

Delaware General Health District

Dedicated to your health

NEWS RELEASE

PLAYTIME EXERCISE AT DAYCARES AIMS TO PREVENT WEIGHT PROBLEMS

**P.O. Box 570
740-368-1700**

**1-3 W. Winter St.
FAX 740-368-1736**

**Delaware OH 43015
Web Site: www.delawarehealth.org**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For further information contact Jesse Carter, public information officer, at 740-203-2085.

DELAWARE, Oh., June 30, 2009 – Preschoolers at nine child care centers in Delaware County are on a better path to lifelong healthy weights than they were a year ago.

Healthier meals and snacks and lots of teacher-led physical activity are daily goals now at the Adventure Academy, the Enchanted Care Kingdom, the Owensfield Drive Goddard School, the Grace Family Day Care and Preschool, the Journey Christian Preschool, the Lewis Center Preschool, Noah’s Ark Learning Centers (both locations in Sunbury), and the Early Learning Center at Ohio Wesleyan University.

All of these child care centers successfully completed the Delaware General Health District’s “Healthy Children, Healthy Weights” program. The program trains child care centers to promote healthy weights in children up to age 5. Healthy Children, Healthy Weights is a partnership with Columbus Public Health and was funded by the Health District and the United Way of Delaware County.

In the Healthy Weights program, child care teachers and staff learn about the serious consequences of child obesity and become role models for the children they oversee. They practice daily to increase their own and the children’s physical activity; they promote healthy body images; and they improve the nutritional quality of meals and snacks served at their centers.

Child care staff then share what they’ve learned with parents through a 6-week Parent Outreach Campaign.

The child care centers were trained by Kelsey Kuhlman, DGHD Health Educator and Carolyn Nye, a Health District registered dietitian. “The feedback we’ve received from participating preschools has been very positive,” said Nye. “We have heard encouraging things from the staff

members, like ‘We’ve had excellent parent participation’ and ‘We are so glad the Health District is reaching out like this.’”

The program also included funds for specially selected child care equipment that encourages even more physical activity. The centers bought playground balls, basketball goals, toy push mowers and corn poppers, egg and spoon race sets, and CDs for active kids.

Obesity is a family challenge, and Delaware County statistics show that it’s never too early in life to begin promoting lifelong healthy weights. A 2007 Health District survey of Delaware County showed 22 percent of adults were obese, up 4 percent from 2003. A 2005-07 DGHD survey of elementary and middle school students’ heights and weights showed almost one in three were overweight or at-risk for overweight.

For additional program information, contact Public Health Dietitian Connie Codispoti at 740-368-1700.