



Evaluation of the School-based Components of the WV Healthy Lifestyles Act:

Physical Education/Physical Activity Findings – Year 1

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Overview

- Background on Healthy Lifestyles Act (HLA) Evaluation
- Key Findings
- PE Teacher responses to surveys
- Themes from PE teacher comments
- Health & PE Academy participation in evaluation
- Recommendations
- Year 2 Evaluation Plans
- Questions/Comments

Healthy Lifestyles Act of 2005

Provided requirements for schools regarding:

- Physical education time
- The sale of healthy beverages
- Fitness testing
- Health education and assessment
- Collection of BMI measurements

Evaluation Data Sources: 2007-08

- **Surveys of school personnel**

- Superintendents
- Principals
- School nurses
- Physical education teachers

- **Interviews**

- Parents
- Students
- Key informants

- **Surveys of health care providers**

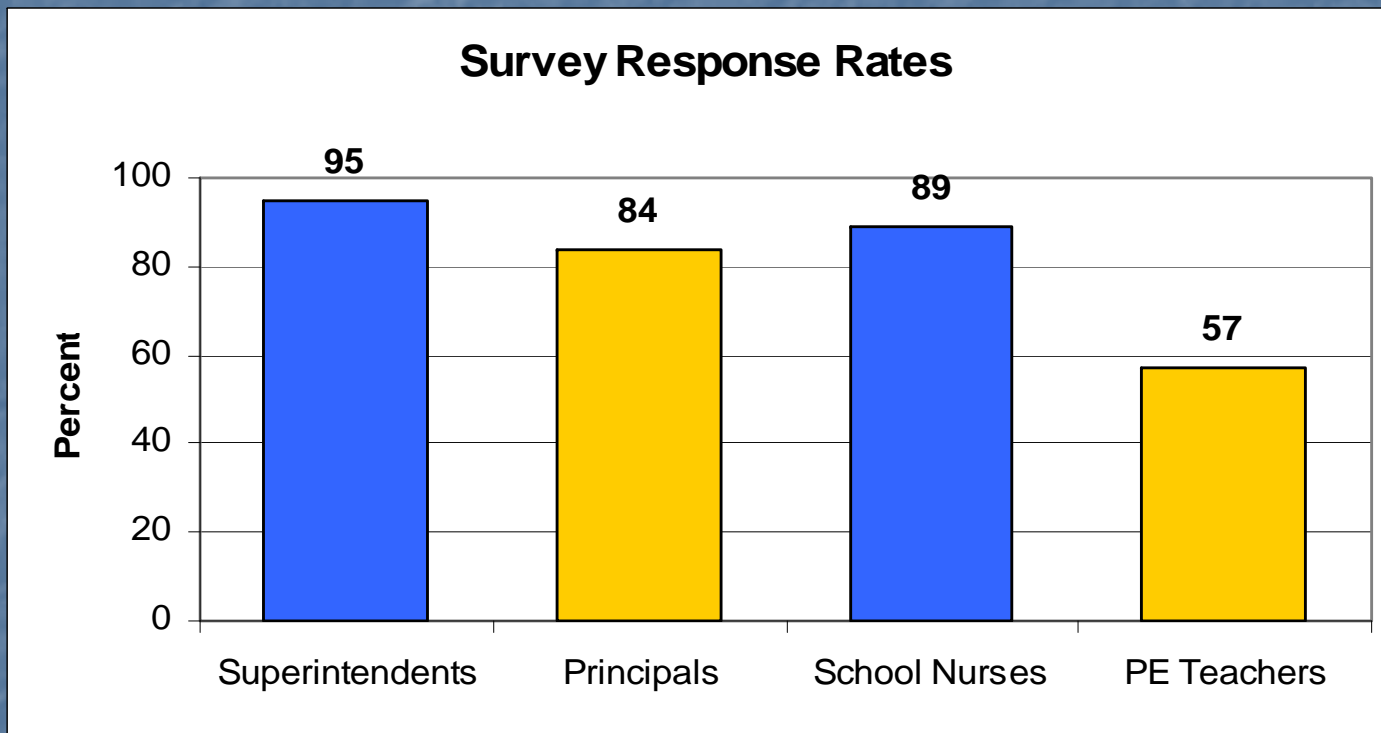
- Physicians
- Nurse practitioners

- **Dept. of Education data**

- Physical education plans
- Health Education Assessment Project (HEAP)
- FITNESSGRAM®
- Local Wellness Policies

