

MONTANA OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Type:

- Physical activity program
- Professional development

Setting:

- School-based

Partners:

- State AAHPERD association
- Media outlet(s)

Goal:

- To implement sustainable statewide and local initiatives designed to increase the time that 9- to 13-year-olds spend in physical activities.

Description:

A statewide conference of health and physical education (health enhancement) teachers focused on staff development and continuing education. The conference, organized by the Montana Office of Public Instruction and the state AAHPERD association, offered sessions on increasing student participation in physical activities, conducting program assessment by using the School Health Index, and student assessment. Pilot projects in two Montana school districts (East Helena and Missoula) provided a variety of activities designed to promote physical activity among preteens, especially those not athletically gifted. The school pilot projects administered the School Health Index, promoted physical activities for high-risk youth and student and student-parent walking programs, and developed a directory of community-wide physical activity opportunities. Media highlighted nontraditional games and activities.

Successes:

- Projects requiring a full school year for implementation were completed and evaluated.
- Local and state media covered activities that were not traditional athletic events.

Challenge:

- It was a challenge to assist communities in finding small amounts of seed money to help improve child health.

Strategies for sustainability:

- The School Health Index, walking programs, and local health councils are well-liked programs and are likely to be sustained.
- Funds must be found for programs for high-risk youth, media promotion, and equipment purchases as these will not continue without recurring funding.



- The agency will introduce the School Health Index and walking programs to additional schools.

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