Obesity, Nutrition, & Exercise for School-Aged Children
Shelby Alexander, Paige Bowen, Brooke Brusseau, Callie Kheradmandi, Katie McGuire, & Sarah Phillips; BSN School of Nursing Students, College of Coastal Georgia
Lydia Watkins, DNP, MSN, CPNP, RN; Assistant Professor of Nursing, College of Coastal Georgia
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**Literature Review Findings**
- Children need to integrate exercise into their daily routine at a young age in order to remain healthy into adulthood.
- If given a choice, children will choose the healthier food options such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
  This information was reinforced when we asked children their favorite foods and were surprised to hear answers such as broccoli, chicken, and salad.
- Children who are active and participate in after school activities have a lower BMI compared to children who do not regularly engage in physical activity after school.
- Providing children with physical activity and games they enjoy was found to motivate them to maintain a more active lifestyle.

**Project Goals / Teaching Topic**

**Nutrition**
- Short discussion on proper eating, including:
  - Foods to avoid such as donuts, French fries, and soda
  - Food categories: Fruits, vegetables, protein, dairy, and grains
  - Reinforced lesson with activity - children had to choose foods and place in appropriate categories

**Exercise**
- Encouraged students to maintain an active lifestyle in order to maintain a healthy weight into adulthood.
- Informed students of benefits of exercise, including:
  - Keeping the heart and lungs healthy, friendships, and developing strong muscles.

**Methods of Teaching**

**Nutrition Poster**
- You Are What You Eat, From Your Head Down to Your Feet, poster visually enticing focal point for the students to read during nutrition discussion.
- Included foods to avoid, the food pyramid, My Plate recommendations, and other useful topics for obesity prevention.

**Nutrition Lecture**
- Spoke to students about foods to eat, foods to avoid, and importance of staying active.
- Kept students engaged by asking frequent questions and guiding discussion toward topics that interested them.

**Handprint Banner**
- Students made a banner to put up in the classroom to reinforce teaching.
- Banner, Handprints for Healthy Kids, will serve as a continual reminder to eat nutritious foods and remain active.

**Relay Race**
- Information is better retained if asked to recall it shortly after teaching, so relay race was designed to enforce nutrition and exercise lessons previously discussed.
- Students ran a short distance, identified various foods, then ran to place foods in appropriate category.
- Relay teams consisted of 5 students, so each student identified foods from a different category.
- Students were able to demonstrate they had been listening to the discussion and got exercise in the process.

**Collaboration**

**Community Partner: Golden Isles Elementary School Nurse**
- Discussed best dates and times to present to the students.
- Nurse gave valuable advice on the best age group to educate, appropriate methods of teaching, and tips on dealing with the limited attention span of 5th grade students.
- The teamwork and collaboration throughout this project enabled us to provide the students with the best possible lesson promoting nutrition and exercise in an attempt to prevent obesity and all of the detrimental side effects.

**CCGA Mini-Grant:**
- Used funding to purchase supplies to support the educational session: paint, paper, relay race equipment which helped to strengthen the quality of the presentation.

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**Percentage of Obesity Among Children Ages 2-17, by Disability Status**

- Obesity rates for children with disabilities are 38% higher than for children without disabilities.

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**Service-Learning Reflection / Outcomes**
- Gained a better understanding of issues that young students in the community face regarding nutrition, exercise, and obesity.
- Saw the need for education in the community and played an important part in helping the children maintain a healthy, active lifestyle.
- Utilized our textbook and class lectures to supplement literature review.
- Collaboration with the school to enhance the learning experience of the children.
- Enabled community engagement and promote leadership through our lesson and activity.

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