Dunn County - On the Move Junior Program
Improves Nutritional Intake Among Children 2017-18

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.

The Situation
More than 30 percent of North Dakota children 2 to 5 years of age are considered overweight or obese (with a BMI-for-age above the 85th percentile). According to the Youth Behavior Risk Surveillance Survey (2015), 42 percent of North Dakota students in grades nine to 12 consumed vegetables less than one time daily, 75 percent of adolescents were not physically active at least 60 minutes per day, and about 12 percent were not physically active 60 minutes on at least one day during the seven days prior to the survey.

Extension Response
"On the Move Junior" is a five-week school-based curriculum for second-graders. It is based on MyPlate, the current icon for nutrition, and includes children's storybooks and hands-on activities. The curriculum aims to improve the variety of healthful foods that children consume, especially the amount of fruits and vegetables they consume. It also aims to improve fitness habits. Parents receive newsletters and participate in goal setting and other family-based activities.

Impacts
Since 2014, 6,947 children have participated. In 2017-18, 1,828 students in 25 counties completed the program.

According to survey results, 78 percent of parents read the weekly newsletter. Parents reported that their children asked questions about food (58 percent), offered help with food preparation (40 percent), requested healthful snacks (47 percent) and tried a new food (42 percent).

County Impact
In the 2017-18 academic year, 18 Dunn County youth participated in OTM Jr. Pre and post surveys indicated an increase in the number of students correctly identifying healthy snacks and physical activities. During the program, several students reported that they increased fruit intake (76 percent), increased vegetable intake (35 percent), and got more exercise (82 percent). Of the parents surveyed, all indicated that as a result of the curriculum they have noticed their child asking questions about food.

Local Feedback

Parent said:
"She liked the new things she learned about food and where it comes from."

Teacher said:
"[The students] learned a lot. This is a great foundation for them. At lunch, I often overhear[d] them talking about the food type/s they [were] eating."

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Resource Links
www.ag.ndsu.edu/food