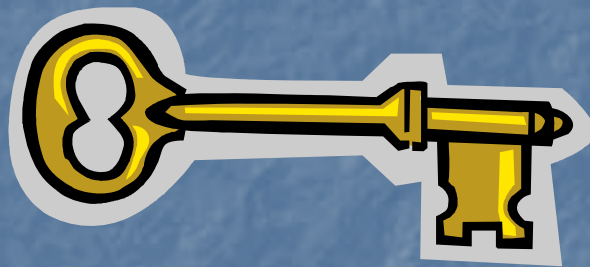
Survey Response Rates

School Personnel Surveys



*PE teachers provided more than 1900 comments on the surveys.

Key Findings





General Impressions of the Act

- The Healthy Lifestyles Act increased awareness of students' health status among school personnel and spurred the creation of new programs and efforts to increase physical activity and promote healthy eating among students and families.

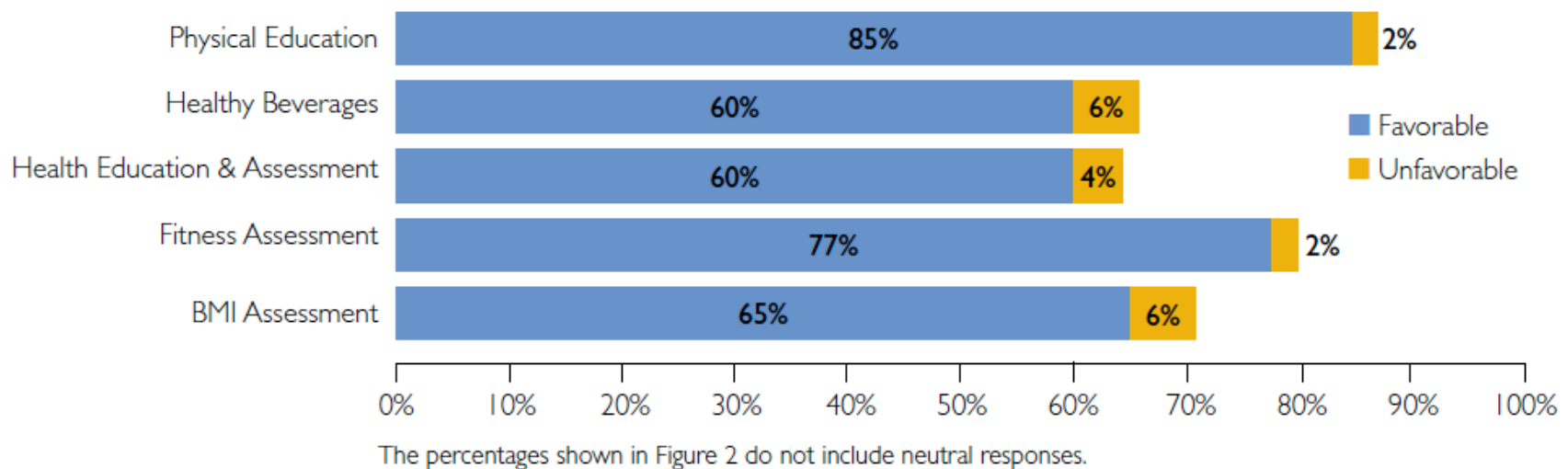
“The Act has empowered concerned educators and administrators to implement higher standards regarding nutrition and physical activity in schools.” (superintendent)



School Personnel Support

- School personnel generally supported mandates of the Healthy Lifestyles Act; **the strongest support was seen for physical education.**

