

N.D. Children are On the Move to Better Health 2015-2016

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.

Extension 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 2016, 19,172 children and their families participated in On the Move to Better Health. Post-surveys with 2,910 children in 2015-16 showed the following as a result of the program:



50 percent consumed more dairy



55 percent drank less pop



52 percent chose healthier snacks



57 percent increased daily physical activity



50 percent ate more fruits and vegetables

Surveys with 1,053 parents in 2015-16 showed the following:

- 81 percent of parents/caregivers read the newsletter and 37 percent set a weekly goal.
- 35 percent increased their fruit consumption and 31 percent increased their vegetable consumption.
- 13 percent increased whole-grain intake.
- 18 percent increased their dairy consumption.

Ramsey County Impact

During the 2015-2016 school year, Agent Laite taught 74 children in one Devils Lake Middle School the five-week nutrition education program. Completed pre- and post-surveys showed the following results:

- 56.3 percent consumed more dairy
- 62 percent drank less pop
- 54.9 percent chose healthier snacks
- 62 percent increased daily physical activity
- 47.9 percent ate more fruits and vegetables
- 74.6 percent met their goals set at the beginning of the lessons

Ramsey County Feedback

Children said:

- “My goal was we were supposed to get active more. Now we play football outside everyday as a family. My dad even plays!”
- “Yes, yes, yes have this program again!”
- “(This program) Changes your mind to eat and drink healthy (foods).”

Public Value Statement

Improving health behaviors can increase quality of life and save millions of dollars in collective health-care costs for North Dakotans throughout their lifetime.

County Contact

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