

**State Agency
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Annotated Bibliography**



National Food Service Management Institute
The University of Mississippi

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National Food Service Management Institute The University of Mississippi

Building the Future Through Child Nutrition

The National Food Service Management Institute was authorized by Congress in 1989 and established in 1990 at The University of Mississippi in Oxford and is operated in collaboration with The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. The Institute operates under a grant agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the National Food Service Management Institute is to improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination.

MISSION

The mission of the National Food Service Management Institute is to provide information and services that promote the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

VISION

The vision of the National Food Service Management Institute is to be the leader in providing education, research, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

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INTRODUCTION

The National Food Service Management Institute, Applied Research Division (NFSMI, ARD), routinely collects information on state agency-funded research related to Child Nutrition Programs (CNP). In the fall of 2008, state agency representatives responsible for overseeing CNPs were contacted via e-mail to provide ARD researchers information regarding state funded research utilizing an electronic survey. The electronic survey was developed by ARD researchers in order to collect information regarding any finished, unpublished research funded by the state agency since 2006. Seventy-three state agencies, representing the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and Child and Adult Care Program (CACFP), were contacted. Of the 73 state agencies, four provided the requested information for a total of 16 research projects, five replied that their state had no current research, and 53 did not respond. This report contains summaries of state agency-funded research during 2006-2008.

We appreciate the response from state agency representatives and their willingness to share the results of their research with others. For more information about these studies, a state agency contact is included with each project summary.

WASHINGTON

EFFECT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF PROVISION 2 IN ALL SCHOOLS IN A SCHOOL DISTRICT ON STATE STANDARD TEST SCORES

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if the implementation of Provision 2 in all schools within the Toppenish School District would have an effect on state standard test scores.

Methodology

Researchers compared pre-implementation and five year post-implementation test scores. A comparative analysis was conducted on the test scores of Provision 2 schools in the Toppenish School District and schools within the peer school district having similar demographics.

Major Study Findings

Over the five year period, Provision 2 schools in the Toppenish School District had substantially higher test scores than schools in the comparative district.

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MASSACHUSETTS

NUTRITION RESOURCES FOR NUTRITION PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS AND PERSONNEL IN SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND SUMMER FOOD PROGRAMS

Overview of the Study

The purpose of the study was to expand access of nutrition resources for providers and consumers of child and adult care nutrition programs and improve services to child nutrition programs and personnel, especially those with school breakfast and summer food service programs. Objectives were to identify barriers of school breakfast/summer food service participation, develop interventions to increase participation, and evaluate the impacts of these interventions on students and their parents/caregivers.

Methodology

Researchers conducted focus groups with parents/caregivers, school nutrition personnel, and students in three school districts. The topic of the focus groups was to identify effective messages, modes of delivery, and program/policy changes to promote school breakfast/summer food service programs and healthier eating in central and western Massachusetts school districts and rural communities. Motivational interview (MI) sessions were also conducted with district administrators and school principals from the same communities to stimulate ideas for making changes in the school breakfast program.

Major Study Findings

- The focus groups findings identified barriers to participation as well as suggestions for increasing participation.
- Barriers to school breakfast included: price, quality and variety of food, timing of breakfast, conflict with before-school activities, transportation schedules, stigma attached to the program, negative attitude of staff, and paperwork (application process, language barriers).
- Suggestions for increasing participation in the school breakfast program included: improve food quality, promote the program and menus to parents/caregivers, involve parents/caregivers, improve application materials (simplify, more languages), improve breakfast environment, and offer Universal Breakfast.
- Barriers to participation in the summer food service program included: quality and variety of food, location/environment of program, transportation to program site, possible stigma attached to the program, cost of meal to adult caregivers, and confusion about eligibility.

