

HOW STATES CAN USE EVALUATION RESULTS TO DEVELOP PUBLIC POLICY

CHILD CARE SETTINGS

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RUDD CENTER FOR FOOD
POLICY AND OBESITY



Overview

- Examples of child care interventions in current state plans
- What are some potential state policies that could improve nutrition in the child care setting?
- How can states evaluate their programs to inform policy?



Examples from Current State Plans

- North Carolina
- New York
- Montana
- Iowa
- Pennsylvania



North Carolina State Plan

- *Nutrition and Physical Activity Self Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC)*
- Centers assess their nutrition and physical activity environment
- Consultants provide assistance on ways to make positive improvements



Examples of changes from *NAP SACC*

- Changes to improve nutrition
 - increasing the availability of fruits and vegetables
 - reducing the use fried foods
 - reducing the use of sugar-sweetened beverages
 - introducing overall nutrition policies in individual centers.
- Changes to improve physical activity
 - purchase of additional equipment
 - creation of additional indoor/outdoor play space



North Carolina



- *Color Me Healthy* Program
- Promotes healthy eating and physical activity in 4-5 year old preschool children
- Uses color, music, and the senses to teach children that healthy eating and physical activity are fun
- Kit contains lesson plans and guides for all activities



New York State Plan

- Work with schools and preschools to implement TV and media reduction curricula
- Example programs:
 - Student Media and Awareness for the Reduction of Television-viewing (SMART)
 - Fit by 5



New York State Plan

- Collaborate with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Health Promotion Specialists, Child Care Coordinating Councils and other resources to improve the food and nutrition environments of childcare centers



Montana State Plan

- Provide incentives for parents/guardians of American Indian infants and children up to age 5 who complete courses on physical activity and nutrition needs of preschool aged children



Montana State Plan

- Provide a *Nutrition and Physical Activity Self Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC)* kit to at least four interested preschools or daycare facilities
- Deliver training workshops and technical assistance as appropriate



Iowa State Plan

- Investigate an established and recommended set of guidelines for screen time
- Disseminate guidelines to caretakers, including child care providers
- Provide training to child care providers on alternatives to screen time



Pennsylvania State Plan

Keystone Color Me Healthy

- 2003 - Pennsylvania Departments of Health (DOH) and Education, Head Start State Collaboration Project, Tuscarora Intermediate Unit, American Cancer Society, Nutrition Education Network, and Penn State Cooperative Extension purchased CMH kits to train early childhood practitioners in five Pennsylvania counties
- 2004-2005 - CMH trainings expanded to 12 more counties
- 2005-2006 - CMH implemented in 17 more counties. Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare (DPW) joined the workgroup and obtained funding from the Heinz Foundation to expand CMH to the remaining 33 counties



Group Activity

- What are some potential programs and policies that could grow from evaluating these interventions?
- Potential avenues for policy change
 - Administration of the CACFP at the state level
 - Licensing of child care settings through the Department of Public Health
 - Education of child care directors at the state level



Examples of Current Evaluation Projects



NAP SACC Evaluations

- *NAP SACC Evaluation*
 - Includes 58 intervention and 38 control child care centers
 - Evaluates the nutrition and physical activity environment of the child care centers
- *NAP SACC Intensive*
 - 12 month intervention
 - Assesses BMI
- *NAP SACC Family*
 - Combines child care intervention with a home based intervention



Color Me Healthy Evaluation

- 2001 and 2002 implemented in 47 North Carolina counties and the NC Cherokee reservation
- Dec 2001 – Train the trainer
- March – August 2002 – Child care providers trained
- Evaluation 8 weeks after training



Child Knowledge and Behavior Variables Assessed

- Children's increase in knowledge of movement and healthy eating (92% and 93%)
- Children's increase in physical activity (92%)
- Children's increase in willingness to try new foods (79%)
- Improvement in fruit and vegetable recognition (82%)



Child Care Provider Attitudes Assessed

- The vast majority of child care providers had a very positive reaction to the program (73.5% rated program “Excellent;” 23.6% rated “Very Good”)
- 99.8% indicated that they would use the program in the future
- 92.3% reported that it helped them realize the importance of teaching children about nutrition



Pennsylvania – *Keystone Color Me Healthy*

- 2005-2006 KCMH evaluation
 - change in childcare providers' basic knowledge
 - current teaching practices related to nutrition and physical activity
 - understanding of KCMH curriculum
 - childcare providers' personal lifestyle changes
 - nutrition and physical activity changes among preschool children as witnessed by childcare providers
 - program and material utilization
 - future program opportunities.



What do you need to know from an
evaluation to inform
policy in your state?



Program Evaluation to Inform Policy

- Document feasibility
- Demonstrate method of dissemination
- Document reactions of various stakeholders
- Measure perceptions of the effect of the program
- Measure key outcomes of the program
- Document how much the intervention costs



Strategies for Participatory Evaluation

- Key informant interviews
- Focus groups
- Mini-surveys
- Neighborhood mapping
- Flow diagrams
- Photographs
- Oral histories and stories

From: Zukoski & Luluquisen (2002) Participatory Evaluation.
Community Based Public Health: Policy and Practice, Issue 5.



Group Activity

- Identify the policies in your state that could have an impact on the child care environment
- Identify the individuals who are in a position to influence those policies
- What are the potential opportunities for change?
- What are the potential obstacles to change?
- What questions need to be answered?



Resources

- Cullen, Giles, & Rosenthal. *Evaluating Community-based Child Health Promotion Programs: A Snapshot of Strategies and Methods*. National Academy for State Health Policy. March 2006. www.nashp.org
- Advocacy and Policy Change. *The Evaluation Exchange*. Harvard Family Research Project. Harvard Graduate School of Education. Spring 2007.

