

## **PARTNERS TEAM UP FOR HEALTHIER YOUTH IN SOUTH CAROLINA**

*Resulting new policies and practices set students on the path to lifelong good health*

### **Public Health Problem**

- Too many South Carolina youth are overweight or at risk for becoming overweight.
- Almost two thirds of students don't get recommended amounts of physical activity or physical education time at school, and most don't eat enough fruits and vegetables.

### **Program**

- Coordinated school health programs help students become more physically active and eat a healthier diet - important steps toward healthy weight and lifelong prevention of chronic disease.
- South Carolina Healthy Schools, the state's coordinated school health program funded by the Division of Adolescent and School Health with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, conducts training, gives grants to local schools, and provides technical support to build school capacity to promote healthy behaviors.
- In one example of successful school efforts, South Carolina Healthy Schools worked with Anderson Partners for a Healthy Community and Anderson Medical Center to establish coordinated school health teams in every school in Anderson County, a school system serving about thirty thousand students.
- Forty-seven school health teams were established, almost all teams have been trained, and teams made plans for school health improvement using the School Health Index and developing a system to document and track their efforts.
- Pilot funding for the initiative was provided by grants from South Carolina Healthy Schools, Anderson Medical Center, and the Duke Endowment Foundation. South Carolina Healthy Schools provided technical support and professional development to school health teams as well as staff of Anderson Partners for a Healthy Community.

### **Impact**

Schools in Anderson County have adopted many new health-promoting practices, such as:

- Adopting policies to ensure that healthy items are offered in school vending machines.
- Increasing physical activity opportunities available to students, faculty, and staff, including walking tracks and nature trails, aerobics, yoga, running and walking programs.
- Implementing an evidence-based health education curriculum.
- Eliminating fried foods, offering more fruits and vegetables and providing breakfast in the classroom.
- Creating a new student reward system that offers healthy food options and non-food rewards.
- The Anderson County School District now has thirty percent more school nurses who were initially supported with Partnership funds and are now entirely sustained with district funds.

### **Contact**

Lynn Hammond  
South Carolina Department of Education  
(803) 734-8076  
lhammond@ed.sc.gov

Sandra Jeter  
Department of Health and Environmental Control  
(803) 545-4502  
jetersa@dhec.sc.gov