Lake Agassiz Fifth Graders
On the Move to Better Health – Grand Forks County

Public Value Statement
Improving health behaviors can increase the quality of life and save millions of dollars in collective healthcare costs for North Dakotans throughout their lifetime.

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 of obese children showing at least one risk factor for cardiovascular disease.

Extension Response
On the Move to Better Health is a five-week school based curriculum that was presented to 65 fifth grade students at Lake Agassiz Elementary School by Extension educators Heinz and Kuster. Based on the MyPlate icon for good nutrition, the curriculum aims to increase the amount of fruits, vegetables and calcium-rich foods in the diets of children and improve fitness habits. Parents receive weekly newsletters, participate in family goal setting and other family activities.

Impacts
Post surveys conducted with students showed the following results:

- 50% increased consumption of fruits and vegetables
- 35% increased consumption of dairy foods and drank more milk.
- 33% decreased the amount of pop consumed and 48% increased consumption of water
- 46% chose healthier snacks
- 39% increased daily physical activity

Feedback
Students commented:
- “I like that I had to make goals because it really pushed me to make healthier choices.”
- “We set a family goal to drink 7-8 glasses of water a day per person. We have been good about reaching it.”
- I reached my goal of drinking 3 glasses of milk a day. “It is a good goal.”
- “I set a goal of not watching or playing video games. It gives me more time to get moving.”
- “I liked that it taught me to eat healthier than I actually was. I now eat fruit and vegetables with my meals.”

Teacher commented:
- A teacher noticed students were taking more vegetables at lunch than before. “One student would grab a salad every day!”

Primary Contact
MaKayla Heinz – Ext. Agent, Grand Forks County
Linda Kuster – Nutrition Education Assistant
151 South 4th St. S302, Grand Forks, ND 58201
701-780-8229
MaKayla.B.Heinz@ndsu.edu
Linda.Kuster@ndsu.edu

Resource Links
https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/extension/food