

Communities for Healthy Living

A Holistic Approach to Engaging Head Start
Families to Improve Health Outcomes



COMMUNITIES
— FOR —
HEALTHY LIVING



Introductions

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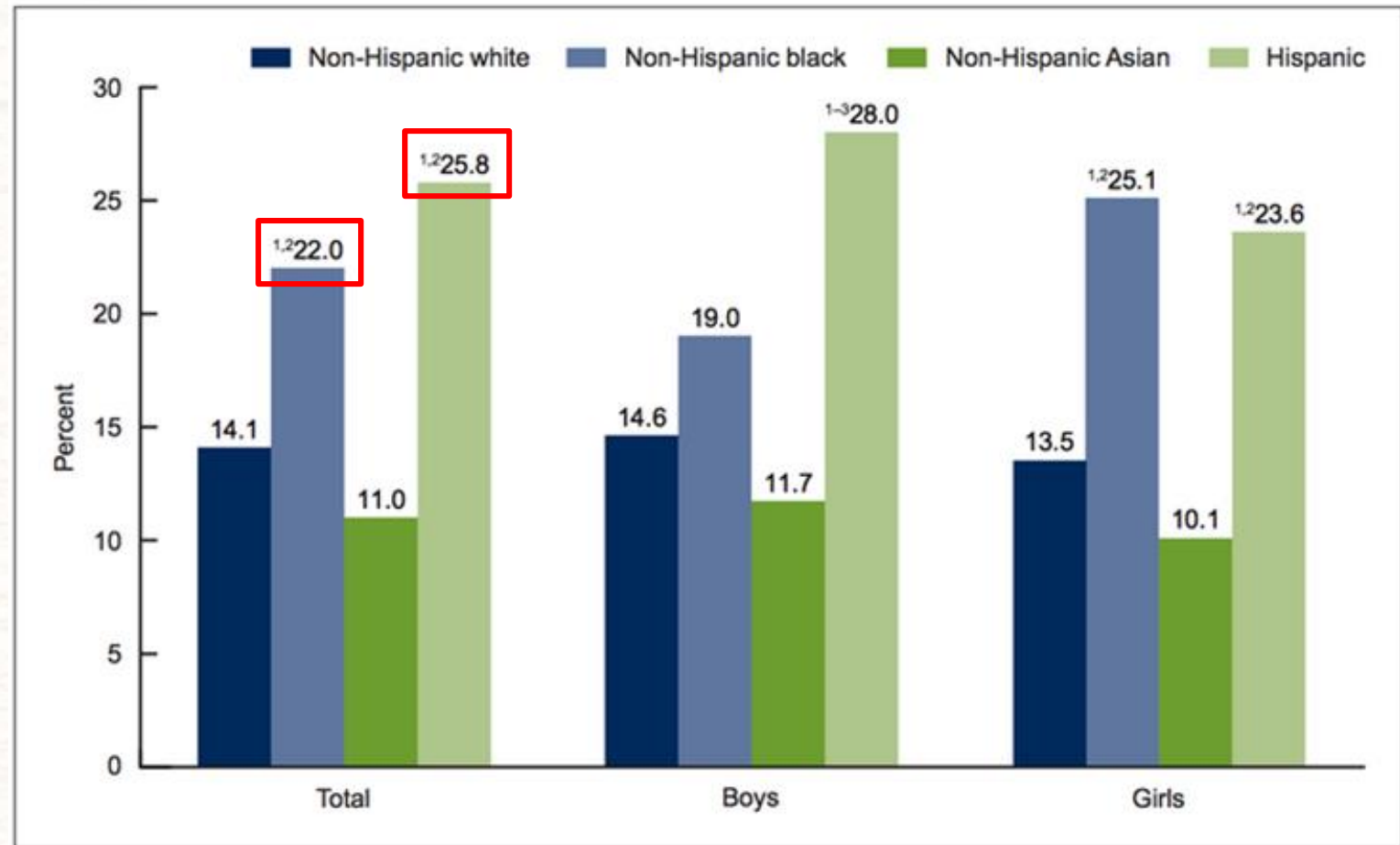
The Problem: Childhood Obesity

Potential for life-long consequences

- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Asthma
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- **Obesity through adulthood**

The Problem: Childhood Obesity

- Overall rate for all children: 18.5%
- Disproportionately affects **Latino and Black** families



¹Significantly different from non-Hispanic Asian persons.

