

Title of Project/Study: Evaluation of KEY 2 a Healthy Start: a Statewide Implementation of Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC) to prevent childhood obesity in early care and education

Student: Stamatiki Clapsis

Student Department: Health Education Behavioral Science

Fieldwork Faculty Advisor: Dr. Neal Boyd

Site Preceptor: Dr. Jamie Jeffrey

Fieldwork Coordinator: Sarah Kelly

Abstract

Introduction: Early onset of high body mass index (BMI) is increasing and interventions must shift to primary prevention in the youngest ages to prevent overweight and obesity. Since 63% of WV children are in non-parental care, the KEY 2 a Healthy Start initiative targeted child care centers where children ages six months to five years spend most of their day. This evaluation measures the effectiveness of the initiative in creating healthy changes in nutrition and physical activity policies and practices in participating centers.

Methods: There is both a quantitative and qualitative component. The quantitative component analyzes pre and post NAP SACC scores for 25 centers, using SASS, to understand changes in nutrition and physical activities best practices met and comparison between different physical activity curriculum enhancements. The qualitative component incorporates key informant interviews on centers' experience to evaluate challenges and successes, and summarize themes.

Results: Chi square analysis of percentage of best practices met in each category for the pre and post NAP SACC shows a significant increase in best practices met at a p-value of <.0001. The percent improvement of best practices met from pre and post NAP SACC by category are: nutrition 38.19%; physical activity 75.00%; and overall 48.22%. Qualitative data from key informant interviews are consistent with the quantitative data. Notably, when asked to rate initiative from scale of 1-5, (most negative to the most positive), all 23 centers interviewed rated the intervention a '5'.

Conclusions: Child care centers undergoing the KEY 2 a Healthy Start initiative showed improvement in overall nutrition and physical activity practices policies and environment. Both quantitative and qualitative data shows the intervention is effective in early child care education. The impact of this initiative is keeping children at healthy BMI and weight in early age before they undergo adiposity-rebound in later years.