- Suggestions for increasing participation in the summer food service program included: improve meals (more hot food, local foods), promote program before program begins through media outlets (target students), improve communication about eligibility (available to all, no paperwork/application), foods available for 0-4 year olds, rainy day policies, more activities including food activities for children, and increase parent/community involvement.
- The MI sessions were effective at gaining new information and insight about the character of individual schools and their challenges. All of the principals recognized and valued the benefits of a school breakfast program to their students; however, they also said they needed more resources, educational materials, and curricular activities, connecting physical activity and health.
- The outcomes of the MI sessions: allowed principals to process the discussion of school meals, helped to put a human face on issues of hunger and food insecurity, encouraged the principals to find solutions to their school's issues, and provided principals with new information from the focus groups in a non-threatening way.
- Collaboration with school nutrition director and staff was established to organize food tastings supporting breakfast area hunger coalition to increase breakfast and summer program promotions. Other initiatives undertaken included adding new foods such as mini-muffins to the breakfast menu and working with local farmers to increase the amount of local produce in meals, especially during the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).
- School Breakfast Program (SBP) participation rate increased substantially from an average of 90.9 to 134.4 breakfasts per day. SFSP data showed an increase from an average of 164 to 230 participants per day in 2006 and 2007, respectively. A development of classroom lessons to support these initiatives has been recommended.

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CHANGING THE SCENE EVALUATION

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Changing the Scene (CTS) toolkit and accompanying training on encouraging change within the schools and districts. Objectives were to identify areas of the school nutrition environment that were most often addressed by schools or districts trying to implement change, see whether changes were more common in schools receiving training compared to those that did not, and use information from participants in the CTS trainings to provide recommendations for future trainings conducted by the Massachusetts Department of Education (MA DOE).

Methodology

The Massachusetts School Nutrition Assessment (MA SNA) survey tool was administered to 296 districts. Structured focus groups were conducted with CTS training participants.

Major Study Findings

- The survey results indicated that the majority (76%) of school districts reported having policies which promote fruit and vegetable offerings as a way of promoting healthy food choices.
- Many districts also reported having policies restricting the sale of certain types of foods with minimal nutritional value (FMNV) in à la carte lines, vending machines, canteens and school stores, and concession stands.
- The majority (64%) of districts reported having policies promoting the sale of fruits and vegetables in à la carte lines, vending machines, and concession stands.
- Districts differed in the number of training opportunities they were able to support for food service staff: 32% supported fewer than three, 39% supported three, and 29% reported supporting 11-16 training opportunities.
- Only 52% of reporting districts have a policy requiring or recommending that schools in their district offer breakfast to students.
- Many schools reported making changes to improve their nutrition environments including: more whole grains and increasing the number of fruit and vegetable options to the breakfast, lunch, and à la carte lines in all schools.

- Schools participating in the CTS training were more likely than their matched counterparts to report that they:
 - Place materials such as posters promoting healthy eating habits in the school (70% versus 43%).
 - Met with parent organizations such as PTA/PTO to discuss the school food service program (64% versus 37%).
 - Alter product placement in the school breakfast line (47% versus 19%).
 - Have vending machines in their school (73% versus 48%).
- The two main themes that arose from focus group discussions with CTS Training participants were support and integration.
 - Support is needed at the district level from students, communities, and administrators to overcome barriers and act as facilitators to change the school nutrition environment.
 - Support is needed from the MA DOE through training opportunities.
 - Additional integration with other organizations, food service, health professionals, and communities is needed.
- Suggestions for technical assistance and support gathered from participants included:
 - Promoting the creation of state level policies and regulations regarding competitive foods in schools.
 - Providing opportunities for all school staff (e.g., custodians, principals, etc.) to receive professional development or training regarding the importance of the school nutrition environment.
 - Fostering communication and conduct outreach among principals, food service directors, and the local community.

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FOOD EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY TRAINING (FEAST)

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this project was to enhance the quality and safety of meals by improving safe food and equipment practices of school nutrition personnel. Objectives were to assess food equipment training needs of school nutrition personnel and to develop and evaluate school based instructional materials on safe operation and cleaning of food equipment.

Methodology

Researchers conducted a survey regarding food equipment training needs of school nutrition programs, including types of equipment and preferred training methods. Instructional materials were developed and pilot tested.