²Significantly different from non-Hispanic white persons.

³Significantly different from non-Hispanic black persons.

NOTE: Access data table for Figure 4 at: https://www.odc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db288_table.pdf#4.

SOURCE: NCHS, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 2015–2016.

The Problem: Childhood Obesity

- **National rate for 2-5 year olds: 13.9%**
- Disproportionately affects **low-income** families
 - National rate among WIC participating children: 14.5%
 - **MA WIC participating children: 16.6%**

Social Justice

Partnering with Head Start



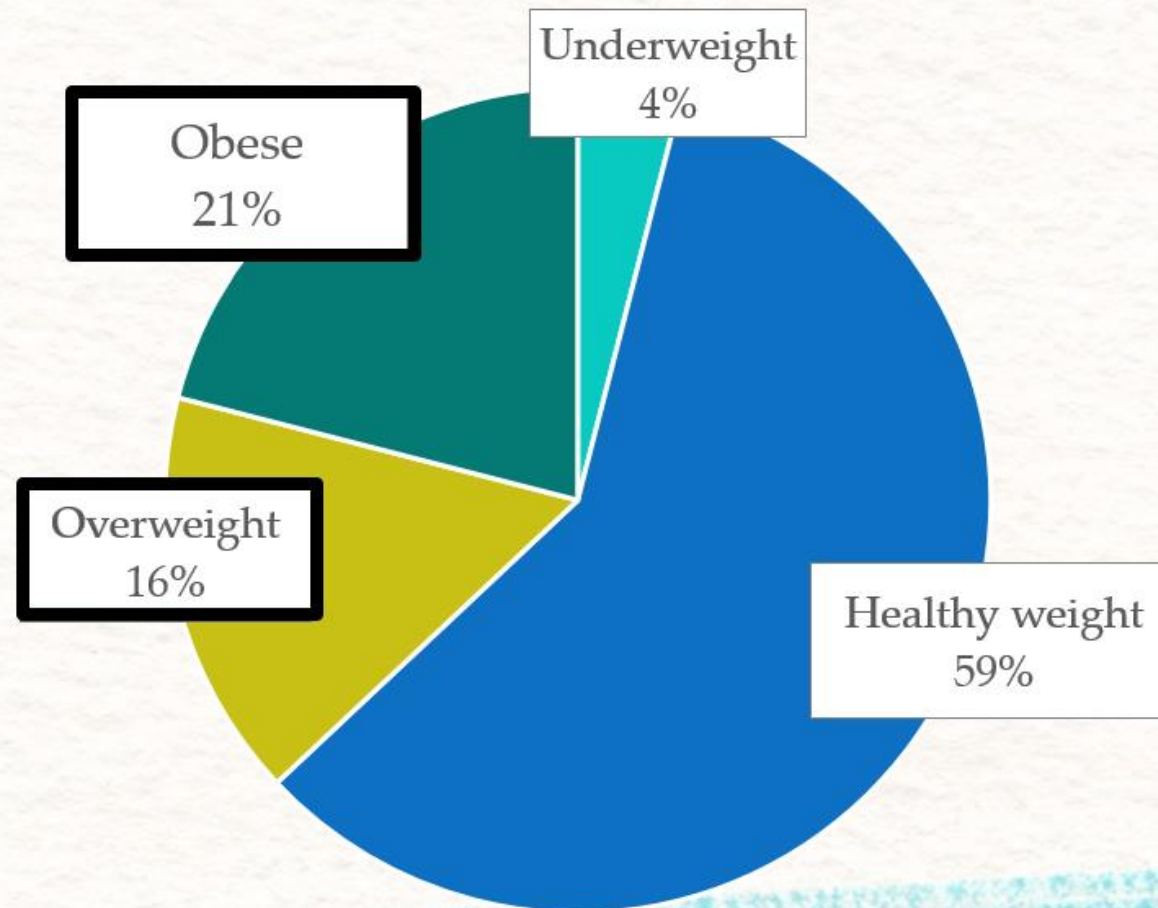


Overview of Head Start

