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Helping Adolescents Get Into A Healthy Weight Range

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BACKGROUND

OBESITY IN TEENS:

Among adolescents aged 12-19 in the United States, the prevalence of obesity increased from 5% in the late 70s to 18.1% between 2007-2008. It has more than tripled over the last 30 years.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

OBESSE CHILDREN ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE: High blood pressure, high cholesterol, insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, breathing problems, joint problems, fatty liver disease, gallstones, heartburn, and poor self-esteem.

IT DOES NOT STOP THERE: Obese children are more likely to become obese adults. Obesity in adulthood is associated with many serious health conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

WHY DID WE WANT TO GO BACK TO HIGH SCHOOL?

Adolescence is an excellent intervention period as this is a time when lifelong habits and a sense of self are formed. A school setting is ideal because school is where children are accessible and prepared to learn. Because losing weight may be seen as a complex and difficult process, to make this process less daunting we propose to study a simplified, stepwise approach to weight loss in adolescents.

PURPOSE

1. **CLASSROOM INTERVENTION:** Educate students about body mass index (BMI) and teach them how to assess their own BMI. For those interested in improving their weight, offer assistance from the school nurse.
2. **NURSING INTERVENTION:** Help adolescent students in the contemplative, action, and maintenance stage of change to develop simple, attainable, lifestyle changes focused on decreasing caloric intake and improving nutritional quality.

AIMS

CLASSROOM INTERVENTION:

1. To teach students how to assess their own BMI.
2. To explore students' satisfaction with learning about their BMI.
3. To investigate the number of students who self-report that they plan on working with the school nurse to improve their eating and physical activity habits.

NURSING INTERVENTION:

1. To track the number of students from the classroom intervention who make an appointment with the school nurse.
2. To track the number of visits the students make with the school nurse.
3. To investigate which lifestyle modifications the students make.
4. To evaluate students' pre- and post-BMI.

ANTICIPATED RESULTS

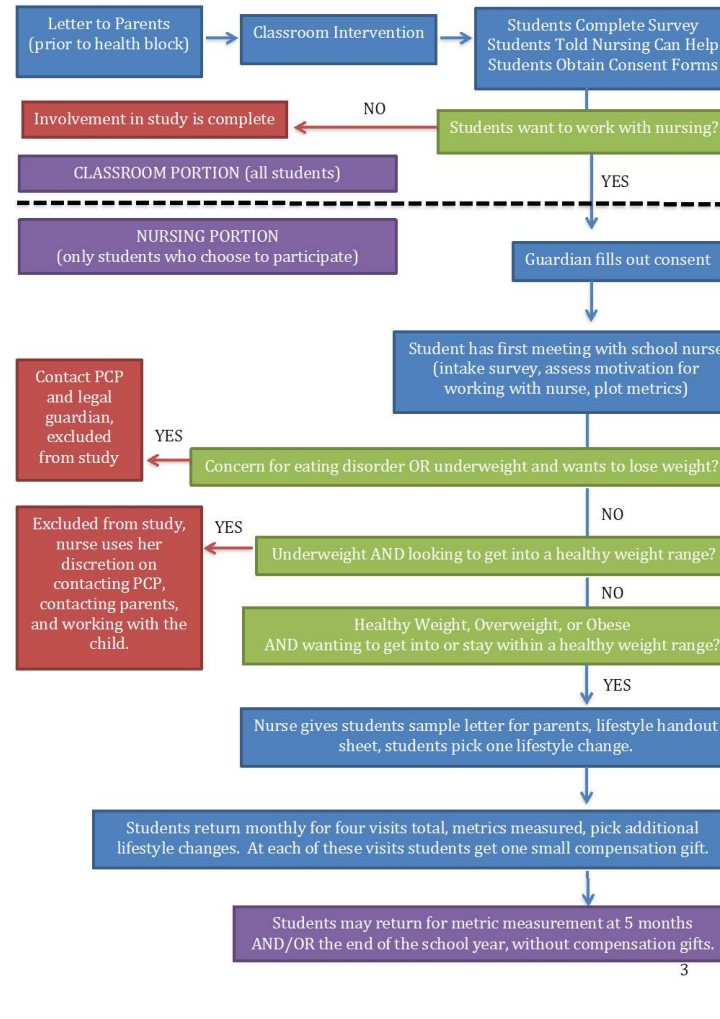
1. **CLASSROOM INTERVENTION:** Students will rate their satisfaction with learning about their BMI measurements high. For those who are overweight or obese, we anticipate that they will make an appointment to follow-up with the school nurse.
2. **NURSING INTERVENTION:** Overweight/obese students who meet with the school nurse for the four visits will have an improved BMI.

