



Eat Healthy, Stay Active!: A Collaborative Partnership between Central Missouri Community Action Head Start and University of Missouri School of Medicine

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Background

- Eat Healthy, Stay Active! (EHSA) is a community-based intervention focused on reducing pediatric obesity in the Head Start community (Figure 1)
- EHSA aims to:
 - Promote healthy eating behaviors and physical activity in Head Start families
 - Measure changes in health literacy using a validated tool, "The Newest Vital Sign" (NVS)
 - Introduce medical students to Head Start, the topic of health literacy and the effects of poverty on patient health

Target Population

- Head Start children and families in Central Missouri**
 - Live at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level
 - Limited access to nutrition, health and physical activity resources
 - 112 Head Start families have participated in EHSA to date
 - 385 Head Start children have experienced the EHSA curriculum
- Head Start Staff**
 - Educate children in Head Start classrooms using the EHSA curriculum
 - 31 staff members have participated to date
- MU SOM 1st and 2nd year medical students**
 - Limited exposure to low health literacy populations
 - 49 medical students have participated in the program to date

Project Description

- EHSA is a 5-month curriculum involving classroom activities, community events and parent trainings
- The program is led by CMCA staff, Head Start teachers and 1st and 2nd year medical students
- Medical students** completed didactic series on topics including poverty, nutrition, health literacy skills and motivational interviewing. They also:
 - Participated in the "I CAN...Help My Child Stay Healthy" training
 - Completed a series of open-ended journal questions
 - Surveyed their attitudes, knowledge, and skills regarding health literacy before and after the program
- Head Start families** were exposed to curriculum that focused on:
 - Nutrition, exercise, health literacy, and goal setting
- Methods of data collection:
 - Medical student growth and competence was assessed using pre and post surveys as well as journaling/self reflection questions
 - Head Start parent health literacy was assessed using the NVS (Figure 2)
 - Head Start children's nutrition knowledge was assessed using a 4 question nutrition survey



Figure 1: The EHSA facebook page connects members of the EHSA community.

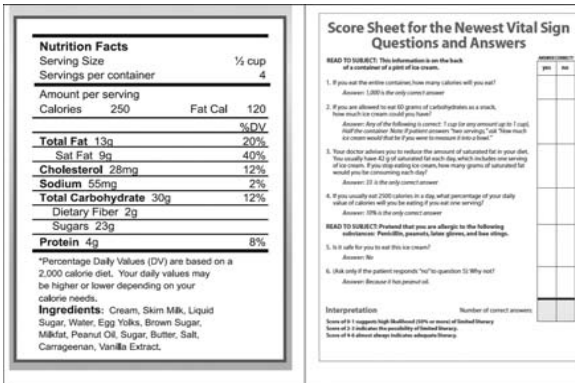


Figure 2: "The Newest Vital Sign" is a validated tool used to assess health literacy.

Results

- Medical students** completed pre and post intervention surveys containing 14 questions in three areas: attitudes, knowledge, and skills/confidence regarding health literacy. Surveys were scored using the 5 point Likert scale
- There was a statistically significant difference in pre and post intervention survey responses for the attitudes and skills/confidence components (Table 1)
- Head Start parent** health literacy (assessed using the NVS) increased after the intervention. **Head Start children** nutrition knowledge increased after the intervention (as assessed using a 4 question nutrition survey) (Figures 3 and 4)

	Pre-Intervention Survey (overall mean)	Post-Intervention Survey (overall mean)	p-value
Attitudes (Q1-5)	3.5	4.32	0.001
Knowledge (Q6-10)	4.64	4.81	0.117
Skills/Confidence (Q11-14)	3.32	3.93	0.001

Table 1: Medical student pre and post intervention survey data. 14 questions (in 3 categories) were scored using the 5 point Likert scale. Data was averaged and statistically analyzed using a student's t-test.

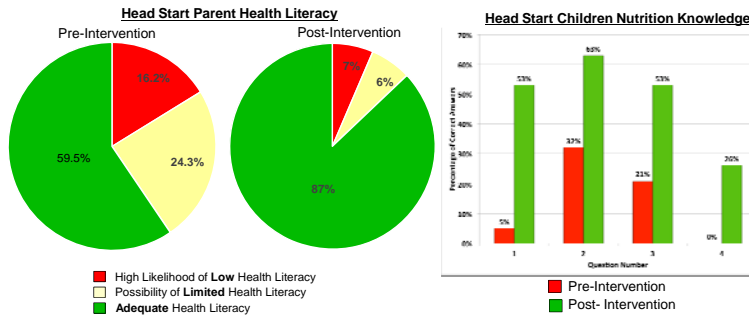


Figure 3: Head Start Parent pre and post intervention health literacy, assessed using the NVS. Figure 4: Head Start children pre and post intervention nutrition knowledge, assessed using a 4 question survey.

Conclusions

- EHSA increases medical student attitudes, skills and confidence in working with low health literacy populations
- EHSA increases health literacy in Head Start children and families
- Evidence supports EHSA as:
 - a valuable educational tool for medical students
 - Other medical schools may implement similar programs to increase preclinical training in the topics of health literacy and barriers to health in low-income populations

Acknowledgements

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Bibliography

Herman A, Nelson BB, Teutsch C, Chung PJ, "Eat healthy, stay active!": a coordinated intervention to improve nutrition and physical activity among head start parents, staff, and children." American Journal of Health Promotion 27.1 (2012): e27-e36.

Learn More about Eat Healthy, Stay Active!

EHSA Year 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QbUBQc1e8V8>
 EHSA Year 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ct2ZbFTccs>
 Find us on facebook by searching: **Eat Healthy, Stay Active!**