- Promote school readiness in children ages birth to 5 from low-income families through comprehensive support of their development
- Early Head Start: Birth through Age 3
- Head Start: Preschool (Age 3-5)
- Positive learning environment
- Support and services include: nutrition, health services, disabilities and mental health intervention and support, family engagement

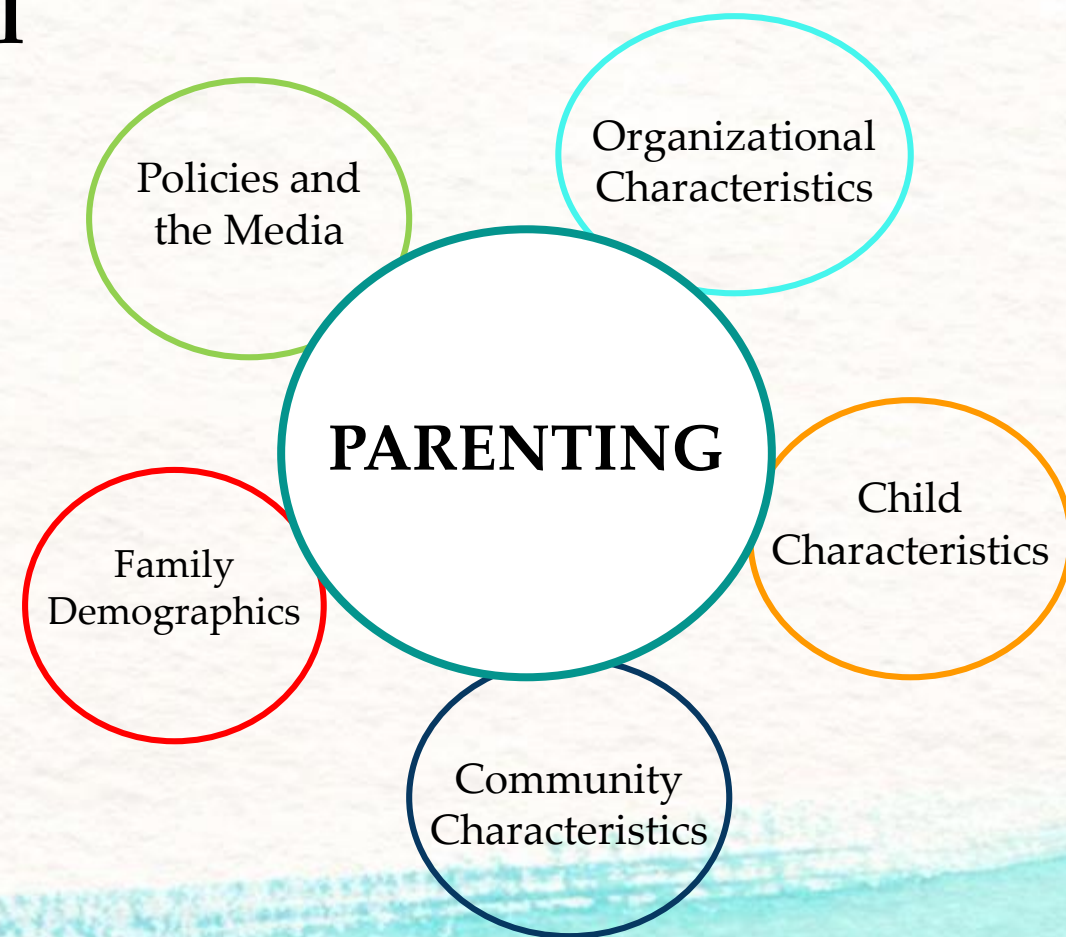


Child Weight Status: Greater Boston Head Starts



Building on the Head Start Model

- Alignment with Head Start performance standards
- Parent-centered participatory approach
- Focus on skill-building and resource utilization
- Counter negative environmental effects to support whole-family health



