

FAMILIES IN FAYETTE COUNTY SHAPE HEALTHIER LIFESTYLES

Private partner shares responsibility with government for the implementation of a needed program

Public Health Problem

- Obesity and overweight can cause children to develop conditions such as type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure, leading to disability and even death as adults.
- Over a third of Pennsylvania eighth graders are either overweight or at risk of overweight.
- Local school nurses and pediatricians identified a need for a weight management program to help local children & their family members reach and maintain a healthy weight through physical activity and healthy eating.

Program

- Steps to a Healthier Pennsylvania - Fayette County partnered with Highmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield to bring KidShape® to their county.
- Steps to a Healthier Pennsylvania - Fayette County coordinates and runs the program. Highmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield pays all program costs, including materials and staff (project coordinator, dietitian, physical activity and mental health specialists).
- KidShape® is an evaluated program for overweight children ages 6–14 and children at risk of becoming overweight, and their families.
- Families participating in seven out of nine sessions have their nominal registration fee returned. Thirty-two high-risk families have participated.

Impact

- Participating families report eating more fruits and vegetables and spending more time being physically active, according to an evaluation of the program by its developers.
- Families describe what they've gained from the program as.....
 - We learned “as a family to watch portions and slow down when eating.”
 - “Portion-size opened my eyes, as did the pedometers. I thought I walked more (in) a day(than I actually do)!”
 - “I am much more aware.”
- School districts in Fayette County where body weight is regularly assessed can now connect overweight children & their families to this needed resource for help in reaching and maintaining a healthy weight.
- Local pediatricians and family practitioners now have an effective program to offer to children they identify as overweight or at risk of becoming overweight.

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