FIGURE 2: PRINCIPAL PERCEPTIONS OF HEALTHY LIFESTYLES ACT MANDATES

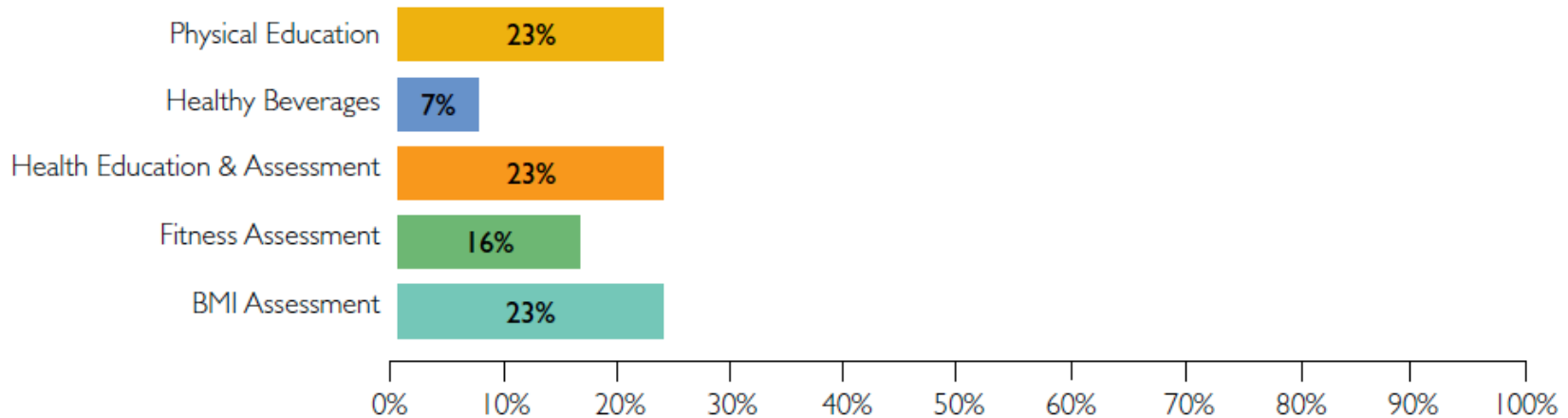




Resource Challenges

- 41% percent of schools lacked the resources needed to implement one or more of the Healthy Lifestyles Acts mandates.

FIGURE 3: SCHOOLS LACKING RESOURCES NEEDED TO IMPLEMENT NEW REQUIREMENTS



Parent Opinions about PE Time

- 56% of parents believed schools should provide PE **5 days per week**
- To accomplish the increased time :
 - 48% in favor of extending the school day
 - 29% in favor of offering fewer art or music classes
 - 10% in favor of having less time in traditional classes such as math, science, and language



PE Facilities & Staffing

- Improved PE facilities and increased staffing are needed to fully implement the PE requirements of the HLA.
 - 33% of elementary schools and 15% of middle schools were unable to meet the time requirements due to inadequate staffing, inadequate facilities, or both.
 - *“Because of salary issues and facilities, I see some students once a week for 35 minutes. My understanding is recess can be counted toward this requirement. This, in my opinion, doesn’t fulfill this requirement since not all students partake in movement during recess.” (PE teacher)*



Best Practices

- Many county- and school-level policies do not reflect current best practices for nutrition and student physical activity.
- For example:
 - 45% of counties do not require recess for elementary students
 - Only 24% of elementary schools prohibit removing recess to punish students for misbehavior



HEAP Assessments

- HEAP assessments have not been fully implemented by schools and there is inconsistent use of HEAP data in education planning.
 - Although 85% of schools conducted HEAP testing with some students, **only 34% of eligible students were tested**
 - 43% of county superintendents reported reviewing HEAP data from their schools



Data Utilization

- Health Education Assessment Program (HEAP) testing results, FITNESSGRAM® data, and BMI screening data are required by the Act but are underutilized in curricula and policy development and evaluation.
 - Less than 25% of Local Wellness Policies indicate one or more of these data sources will be used to help evaluate the policy.
 - Less than 25% of superintendents report using HEAP data to evaluate county progress or set county goals.

PE Teacher Responses to Survey Items

PE Budget

- 70% of PE teachers reported having a dedicated budget for PE.
- 57% believed the budget was not sufficient to meet current equipment needs

PE Facilities and Equipment

- 41% rated their **indoor** PE facilities as fair or poor
- 44% rated their school's **outdoor** facilities as fair or poor
- 65% of PE teachers rated their school's PE equipment as good or excellent

Physical Activity at School

- 93% of PE teachers felt that non-PE teachers strongly encouraged student PA
- Only 6% of PE teachers felt that PA was well-integrated into academic subjects