Major Study Findings

- Over 600 school nutrition directors were surveyed regarding food safety and equipment training needs including food preparation practices, types of equipment, employee demographics, and preferred training methods.
- The Massachusetts Food Equipment and Safety Training (FEAST) advisory group provided input on the content, design, and pilot testing of printed and video instructional materials.
- Three hundred Massachusetts school nutrition personnel were introduced to the fact sheets and training packet at a statewide Massachusetts Department of Education Conference in June 2006.
- A follow-up survey indicated that fact sheets were very important in teaching basic equipment operation, cleaning and sanitation, operation knowledge, and safe operation and equipment sanitation practices.
- A case control study was used to evaluate additional FEAST materials comparing using fact sheets only, fact sheets and video, and no intervention. Evaluation of the three formats indicated the importance of the demonstration with either fact sheets and/or video.
- Four workshops introducing the instruction packet with CD were conducted for 125 child nutrition program supervisors and assistants throughout Massachusetts.

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CALIFORNIA

EVALUATION OF THE CALIFORNIA FRESH START PROGRAM

Overview of the Study

In 2005, California enacted SB 281, which established the California Fresh Start Program (CFSP), in order to encourage and support schools in providing an additional serving of fruit and vegetables in the School Breakfast Program. The California Department of Education, Nutrition Services Division, administered the program, placing emphasis on increasing the provision of fresh California grown fruits and vegetables. The CFSP, the nation's first program allocating funds to increase consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables in a school nutrition program, reimbursed participating schools an additional ten cents for every breakfast when the school offered an additional serving of fruit and vegetables. SB 281 required an extensive evaluation of the CFSP implementation. The Center for Weight and Health, University of California, Berkeley (CWH/UCB), was employed as the independent evaluator.

Methodology

In 2006-07, CWH/UCB evaluated 69 diverse schools determined eligible from a randomly selected pool of 93 schools participating in the CFSP. Evaluation data was collected from the 69 participating schools. The evaluation data included demographics, school breakfast participation rates, breakfast menu production records and invoices, site observation data, and survey and interview data from students and school nutrition directors.

Major Study Findings

- The CFSP exceeded expectations in many areas of the schools included in the evaluation.
- The amount of fresh fruits and vegetables offered to students doubled.
- The amount of fresh fruit taken by students at breakfast increased to an even greater degree (up 136%).
- The variety of fruits and vegetables offered to students at breakfast increased substantially.
- The amount of fruit juice schools offered and students took at breakfast decreased.
- Participation in school breakfast increased by about two percent, enough to bring nearly one million dollars in additional federal meal reimbursement to the State of California.

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THE FEASIBILITY OF MANDATING SCHOOL BREAKFAST IN CALIFORNIA'S SEVERE NEED SCHOOLS: COSTS, CHALLENGES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview of the Study

This report was mandated by the California State Legislature regarding the requirements of Chapter 72 of the Statutes of 2006 (Assembly Bill 569/Garcia.) This measure required the California Department of Education to report to the State Legislature on the cost and feasibility of mandating all of the state severe need schools, kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12), participating in the School Breakfast Program (SBP). Severe need schools are those who have 40% or more of their students participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and are eligible for free or reduced price meals.

Methodology

Researchers from University of California, Los Angeles/West Ed, a research firm, randomly sampled 104 out of 570 California severe need schools not offering breakfast, yielding 73 school districts in the sample. Data collected included telephone interviews with food service directors and school business managers, site visits, and follow-up phone calls. An additional 11 districts were identified with one or more severe need schools that recently began providing the SBP. Seven of the eleven of these breakfast-adopter districts provided interview data.

Major Study Findings

- The study found that nine out of ten severe need schools in California are already participating in the SBP. Successful strategies employed by these schools to adopt and sustain SBP participation included: breakfast in the classroom, nutrition break breakfast, grab n' go breakfast, second chance breakfast, and breakfast on the bus.
- Some of the severe need schools that do not currently participate in the SBP reported significant challenges to adopting the program. Most commonly cited barriers included: logistics of correlating the program with bus and class schedules, anticipated lack of student participation, extra paper work required, and cost of the additional district nutrition services staff needed.
- Interviewees suggested a number of ways to make the SBP more feasible in severe need schools not currently offering the program. These include ensuring that school breakfast reimbursement rates cover all costs, helping recruit appropriate staff at a reasonable cost, addressing staff resistance, purchasing needed equipment, promoting the SBP to parents and children, coping with bus and class scheduling conflicts, and obtaining help with food transportation costs.

