

Wellness 4 Uth: Increasing Health Through a School Based Wellness Program

Abstract

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### Abstract

**Background:** Approximately 32% of children ages 2-19 in America are overweight or obese and over 70 million children are expected to be obese by 2025. Obesity in children can cause significant medical and psychosocial problems. Educational interventions related to nutrition and physical activity during childhood could be the key to obesity prevention. Addressing nutrition in school can help increase healthy lifestyles in students.

**Methods:** This quality improvement project lasted 12 weeks and was separated into three modules, each incorporating two or three of the eight core principles of healthy living as defined in *Eat Well & Keep Moving: An Interdisciplinary Elementary Curriculum for Nutrition and Physical Activity*. An educational portion was offered for the first half of the session and the second half consisted of physical activity. BMI screenings, Healthy Habit Assessments, and Fitness Tests were done at the beginning and end of the intervention. There was also an assessment of knowledge done at the beginning and ending of each module.

**Results:** Healthy Habit Assessments scores showed no significant change in making healthy choices ( $p = 0.157$ ). None of the fitness test components showed significant change in physical fitness. Modules showed no significant changes in knowledge, p-values were 0.234, 0.461, and 0.102 respectively.

**Conclusion:** A 12-week wellness intervention may not be long enough to show significant changes in healthy behaviors and physical activity. The data provided by this project can inform other SBHCs or schools in general who are interested in preventing and treating childhood obesity by starting a school-based wellness program.