FITNESSGRAM® Results

- The majority of physical education teachers (77%) were satisfied with FITNESSGRAM®.
- 88% of PE teachers provided the testing results to students
 - 78% provided verbal results
 - 33% also provided results in writing
- 74% of PE teachers reported using the assessment results to modify the PE curriculum

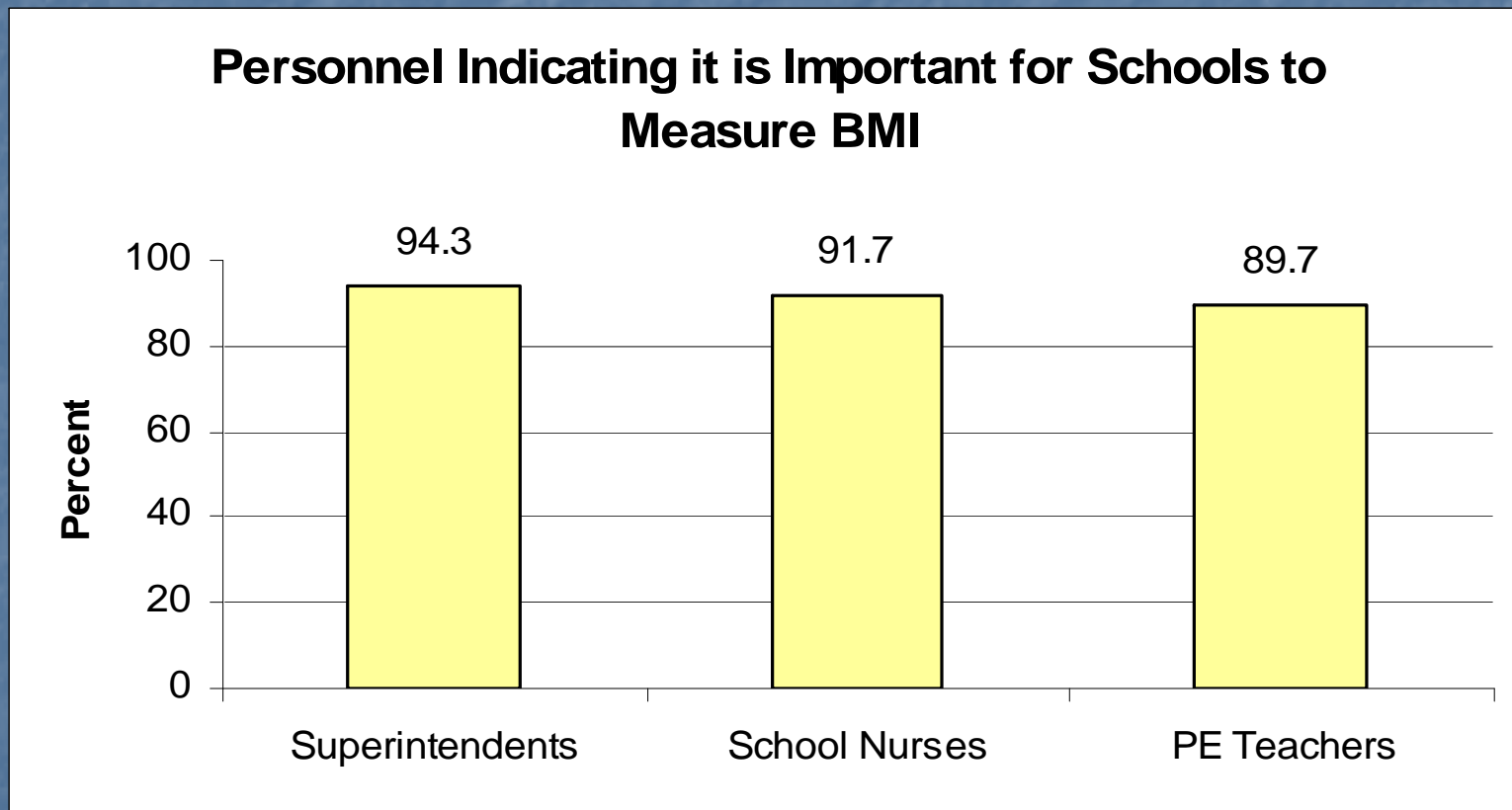
PE Teacher Experience with BMI Assessments

- 75% conducted BMI (or body composition) assessments with students
- 83% indicated it was not difficult to keep the measurement process private