- The key recommendations from this study were to support the state requirement that severe need schools provide breakfast, but with a provision to permit those schools with special circumstances (e.g., schools with a large number of students who need medically required, individualized nutrition needs) to request a waiver from the State Board of Education.

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PENNSYLVANIA

PENNSYLVANIA ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW AND TRAINING (ART)

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this project was to implement strategies to reduce administrative errors in school meals programs.

Methodology

In April of 2007, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Food and Nutrition, presented six training sessions related to administrative errors in school food service programs. A series of three half-day sessions was presented in two locations, Harrisburg and Pittsburgh, PA. The session topics included Eligibility Determination, Verification, and Meal Counting and Claiming. The sessions were advertised to National School Lunch Program (NSLP) sponsors that had been identified as experiencing administrative errors in their programs, as well as to new sponsors of the NSLP. One hundred twenty-one individuals attended these sessions. An evaluation form was developed and distributed at each session. Three on-line modules were developed covering the administrative topics identified above. Each module includes objectives and practice questions. An accompanying User Guide was developed and is accessible through the Web site containing the modules. The modules were tested by 30 school food service directors.

Project Outcomes

- Based on the evaluations, the administrative training sessions were very well received.
- Participants expressed interest in continued training and many asked for refresher courses on a yearly basis. However, work responsibilities and time constraints continue to be barriers to attending face-to-face sessions.
- The User Guide for the on-line modules were distributed to 22 local education agencies that were determined to have been encountering administrative errors.

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PENNSYLVANIA'S SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM INITIATIVE THROUGH THE PROJECT PA BREAKFAST BRIGADE PROGRAM

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this project was to facilitate the initiation and expansion of School Breakfast Programs.

Methodology

In 2002, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Food and Nutrition, contracted with Penn State University through the collaboration known as Project PA to implement strategies for improving school breakfast participation in Pennsylvania. A need was identified in providing assistance to school food service directors, who were ready to initiate a breakfast program or take steps in improving an existing program. One of the strategies involved was providing one-on-one consultation. This strategy became known as the Project PA Breakfast Brigade. Breakfast Brigade members are school food service directors who are experts in school breakfast and available to provide this consultation free of charge to school districts. This phase of the project also included the development, distribution, and analysis of a survey regarding barriers to initiating School Breakfast Programs and resources needed to start School Breakfast Programs. Surveys were distributed to school food service directors with a school or schools having a free and reduced meals rate of 20% or greater and no School Breakfast Program.

Major Study Findings

- Breakfast Brigade members provided assistance to 43 school districts to initiate or expand School Breakfast Programs.
- The Breakfast Brigade Web site was updated and the School Breakfast Resources Web site was developed.
- Survey results showed that the top reported barriers to initiating School Breakfast Programs included: transportation issues, scheduling issues, labor costs, and staffing issues.
- Reported resources needed, familiarity with alternative breakfast service systems, and attitudes about school breakfast differed significantly when comparing directors from public and private local education agencies.

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NUTRITION CURRICULUM

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this project was to develop and pilot-test 16 nutrition education lessons for grades K-12 that can be downloaded from a public location on the Pennsylvania Department of Education Web site. Lessons contain active links allowing teachers to easily explore handouts, Web sites, and resources.

Methodology

In the fall of 2007, 16 priority nutrition topics were identified through a systematic process. The process included reviewing all current Pennsylvania nutrition curriculums, nutrition-related academic standards, and the Healthy People 2010 Nutrition objectives. Over the next six months, 16 lesson plans were drafted, reviewed, and revised based on feedback from teachers and nutrition consultants. Pilot testing occurred in schools that did and did not participate in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funded PA Advocates for Nutrition and Activity Programs. Lessons were revised based on pilot test feedback and submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Food and Nutrition.

