



## Creating Policy, Systems, Environmental Change: Success Story and Lessons Learned

### Using Positive Motivation to Increase Nutrition Education and Physical Activity during the School Day

#### Intervention Summary

This year we have collaborated with school principals, Greenfield Community health advocates, high school student volunteers, school leadership group students and our Greenfield Healthy Enriched Lives Produce Success (H.E.L.P.S) Collaborative Partners to turn the lunch recess into a fun physical activity and nutrition education event.

We started by partnering with the principal at Granite Pointe Elementary who was looking to reward his students for their good behavior by having us come during lunch and do something fun with them since the kids always look forward to our nutrition lessons. These students earned tickets for good behavior with the recently implemented program called Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS) Program. We were to meet with the students who earned enough tickets to enter in the “Fun Friday Zone” (an area of the playground blocked off for them to enjoy the special activities).

We asked our Greenfield H.E.L.P.S. Collaborative partners for donations of their agency promotional items that are kid friendly so we could give away as nutrition education reinforcement incentives since we aren't allowed to purchase any with USDA SNAP-Ed Nutrition Education Obesity Prevention Branch (N.E.O.P.B) grant money. They provided us with jump ropes, books, pencils and some frisbees that students could choose from after they participated in Power Play physical activities facilitated by the nutrition educators and Granite Pointe Elementary school Student council students.

Students were excited to come to the “Fun Zone” which was decorated with balloons and had lively music playing for them to enjoy. We borrowed a megaphone to greet and

congratulate them for their good behavior. We talked to them about ChooseMyPlate and what they needed to do to be healthy, which included physical activity. We lead them in groups of twenty or more students as they came into the physical activity area.

Their physical activity consisted of doing three Power Play exercises from the Playing for Healthy Choices Cards. The cards were copied and placed on the sides of a square box to form a dice. We instructed the student council members to lead their peers in the exercise as the nutrition educators supervised everyone. The student leaders would roll the “dice” to see which exercise the students would learn. When they finished doing the exercise they would then move to the next section with another student leader to learn a different exercise. After their third exercise, they went to the prize table to choose an item and move to another area of the Fun Zone to play some games set up by their principal. Their choices were a frisbee throw game with the principal, a ring toss game lead by student council members, or playing with physical activity equipment that they don't usually have available during recess. The event was enjoyed by everyone.

## **Description of Barriers Encountered and Identified or Proposed Solutions**

We were having difficulty going into the classrooms during the regular school hours. We turned to the afterschool program to reach students but there are so many more to reach during the regular school day. Principals and teachers didn't want any interruptions in the classroom because they are working hard on bringing student test scores up.

## **Future Directions/Sustainable Success**

We would like to continue with these activities and invite more partners to help make these events successful and fun for the students. After a couple of years, I would hope the schools would continue this model on their own with the support of all the collaborative partners.

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