide a guide for those who would like to assess a CoP’s characteristics, processes, or outcomes/impacts.

Secular Changes in Physical Education

At the request of the President’s Council on Fitness, Sport, and Nutrition, the NPAPA formed an ad hoc committee to review the available evidence regarding secular changes in exposure to school-based physical education among American children and adolescents. The Secular Changes in Physical Education Exposure Committee was charged with developing metrics to assess physical education exposure over time, identifying the best resources to address each metric, and drawing conclusions based on the available evidence to develop a report summarizing their findings. The primary goal of the report was to explore the issue of physical education exposure over time in order to address the uncertainly about the magnitude and nature of changes in physical education exposure. The findings of this report show that physical education attendance among U.S. high school students has been below the recommended guidelines for the last two decades and that notable differences in attendance exist between grade level, sex, and race/ethnicity subgroups. The report concluded that policies and programs should be adopted that prioritize physical education in order to maximize its benefits.
Conferences

In July 2009, the NPAPA hosted the first of two national conferences. Over 300 registrants from public health, education, government, and non-profit organizations gathered to contribute to development of the first U.S. National Physical Activity Plan. Plenary sessions at the conference featured national and international experts in the field of physical activity and public health. Presentations highlighted evidence supporting policy change that could ultimately lead to increases in population levels of physical activity. In addition, breakout groups met throughout the conference to generate content for each of the societal sectors around which the Plan was being developed.

The second national conference, held in February 2015 highlighted important developments and opportunities in the physical activity and public health field through ten thematic panel sessions, poster presentations, and an awards ceremony recognizing organizations successfully implementing the NPAP. Attendees also discussed revisions to the National Physical Activity Plan. Sector Expert Panels presented suggested updates to the Plan based on the most current state of science, policy, and practice. Breakout sessions were held for each NPAP sector for a more in-depth discussion of the suggested updates. Sector panels used the feedback provided to finalize updates to the NPAP.

Publications

A growing number of publications related to the National Physical Activity Plan appear in the peer-reviewed literature covering an extensive list of topics including insight and evolution of the Plan, strategies and recommendations for increasing physical activity in youth, implications for public health care practice, compliance with national physical activity guidelines, evaluation of sector activities, and more.
**Financial Summary**

Revenue to support the NPAPA has come from multiple sources including federal grants, organizational partners, corporate sponsorships, and conference registration. Income to the NPAPA has provided for staff support, travel, two national conferences, events, and other day-to-day expenses such as telephone charges and office supplies. Prior to 2014, NPAPA’s funds were managed by the University of South Carolina. Beginning in 2014, after establishing NPAPA as a formal not-for-profit organization, most funds have been managed through a bank account.

**Timeline Map – Key Accomplishments**

2007  Seed funding from CDC  
Organizational Partners recruited  
Interim Coordinating Committee formed  
2008  Vision, mission, and goals developed  
2009  **NPAP Conference**  
Special issue of JPAH published (white papers)  
2010  First U.S. NPAP launched  
2011  MOU between NPAP Coordinating Committee and US DHHS established  
2013  **NPAPA** established as a formal non-profit organization  
2014  **U.S. Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth** (1st edition) released  
**Implementing Physical Activity Strategies** published  
Revision of NPAP initiated  
2015  **NPAP Congress**  
2016  2nd **U.S. NPAP** launched  
**U.S. Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth** (2nd edition) released  
2017  **Walking and Walkable Communities Report Card** released  
2018  **Promoting Walking and Walkable Communities – Cross Sector Recommendations** released  
**U.S. Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth** (3rd edition) released