Major Study Findings

- Sixteen pilot-tested nutrition education lesson plans were developed for grades K-12.
- Currently the Web site is being developed with the intention of posting the nutrition education lessons.

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CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM ELECTRONIC APPLICATION AND REIMBURSEMENT SYSTEM (CN PEARS)

Overview of the Study

PEARS is a Web-based Electronic Application and Reimbursement System used by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to administer the Child Nutrition Program, including the National School Lunch, School Breakfast, Afterschool Snack, Special Milk, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable, Coordinated Review Effort, Seamless Summer, Child and Adult Care Food, and Summer Food Service Programs.

Methodology

The CN PEARS system is a custom solution that has been developed by Colyar Consulting Group, Inc (CCG). The system is tailored to a great degree to match the needs of Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). CCG's services are significant due to their knowledge of the system and processes utilized by PDE and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In addition, CCG also provides software modifications, help desk services, and software maintenance and support.

Major Study Findings

- This is an ongoing study for the PDE.

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NUTRITION CURRICULUM

Overview of the Study

During the 2008-2009 school year, five nutrition education lesson plans were developed and pilot-tested. These lessons are designed to continue expanding the initial nutrition education curriculum.

Methodology

Five lessons were developed by nutrition professionals and reviewed by teachers and consultants. The final five lessons will be provided in an electronic format posted in a public area of the Pennsylvania Department of Education Web site.

Major Study Findings

- To date, this study is ongoing. The projected completion date is late summer 2009.
- Plans include five additional nutrition education lessons to further expand the nutrition curriculum available to teachers.

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BREAKFAST BRIGADE CONTINUATION AND SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROMOTION

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this project is to facilitate the initiation and expansion of School Breakfast Programs.

Methodology

This phase of the project involved a collection of School Breakfast Best Practices, delivery of a School Breakfast session at a PDE/PA Action for Healthy Kids Conference, development of a school breakfast tool kit, and promotion of the Breakfast Brigade.

Major Study Findings

- To date, this study is ongoing. The project was initiated in October 2008, so additional outcomes and findings have not yet been identified.

- A Web site has been set up for collection of School Breakfast Best Practices.

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TEAM NUTRITION LOCAL WELLNESS DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this demonstration project is to describe the local education agencies (LEAs) process in developing and implementing Local Wellness Policies and provide technical assistance to these LEAs in facilitating policy implementation. Case studies included descriptions of the individuals involved in policy development and implementation, LEAs implementation priorities, processes used, strengths and barriers to implementation, training and technical assistance needed, and outcomes associated with policy implementation. Pennsylvania is one of three states to receive funding to implement this demonstration project.

Methodology

Five agencies are serving as Demonstration LEAs and two agencies are serving as Comparison LEAs. Baseline data collection has been completed. Data collection methods include surveys, interviews, cafeteria observations, and competitive food inventories. Training needs are being assessed using a participatory strategies approach. Training and technical assistance has been provided for the development of action plans, nutrition education, school meal programs, communication regarding the local wellness policy, and measurement of policy implementation. LEAs are submitting monthly reports documenting policy implementation. Post data collection will take place in the spring of 2009.

Major Study Findings

- To date, this study is ongoing. Outcomes and findings will not be available until late summer of 2009.

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ACTION FOR HEALTHY KIDS CONFERENCE

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this project is to provide support for the Pennsylvania Department of Education/PA Action for Healthy Kids Wellness Conference.

Methodology

The support provided for the “Wellness and Academic Success: Educating the Whole Child” conference falls into four areas: Collection and Compilation of Promising Practices, Management and Support for Promising Practices Presenters, Development of Motivational Opening Segment, and Conference Evaluation. A Web site has been set up to collect Promising Practices related to implementation of Coordinated School Health. An advertisement regarding the search for Promising Practices was developed and sent to a variety of state-level organizations. Selected Promising Practices will be edited, laid out, and compiled into a manual that will be distributed to attendees at the wellness conference. A select number of individuals submitting Promising Practices will be invited to present their Promising Practice during break-out sessions at the conference. A motivational video segment will be developed for the conference. This segment will be shown at the opening of the conference and at transition times. A conference evaluation form will be developed and distributed.