BMI Assessments in Context

- School-based BMI assessments have been recommended by the Institute of Medicine
- BMI measurements in WV primarily conducted through CARDIAC screenings and FITNESSGRAM® assessments
- During the 2007-08 school year, 47% of students surveyed (grades 5, 7, and 9) reported having their BMI assessed

Importance of BMI Assessments



Themes from PE Teacher Comments

Theme #1

- The law did not go far enough in its requirements – more PE time is needed to ensure adequate fitness and skill development for children.
 - 71% of PE teachers said time requirements were too low
 - ***“Provide daily physical and movement education for the entire school year for all students in each grade.”***

Theme #2

- The law has effectively increased physical education time for many students.
 - *“Students attend more PE classes than before – more time out of desks and moving.”*

Theme #3

- It has been challenging to implement the law as intended - improvements are needed.
 - *“Classroom teachers allow students to stand around at recess. Counting PE/fitness at recess is like telling a student to work on reading or math at recess.”*
 - *“In this school with over 600 students, I can only see each student one day a week for 45 minutes. They get no other PE. The county is allowed to count recess towards HB2816 compliance. Many students rarely have recess because it is withheld for discipline.”*

Theme #4

- PE teachers have been creative in finding ways to improve student fitness and physical activity, and address facility shortcomings.
 - 32% had written grants to provide additional funding for supplies
 - *“I get equipment from Campbell’s labels, Jump Rope for Heart, and the Diabetes Walk. Otherwise we would have very little equipment.”*

Theme #5

- Changing PE at school is not sufficient to improve fitness; students also need more physical activity throughout the day, improved nutrition, and parent support.
 - *“Changes also have to be made in the home. A lot of our students are not active at all after they leave school.”*
 - *“Health changes need to be made in the home as well. Dietary changes need to be made in school lunch programs.”*

Theme #6

- PE teachers have concerns about body composition assessment and reporting.
 - Need assistance from school nurse or other personnel
 - Time consuming
 - Need a reporting form and method to inform parents

Theme #7

- PE teachers have concerns about the use of FITNESSGRAM®.
 - Concerns were voiced about time required, needing a more efficient way to record and communicate results, and whether the tests were sufficiently challenging for students:
 - *“The tests are too easy for the students. It’s not hard for the students to be in the healthy fitness zones even if they are obese.”*

Theme #8

- Many schools lack adequate space or equipment to conduct the required PE classes.
 - 64% reported having a gym for PE, but many noted the gym was not used exclusively for PE classes
 - ***“There is a dedicated gym but it includes the stage and is used for a multipurpose room. Also entrance to lunch room and kindergarten rooms is through the gym.”***

Theme #9

- DDR has been a welcome addition to the PE program.
 - 92% of PE teachers believe DDR is an appropriate component of a PE curriculum
 - 91% believed DDR was effective in engaging sedentary students in PA
 - ***“It is awesome. The students like it a lot. It helps to get the CSOs in dance and music.”***

Theme #10

- Although DDR has many benefits, there are concerns and challenges associated with its use.
 - Concerns = having adequate equipment and space, time required for set up and take down, expense of equipment, inactivity that results when students watch others play.
 - ***“It takes approximately 20 minutes to set up the gym for DDR. This is the reason I use it 3 times a year for all classes in a row.”***

