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CHOICES: A Family-based Childhood Obesity Intervention for Low Income Minority Children

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CHOICES PARENTAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Childhood Obesity 101

Overview: This session provided parents with an overview of childhood obesity. Special emphasis was placed on the unique cultural factors affecting low income and minority children. Topics included the risk factors for and causes of childhood obesity, health challenges, and a brief look at the scope of the problem at the local, state and national level.

Family Dynamics

Overview: This session engaged parents in reviewing the “Family Tree” of relatives who were or are obese and the genetic predispositions to being overweight. Parents had an opportunity to review their child’s BMI information as well as their own. Ultimately, the session aimed to empower parents by helping them understand how their “inheritance” and how family health history may impact their children. Preventative strategies were also discussed.

Every “Body” is Different

Overview: This session engaged parents in an in-depth discussion about self-concept & body image. It challenged parents to examine their approach to helping their children develop positive body image. The session also provided strategies to avoid because of their ineffectiveness and potential for long term harm. Parents also had to reflect on their own body image.

Keep Moving

Overview: The purpose of this session was to educate parents about the importance of exercise, physical activity and the values of a healthy lifestyle. This session also included a discussion about monitoring and reducing screen time. Parents were provided with strategies to incorporate more physical activity into their family life. There was also a discussion about the environmental and community barriers that inhibited or enhanced physical activity.

You are What You Eat

Overview: This session focused on helping parents how to identify healthier cooking alternatives, nutritional choices and improved grocery shopping practices. The discussion included an examination of the cultural factors that affect families’ eating and cooking habits. Topics also included understanding portion sizes, strategies to increase more fruits and vegetables, decreasing reliance on fast food, and identifying the “hidden” sugar in foods.

Cooking for a Healthier Family

Overview: This session used a cooking class as creative instruction to teaching healthy cooking options as significant ingredients for the recipe for obesity reduction. Parents were provided with ways to alter popular recipes to make them healthier. There was also a discussion on how to get children involved in menu planning and preparing healthy meals and snacks.

Grocery Store Tour

Overview: The group tour was facilitated by a local registered dietitian. Participants were taught the skills of reading labels, understanding marketing strategies, and making healthy selections when grocery shopping. Parents also learned grocery shopping tips and price comparisons.

Breaking Barriers to Change

Overview: The purpose of this session was to help parents set long term goals for healthy living and identifying strategies to break barriers to living healthier. The discussion included identifying those behaviors and environmental factors that contribute to unhealthy behaviors.