Major Study Findings

- To date, this study is ongoing. The projected completion date is late summer 2009.
- The Promising Practices Web site was developed and advertised. Promising Practices were submitted.

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2006 WELLNESS POLICY

Overview of the Study

The goal of this project is to support local education agencies (LEAs) in successfully developing, adopting, implementing, maintaining, and measuring implementation of local wellness policies through (a) analysis of LEAs selected wellness policy goals; (b) development of Administrative Guidance templates; (c) showcasing of Promising Practices related to wellness policies; and (d) delivery of a Wellness Policy Summit.

Methodology

Project activities included developing a Pennsylvania Local Wellness Policy (LWP) matrix, developing Action Plan templates, identifying Promising Practices for policy implementation, and supporting the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)/Pennsylvania Action for Healthy Kids (PA AFHK) Wellness Policy Conference. Identified policy goals submitted by LEAs were entered into a database and analyzed. A matrix of policy goals was developed to identify policy areas most and least often selected. This analysis and matrix will allow for a focused and coordinated state approach to training activities and serve as the basis for the development of Action Plan templates. LEAs were encouraged to submit descriptions of Promising Practices related to selected wellness policy components through an on-line activity reporting system. Representatives from the selected Promising Practices were invited to present their Promising Practices at the PDE/PA AFHK Wellness Policy Conference. This summit provided a forum for a presentation of Promising Practices and was documented to create on-line proceedings. An evaluation was also conducted during the conference.

Major Study Findings

- To date, this study is ongoing. The projected completion date is fall 2009.
- The policy goals matrix was developed and submitted to PDE.
- Ten Local Wellness Policy Action plans were developed and are accessible through PDE's Web site.
- Seventy Promising Practices submissions were edited and compiled into a manual that was distributed to more than 350 attendees at the PDE/PA AFHK Wellness Policy Conference. The manual is also accessible through the Project PA Web site.
- A conference evaluation was conducted and a report was submitted to PDE. Participants felt that the conference was effective in meeting its objectives, particularly in helping participants recognize the relationship between student's health and academic success.

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KEYSTONE COLOR ME HEALTHY

Overview of the Study

Color Me Healthy is a nutrition and physical activity program for children ages four and five. Color Me Healthy uses color, music, and exploration of the senses to teach children that healthy eating and physical activity can be fun. The project in Pennsylvania is referred to as Keystone Color Me Healthy and is part of the Keystone Kids Go! campaign. As part of the campaign, the Color Me Healthy resources have been adapted and enhanced by the Pennsylvania interagency management team lead by the PA Departments of Health, Welfare, and Education. As of December 2007, Keystone Color Me Healthy (KCMH) was disseminated to early childhood practitioners in each of the 67 counties in Pennsylvania. A minimum of 75 training slots and 75 KCMH kits and resources were made available to practitioners. Through a unique public/private partnership, the Heinz endowment provided funding to assist in the dissemination of the materials and training to practitioners across the state. This project includes professional development, quality assurance, and resource development related to Color Me Healthy.

Methodology

The professional development institutes incorporated all components of the Keystone Kids Go! Program, including Go Colorful! and Go Active! (Go Active! tool kit), updates and revisions to materials, workshops for early childhood practitioners, conducting quality assurance monitoring visits for instructors, and conference presentations.

Major Study Findings

- To date, this study is ongoing. The projected completion date is fall 2009.
- Two professional development institutes were held for current KCMH instructors, who will deliver the trainings via the Office of Child Development and Early Learning Regional Key System.
- The KCMH Supplemental Guide was revised and updated.
- “Go Healthy! It All Begins with You” workshops that focus on the importance of adult role modeling were conducted at six different venues across the state.
- Ten quality assurance monitoring visits for instructors were conducted.

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