CATCH - Coordinated Approach to Child Health: Curriculum & Training

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

A Prevention Research Center Tool Showing Evidence of Effectiveness

OVERVIEW

More than 10,000 schools and communities in the United States and abroad have adopted CATCH, a school health program that focuses on coordinating the efforts of teachers, school staff, and the community.\(^1\) CATCH promotes physical activity and healthy food choices for children from preschool through eighth grade and offers additional modules in sun safety and e-cigarette prevention. Scientific studies have shown CATCH to be effective, which led to Texas state legislation requiring coordinated school health programs.\(^2\) The program reinforces health concepts through four combined parts:

- Classroom instruction
- School nutrition services
- Physical education lessons
- Family events

The program also includes the CATCH Coordination Kit which provides a step-by-step guide for increasing collaboration between school administrators, teachers, nutrition staff, parents, and community constituents to deliver coordinated health messages across children’s learning environments and after-school settings. Many of the program lessons and resources are available online via the Digital CATCH platform. One to 3-day on-site workshops are held to train faculty and staff in the CATCH program.

RESEARCH RESULTS

More than 130 peer-reviewed scientific publications support the effectiveness of CATCH in reducing overweight and obesity. Compared with other childhood obesity interventions, CATCH is significantly more cost-effective.\(^3\) CATCH has an even greater impact when combined with community participation\(^4\) and Spanish translation\(^5\) in schools with many low-income students. One follow-up study showed that eighth grade students maintained higher levels of physical activity and better eating habits, which they began 3 years earlier as a part of the CATCH program.\(^6\)

TOOL LOCATION

http://catchinfo.org/programs/

REFERENCES