

Wichita County, Texas Launches Program to Promote Healthy Active Living

by: Quincy Christian

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IS KEY

Practice 5-2-1-0=8 every day as a role model for your community and for your health! 5-2-1-0=8 is a community-led program, and increased public support would pave the way to reaching new parents, families and children. To learn more about 5-2-1-0=8 or for information on how to have this program in your community, contact the Wichita Falls-Wichita County Public Health District.

"5-2-1-0=8 is a simple reminder of the healthy behaviors we want adults to role model, healthcare providers to speak about and children to practice. Change will not occur unless we have a change in our culture. 5-2-1-0=8 could achieve that change."

- Kaye Knauff, DNP, MSN, FNP-BC,
Midwestern State University



SUMMARY

The Health Coalition of Wichita County (HCWC) joined with local partners to grow a multi-sector program, "5-2-1-0=8," to increase healthy eating and active living in Wichita County, Texas. 5-2-1-0=8 stands for five daily habits: 5 servings of fruits and vegetables, 2 hours or less of recreational screen time, 1 hour of physical activity, 0 sugary drinks and at least 8 hours of sleep. 5-2-1-0=8 utilizes policy, systems and environmental (PSE) changes and education to achieve consistent messaging where people live, study, work and play.

CHALLENGE

In 2014, a fitness assessment of Wichita County public students in grades 3-12 found that, on average, only 54% of children achieved the "Healthy Fitness Zone" for body mass index (BMI) and 33% were at High Risk for developing health problems now or in the future. With adults, Wichita County has an obesity rate of 32%, higher than the State of Texas. The 2015 County Health Rankings indicated a physical inactivity rate of 29% and 81.7% of adults consume less than 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day. 29% of residents live in a food desert, or have limited access to healthy foods due to residing in a neighborhood without a grocery store. 5-2-1-0=8 is an opportunity to reach children in several settings to allow for continued exposure to the same messages; several healthy active living initiatives exist, 5-2-1-0=8 eliminates confusion and promotes one universal theme.

Contact

Quincy Christian

Wichita Falls-Wichita County
Public Health District
1700 3rd Street
Wichita Falls, TX 76301
940-761-7800
<http://health.wichitafallstx.gov>

SOLUTION

The Health Coalition of Wichita County (HCWC) built the framework for 5-2-1-0=8 in Wichita County in late 2014 with assistance from Midwestern State University (MSU) and United Way; these organizations leveraged their experience and resources to build the partnerships needed to make this program a success. One key partnership is with the MSU Wilson School of Nursing. MSU collaborated to provide Pediatric nursing students the opportunity to speak about disease prevention at a developmentally appropriate level with children in 3 elementary schools. One of the nurses shared her thoughts on the program and said, "I like how we are teaching children how to stay healthy. One job nurses have is education. This program will help us practice our educational skills and how to talk to children." The HCWC also engaged the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) of one school district.

RESULTS

As a result of this initiative, 8 local organizations from a variety of sectors contributed to the strategic planning of 5-2-1-0=8. Two coalitions, the HCWC and the Early Childhood Coalition (ECC) endorsed 5-2-1-0=8 and included 5-2-1-0=8 in their activities and goals. Two of the four public school districts and 1 private school incorporated 5-2-1-0=8 into P.E. and one school district now has an agreement, or MOU, with MSU for the initiative. Furthermore, one of the SHAC members is the director of the Child Nutrition department. Child Nutrition staff joined 5-2-1-0=8 and quickly took advantage of the lunch line as an additional platform to promote healthy eating. One of their strategies was "Eat Your Way through the Rainbow." Staff altered the menu to include more colors, asked children about what colors they ate at home and decorated!



SUSTAINABLE SUCCESS

The HCWC intends to expand 5-2-1-0=8 to include all sectors. The HCWC developed a green prescription for all clinics in the county, including those that serve diverse, low-income areas. These will be used when counseling "At-Risk" patients. HCWC and MSU will implement the program in 17 new schools, reaching 8,000 students total. A health educator validated the program in 6 after school centers and the HCWC now plans to expand to the YMCA. The YMCA will integrate 5-2-1-0=8 with their existing wellness program. The ECC will train child care agencies on aligning existing practices with 5-2-1-0=8. The versatility of this program coupled with refreshed community partnerships will be vital for sustainability in years to come.