Health & PE Academy
Participation in the Year 1
Evaluation

BMI Representativeness

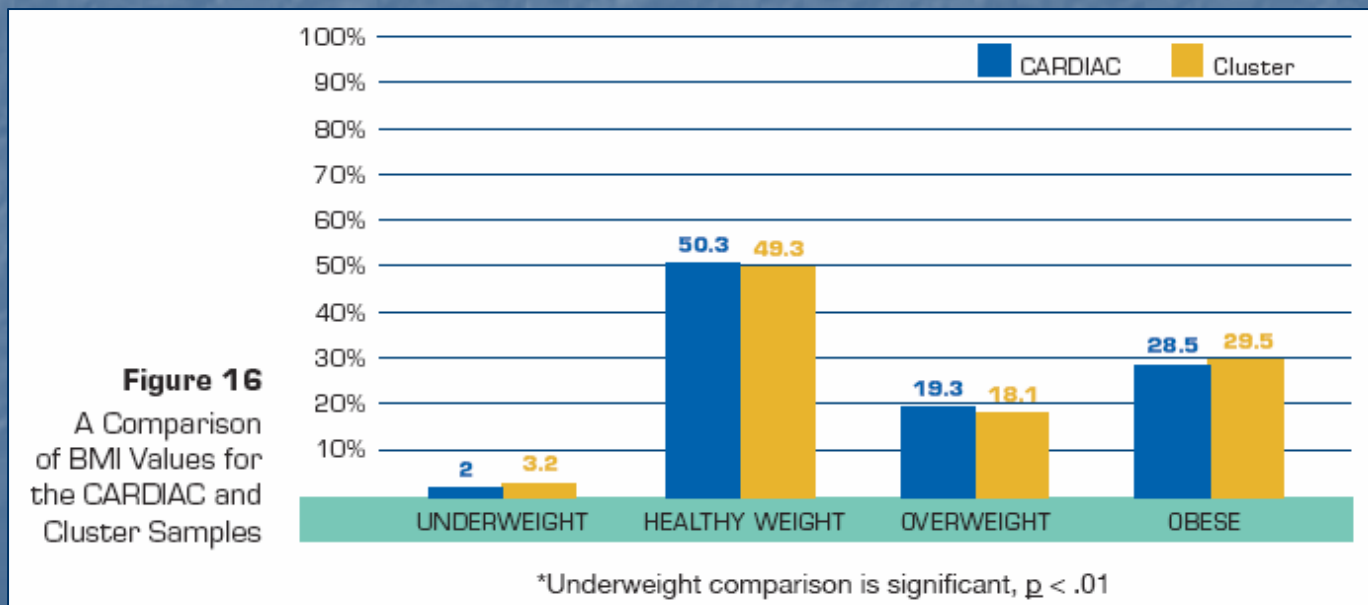
- CARDIAC has been conducting screenings with 5th grade students for more than 10 years.
- CARDIAC uses an “active consent” process in the 5th grade – parents must give written consent and students must give written assent in order to participate.
- Less than 40% of students participate.
- Because CARDIAC’s BMI measurements were not based on a scientifically drawn (random) sample, it was unclear whether the BMI data could be considered representative of 5th graders in the state

Method

- To assess the representativeness of CARDIAC's BMI data for 5th grade, Academy members measured the heights and weights of 5th grade students in their schools.
- 1640 5th grade students from 34 schools across 16 counties (cluster sample)

Results

- Comparing the 5th grade cluster sample to the CARDIAC sample revealed that the proportions of students in the healthy weight, overweight, and obese categories were not significantly different
- A significant difference was noted for the underweight category



Representativeness Conclusion

- The 5th grade CARDIAC BMI results accurately reflected the state's rates of childhood obesity for that age group.
- The accuracy (or representativeness) of county and school level proportions could not be accurately assessed due to small sample sizes.

Recommendations:

Five Recommendations based on
the overall* evaluation

Recommendations

1. Increase physical activity for all students, with an emphasis on moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Recommendations

2. Expand opportunities for students and parents to learn about and participate in programs related to healthy eating, regular physical activity and obesity prevention.

Recommendations

3. Promote the use of available data and evidence-based decision-making for curriculum planning and policy development that will lead to greater use of best practices.

Recommendations

4. Identify strategies to promote practices by health care providers that include:

- Routine calculation of children's BMI percentiles;
- Educating and encouraging healthy lifestyle behaviors;
- Regular and ongoing weight counseling for families and children

Recommendations

5. Identify and address the barriers that are preventing full implementation of the Health Education Assessment Project and create strategies to increase utilization of HEAP data as part of the curriculum planning process.

Year 2 Plans

- Assess changes in the efforts to implement the HLA and the impact of the Act between Years 1 and 2;
- Evaluate the impact of the new WV Standards for School Nutrition;
- Add surveys of health teachers and county food service directors;
- Review and evaluate the revised Local Wellness Policies; and
- Assess the impact of changes in BMI screening procedures on parental knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and satisfaction with BMI assessment

Your questions or comments?



Our questions:

- What could we do to increase the number of survey responses we receive from PE teachers?
- Are there other questions that should be included in our surveys?

Thank you!

Full report is available online:

www.hsc.wvu.edu/som/hrc

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