



NAP SACC in Person County

BACKGROUND

In late 2006, staff at the Partnership for Children became increasingly concerned about the rising obesity rates among our county's youngest citizens. Available data indicated that 31.8% of our children 2-4 years old were obese or at risk of obesity. A local committee was formed of Partnership Staff, Board Members, Health Department and Child Care Community representatives. This group did a more in depth look at the childhood obesity problem in our 2300 children birth to five. In early 2007, a local study was completed which revealed 45% of our young children were obese or at risk for obesity based on their BMI. As a result of these scores, the local committee recommended to the Partnership Board that resources be pursued to begin to address childhood obesity. Although we did not receive the General Mills Grant that we pursued, our efforts were not in vain. During the development of the GM grant, we developed the concept of Dancing with Diversity, a fitness and nutrition approach to help instill the importance of daily physical activity and proper nutrition in our children at a young

age. For '07-08 our Partnership received a small amount of new Smart Start dollars which our board decided to direct towards addressing childhood obesity. When the NAP SACC funding became available through the NCPC Grant Program, it was a great fit for Person County. Our need was clear and our Board unanimously agreed for us to pursue NAP SACC. Our local Health Department expanded the CCHC position to encompass NAP SACC and our provider community was quickly interested in the opportunities NAP SACC provides. Even though we are only a short distance into the two year project, many successes have occurred.



Centers Eagerly Embrace NAP SACC Goals:

There are seven child care centers in Person County participating in our NAP SACC grant. All of these centers are 3 to 5 star rated facilities, serving 384 children. The centers participating include: Learn

1. One of the centers selected serving family style meals as one of their goals. They initially said they'd try this once a week. Staff of this center have seen such improved eating habits since involving the children in serving their own meal, that they have instructed their food service folks to provide all their meals family style. The children are asking for second helpings on healthy foods such as tossed salads which never happened before. Staff can see the improved eating habits by offering the meals family style.
2. All of the centers involved in NAP SACC here in our county have identified healthy celebrations as one of their goals and are instituting a new policy on healthy celebrations. One of the centers presented a parent challenge for Valentine's Day. Bring something healthy for the celebration. Something red, pink or white. Next, they've got a challenge for their

Spring/Easter celebration.

3. Involving the children in the whole meal process – Children are helping to set the table, teachers are teaching lessons on hot and cold meals; centers are getting the children to help by establishing a lunch helpers charts; etc.
4. One of our centers is already planning a garden for the upcoming spring/summer. They have contacted Southern States who has funds to help with the cost of the garden. The children will help plant, pick and prepare the foods. This center had a garden last year, but this year, due to NAP SACC, they're planning a bigger garden with more vegetables.



workshops and the Center Self-Assessments. In identifying items for their NAP SACC action plan, Centers have been so eager to address nutrition and fitness goals, our CCHC has to remind them of the two year nature of our grant.