

Making a Difference 2011

Improving Health and Wellness in Hockley County

Relevance

The FCS Committee identified health and wellness issues as top priority for the county the past six years, as well as, 2011. Chronic health conditions are associated with an increased risk of several conditions, including diabetes and overweight or obesity. Texas' 1.7 million diagnosed diabetics (9.7%) and rising childhood obesity prompted the implementation of two programs: **Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes** and **Balancing Food and Play**. Another program that dealt with health and safety issues was: Passenger Safety/Safe Kids – “**Heat in a Closed Car**”, at the South Plains Rural Health - Children's Health Fair.

Response

Balance Food and Play – 75 third grade students at Sundown, Whitharral and Levelland Christian elementary school's learned to choose nutritious foods and increase their physical activity through the 20-lessons or four week curriculum. They learned how to choose healthy snack foods, the importance of physical activity, and limiting screen time to two hours or less per day for general health and wellness. This was a 42% increase from the past school year (2009-10) and one new school.

Diabetes Education – 10 people with diabetes learned to manage their disease through self-care and nutrition by participating in **Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes**. This series of lessons covers 9 topics in four classes: *What is Diabetes?; Nutrition – First Step to Diabetes management; One Diabetes Diet – No Longer the Sole Option; Managing Your Blood Glucose; Nutrition Labels; Diabetes and Exercise; For Good Measure at Home and Eating Out; Diabetes Medicines; and Preventing and Managing Complications.*

Passenger Safety/Safe-Kids Education – “NEVER Leave a Child in a Closed Car!” demonstration at the South Plains Rural Health – **Kids Health Fair**. Handouts and the vehicle display showed the dangers of leaving a child in a closed car –temperatures in parked vehicles rise very quickly, in just 10 minutes, temperatures can increase by almost 20 degrees.

Results

Balancing Food and Play was implemented in May at Sundown Elementary (3 classes), Whitharral Elementary (1 class) and Levelland Christian Elementary (1 class).

Results indicate:

- 41% report drinking fewer sweetened beverages.
- 42% report increasing their physical activity by 20 minutes each day.
- 69% report decreasing the amount of time spent sitting in front of the television or computer.
- 89% report eating more fruits and vegetables.



"I changed my candy snack after school to fruit snack."

"I eat better and get more exercise"

"I eat more healthy and I play more."

Third Grade participants



Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes was implemented in the Spring and Fall in 2011 in Hockley County.

- 10 people completed the four week series.
- 7 people (70%) reported having no previous diabetes classes, indicating a critical need for Diabetes education.
- 8 people (80%) reported receiving no meal plan from their doctor.
- Self-reported blood glucose levels went from 125 mg/dl before breakfast at the beginning of the series to 114 mg/dl at the end of the series.
- Self-reported blood glucose levels went from 106 mg/dl on average, 2 hours after a meal to 103.5 mg/dl at the end of the series.
- Based on these results, participants have the potential to save \$504,247 in future health care costs for their remaining years of life if they continue to do as well as they were doing at the end of this series.

Passenger Safety/Safe-Kids Education efforts were conducted in August at South Plains Rural Health – "Kids Health Fair" in Levelland. It is conducted every other year-opposite of Covenant Hospital Health Fair. About 300 attended the Tuesday evening three hour event. A child's body temperature rises three to five times faster than an adult's, making children more vulnerable to a deadly condition known as hyperthermia, or heat stroke. Heat stroke can occur at body temperatures above 104 degrees. Last year in Texas, there were 13 vehicle heat-related deaths. Nationally, there were 49, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).



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