

FIT WIC NEWS

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Our primary goal will address the ever-growing problem of overweight in NH WIC preschoolers, ages 3 to 4 years old. Through use of Fit WIC educational materials originally developed by the Vermont WIC Program, all local NH WIC agencies will begin delivery of physical activity messages. Objectives will be to increase physical activity and decrease sedentary behaviors of 3 to 4 year old WIC children. Playgroups for families that demonstrate appropriate physical activities and facilitated discussion groups for parents will be paramount in attempting to change behaviors for their lifetime. The NH Reads AmeriCorps Program will play a major role in conducting playgroups at WIC clinics. Providing simple, age appropriate physical play ideas through education on the Fit WIC Parent Activity book to families will assist in establishing the importance of physical activity for preschoolers.

FOCUS AREA

The portion of the project that extends WIC Fit-N-Fun into the community will reinforce WIC nutrition counseling by exposing participants to consistent health messages in a variety of settings. Health research has shown that repeated exposure to a message, especially when delivered through multiple channels, may intensify its impact. Through this layering of physical activity messages we increase the likelihood of positively affecting behavior change.



Fit WIC Activities Booklet



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THE PROBLEM OF CHILDHOOD OBESITY - WHY ACT NOW?

The prevalence of childhood obesity is increasing.

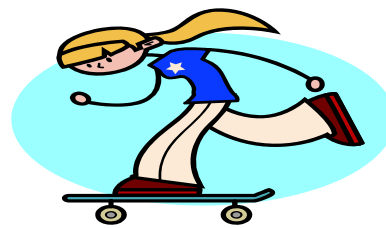
American children are gaining weight—more children and more weight than ever before. The problem is everywhere—no matter which neighborhood, state, or region you visit; American children are gaining weight faster than at any other point in our nation's history. In recent testimony given before the United States Senate, Eric M. Bost, USDA under Secretary of the Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services, said: "In the past 20 years, the percentage of children who are overweight has doubled and the percentage of adolescents who are overweight has more than tripled."



NEED FOR PROJECT

Parents of 3 and 4 year old children face situational obstacles to providing opportunities for physical activity for their kids. Weather, safety issues, and lack of ideas are frequently voiced as reasons for not becoming physically active. WIC Fit-N-Fun addresses these concerns with easy physical activity options for inside and out. Fit WIC Parent Activity book and kit takes the difficult task of planning what to do with young children when it is cold outside or they lack a playground, and puts a multitude of ideas at the fingertips of parents. Many community groups, including health care providers, schools, non-profit organizations, and private citizens are concerned about the issues of childhood overweight. Many of these groups are working on the problem through specific programs and individual counseling. Families may find themselves receiving a multitude of advice from various disjointed and sometimes contradictory sources. Through WIC Fit-N-Fun we will conduct

outreach as well as Train the Trainer opportunities to community partners. Through outreach to health care providers, WIC can emerge as an authority on issues of pediatric overweight and improve communication and collaboration on consistent physical activity messages.



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