NEW YORK EDUCATES SCHOOL PERSONNEL ABOUT CHILDHOOD OBESITY

Technology increases opportunities for health-related professional development

Public Health Problem

- Childhood obesity is a significant public health problem strongly associated with the development of type 2 diabetes in children.
- Teachers and other school personnel can learn to take actions that help children reach and maintain a healthy weight, but release time for professional education is very limited in most schools.

Program

- Two New York State Department of Health programs, Steps to a HealthierNY and Diabetes Prevention and Control, partnered with the New York State Education Department and the University at Albany School of Public Health to produce a professional development program for school personnel entitled *"Preventing Type 2 Diabetes in Children: Making the Case for the Healthy Schools Approach."*
- The program features a DVD with personnel from two award-winning New York State schools discussing their successful use of the Healthy Schools Model to increase physical activity and improve nutrition – important steps to preventing diabetes.
- A CD-ROM toolkit completes the training package which has been distributed to all 7,500 public and non-public schools throughout New York State as well as school nurses at the annual New York State Regional Health Update series. The training is also available via the internet at: http://tinyurl.com/d9lnj

Impact

- School personnel are provided with an easily-accessed, effective training program that provides continuing education units they need along with information on improving the eating and activity environment in their school.
- Over 1,000 out-of-state requests for copies and information have come to the New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Chronic Disease Services demonstrating a need for timely and convenient training on this topic.
- Trained school personnel are encouraging students to practice healthy behaviors. A school with many Title I students has added daily fresh fruit & vegetable trays in the cafeteria to increase healthy food offerings and teachers at another school set an example for students by taking time before school to take a walk.

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