

ND Children are on the Move to Better Health

The situation

Childhood obesity has more than tripled in the past 30 years. Some researchers consider children to be “overfed” but “undernourished.” Obese children are at higher risk for cardiovascular disease, with 70 percent showing at least one risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Obesity also increases the risk for diabetes, stroke, cancer and osteoarthritis.

Response

On the Move to Better Health is a five-week school-based curriculum for fifth-graders. It is based on MyPlate, the current icon for good nutrition. The curriculum aims to increase fruits, vegetables and calcium-rich foods in the diets of children and improve fitness habits. Parents receive newsletters and participate in goal setting and other family-based activities.

Impacts

From 2007 to 2013, 10,482 children and their families participated in On the Move to Better Health. Post-surveys with 2,100 children in 2012-13 showed the following:

- 62 percent drank less soda pop
- 59 percent chose more healthful snacks
- 59 percent consumed more milk and other dairy foods
- 58 percent increased their daily amount of physical activity
- 53 percent consumed more fruits and vegetables

Surveys with 837 parents in 2012-13 showed the following:

- 85 percent of families read the newsletters and 40 percent set a weekly goal
- 42 percent indicated their family's fruit consumption had increased
- 34 percent reported their family's vegetable consumption had increased
- 20 percent reported their family's whole-grain consumption had increased

Feedback

Children said:

- “It was very fun and interesting. I hope they do it again.”
- “I liked the part when we eat more dairy, fruits and veggies.”

Parents said:

- “She has talked a lot more about healthy eating and lets us know what is healthy.”
- “He reminds us we need to exercise as a family.”

Contact

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