POTENTIAL CLINICAL IMPACT

If this program successfully helps teenagers develop healthy habits, then it can be implemented in schools across the country, hopefully resulting in a decreased prevalence of adolescent obesity.

METHODS

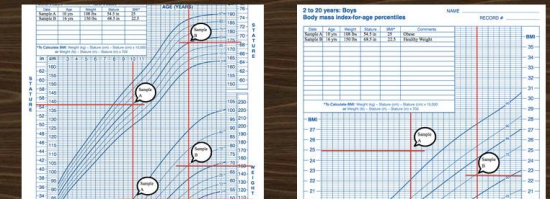
PROTOCOL – HELPING ADOLESCENTS GET INTO A HEALTHY WEIGHT RANGE



3

CLASSROOM INTERVENTION

P.E. teachers at an urban high school in New Mexico will teach 475 Freshman students how to calculate and interpret their body mass index (BMI) based on a lesson plan created for this research project. Students will work with sample data points and then be encouraged to measure their own height and weight, calculate their BMI, plot their personal metrics on a growth chart, and complete a survey about their experience. All students will then receive a consent form for the nursing portion of the project.



NURSING INTERVENTION

GOAL SETTING SESSIONS - VISITS ONE THROUGH THREE (Month 0, 1 and 2):

Up to 90 students interested in getting into or staying in a healthy weight range have the opportunity to work with the school nurse, who will provide one-on-one goal setting sessions over a two month period. Students commit to making one lifestyle change focused on decreasing caloric intake, from a list of evidence-based tasks, as their personal "homework assignment." At each visit they assess how the prior month went, pick a new "homework assignment," and have their metrics (height, weight, and BMI) evaluated.

FOLLOW-UP VISITS - VISITS FOUR THROUGH SIX (Month 3, 5, and the end of the school year):

At this point, students hopefully have learned that they can make healthy changes if they focus on one task at a time. Students will be encouraged to independently continue to work through all 12 lifestyle changes they were taught about during the first three visits. At the fourth visit, all participants will complete a survey, using Likert scale questions, about their experience. Follow-up visits five and six are optional. At all follow-up visits, the student's metrics will be measured and adherence to the lifestyle changes will be assessed.

Lifestyle Changes - A

Congrats on deciding to work towards the goal of losing weight. Your zip code to health is 75210: Have breakfast 7 days a week, eat 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day, limit your screen time (yes, texting is included) to 2 hours or less per day, exercise for at least 1 hour every day, and drink 10 sugar sweetened beverages. During the next few months we will work on ways to decrease caloric intake and to eat healthier. Pick one lifestyle change below and treat this as your homework assignment for the month. Do you best to stick with this change. Although we are focusing on eating habits, remember that exercise is important too!

1. Stop drinking sugar-sweetened beverages, such as soda, sweetened iced tea, Gatorade and juice. Drink water instead. If you want to, you can put a lemon or lime in it to add some taste. Or you can switch to a sugar-free or "diet" soda.
2. When you drink anything other than water, use a smaller cup or bottle than you normally use.
 - a. Example: Drink a small can of soda instead of a big bottle.
3. Eat 5 servings of fruits or vegetables a day. One serving is approximately the size of your fist.
4. Measure your food before eating. Look at the label on your food before eating and measure one serving at a time. If this is a snack food, pick out one serving and put the container away before eating.
 - a. Example: If you have cereal for breakfast and the box says a serving is 1 cup, then measure out 1 cup and pour it into your bowl.
 - b. Example: If you have a big box of nuts, put 2 tablespoons of nuts in a bag or on a plate. Put the box back in the cupboard before you start eating.
 - c. Example: If you drink juice, see what one serving size is (e.g. 1/2 cup), pour one serving into a measuring cup, and then into your glass.
 - d. Here's a tip: 1 oz = 28.35 gms = 1 fl. oz = 29.57 ml = 1/8 cup = 6 tsp. = 2 tbsp.
5. Personal Choice:
 - a. Talk with the nurse and come up with your own plan!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
I, _____, have picked lifestyle change A, _____ as my homework assignment for the month and will do the best I can to succeed in doing this.

Date: ___/___/___