

Eat Well Play Hard Program

Obesity has reached epidemic proportions in the United States, and Clinton County is no exception. Childhood obesity is a major public health problem. One in five New York State children are overweight and in the last 30 years the percent of children who are obese has tripled.

Overweight children will most likely become overweight adults. This can increase the risks of developing serious diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, and elevated cholesterol. Prevention of child obesity may be the key to future healthier generations.

How Does It Work?

Eat Well Play Hard, part of a statewide initiative, will work with Clinton County schools, day care providers, the WIC program and other agencies to help assure healthier food choices and opportunities for physical activity for our children exist.

The Goals

The Eat Well Play Hard's goal is to prevent childhood overweight and reduce long term chronic disease risks through the promotion of physical activity and targeted dietary practices for children ages two and older.

The Strategy

Our strategies will include increasing developmentally appropriate physical activity; increasing consumption of 1% of less milk and low fat dairy products; and increasing fruit and vegetable intake.

Our Partners

The Eat Well Play Hard partnership meets every other month at the Clinton County Health Department to discuss ways to make our community a healthier place for our children. Our partners include:

AuSable Valley Central School
Beekmantown Central School
Child Care Coordinating Council of the North Country
City of Plattsburgh Recreation Department
Clinton County Health Department and WIC Program
Cornell Cooperative Extension
Eastern Adirondack Health Care Network
Fidelis Healthcare
JCEO Headstart
New York State Department of Health
Northern Adirondack Central School
Northeastern Clinton Central School
Plattsburgh City Schools
Peru Central School
Saranac Central School
Town of Plattsburgh Recreation Department
YMCA
Youth Bureau

Mini Grants

Eat Well Play Hard awarded mini grants totaling \$15,000 to seven different agencies: Peru School District, Beekmantown School District, Plattsburgh YMCA, Child Care Coordinating Council of the North Country, Northern Adirondack School District, Saranac School District, and the Town of Plattsburgh Recreation Department. This past year's funding focused on inclusive and non-traditional physical activity enhancements. These grants will create a healthier environment for our area children. Some of this year's grants included cross country skiing; rotating playgrounds for toddlers, Trikke three wheel carving bikes, and indoor activity options for inclement weather days.

Our Community Assessment Results

The first year of Eat Well Play Hard included conducting a Community Assessment. This assessment allowed us to determine where our partnership should focus its efforts. Clinton County EWPH teamed up with our partners and completed three surveys; an environmental opinion, community opinion and a parent's community opinion survey. The summary of the findings included:

1. Availability of healthier food items was seen as a potential for behavior changes.

2. Incorporation of physical activity programs, especially at schools, may increase activity levels of community residents and their children.
3. Local organized recreational opportunities are well planned but there is a need for more non-competitive activities. Incorporation of nutrition would strengthen recreation programs.
4. Student education was indicated as a possible vehicle for improved nutrition and physical activity.

Programs We have Implemented

NAPSACC

NAPSACC (Nutrition and Physical Activity Self Assessment for Child Care) is an evidence based program for child care centers. NAPSACC centers self assess their site and then choose areas they wish to improve upon, physical activity and/or nutrition. A NAPSACC consultant then helps the site make a planning document for the goals they want to work on and also conducts four workshops to provide them with knowledge needed to make these changes. The consultant then continues to provide technical assistance until the site has completed the workshops and the goals. The site then completes the same self assessment to see what areas they have improved upon.

Clinton County Eat Well Play Hard is currently working with two child care centers and it looking for more to implement NAPSACC. The two centers are the YMCA's Bright Beginnings and Champlain Children's Learning Center in Rouses Point. These two centers are working on nutrition and physical activity policies and have received many incentives such as play equipment, lunch bags, portion control plates, and much more to reach their goals.

CATCH Kids Club

Another program being implemented in EWPH is the CATCH (Coordinated Approach to Child Health) Kids Club. This nationally recognized model for healthy living for children focuses on increasing non-competitive physical activity as well as nutrition for children. Eight afterschool programs in Clinton County are implementing the CATCH Kids Club: four from the YMCA, two with the Saranac PALS, one with Keeseville elementary, and one with the Ted K. Center. The staff from these eight sites were trained by a professional CATCH trainer (add the training pictures here). The feedback from these sites has been very positive and the children's participation level during physical activity time has increased since implementing the CATCH Kids Club.

Our Plans for this Year

Eat Well Play Hard will continue to recruit child care centers to implement NAPSACC. Along with child care centers EWPH is looking at trainings for private home base centers. Child care is the perfect place to start introducing children to healthier lifestyles including physical activity and proper nutrition.

EWPH has purchased a variety of healthy cookbooks, nutrition books, and children's yoga and dance videos and other resources to display at some of the public libraries. These books will be on display and families will be able to use these books as a resource.

EWPH will continue to work closely with recreation departments to continue offering cooking classes, non-traditional physical activity programs, gardening, and continued support for healthy drinks and snacks during games and practices.

In addition EWPH will continue to work closely with WIC, JCEO, schools, and other agencies to promote healthier environments for our children. It is important to make lasting changes that will benefit our children's future health.

Contact Us

Please check frequently for more developing information and activities. For further information on this program or other nutritional programs, call or visit us at:

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