Communities for Healthy Living





Communities for Healthy Living (CHL)

- 5-year community-based intervention trial in Greater Boston
- Funded by the NIDDK
- Partnership between HSPH, Action for Boston Community Development, and the Community Action Agency of Somerville
 - Serve ~2,000 children/year



HEAD START &
CHILDREN'S SERVICES



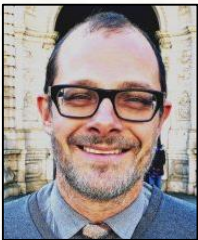
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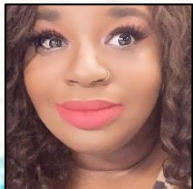
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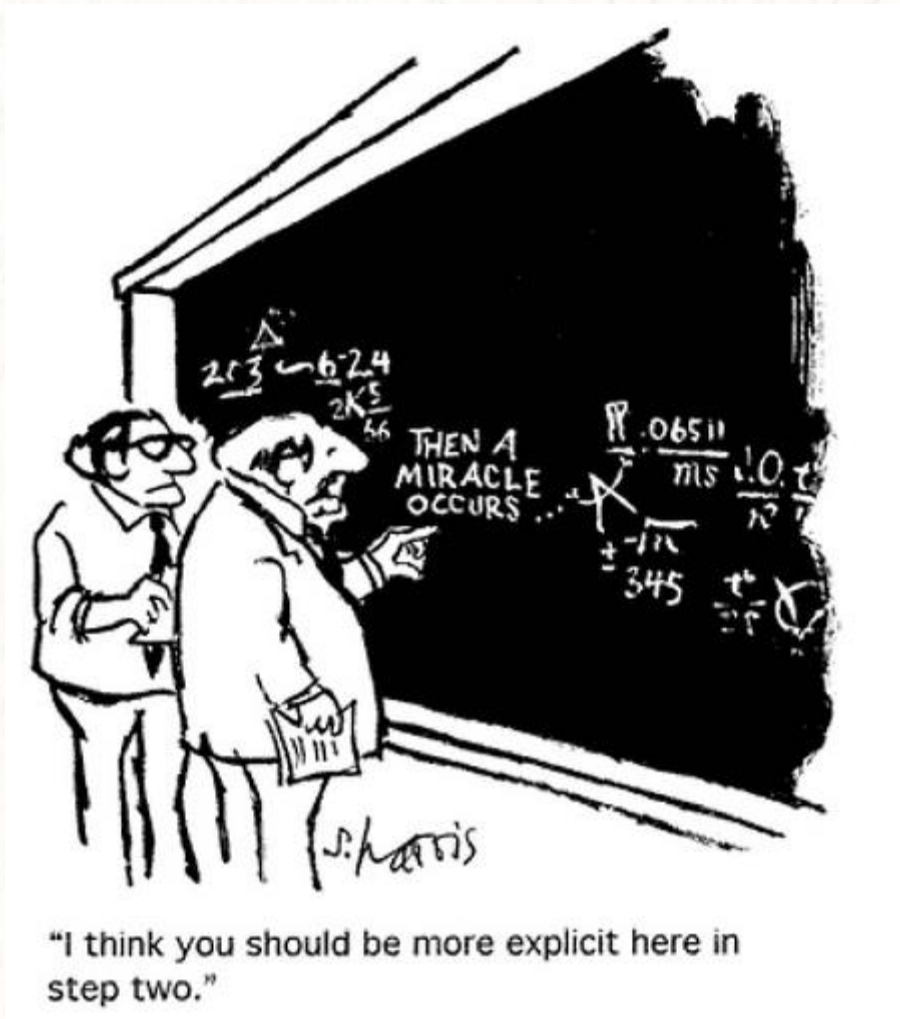


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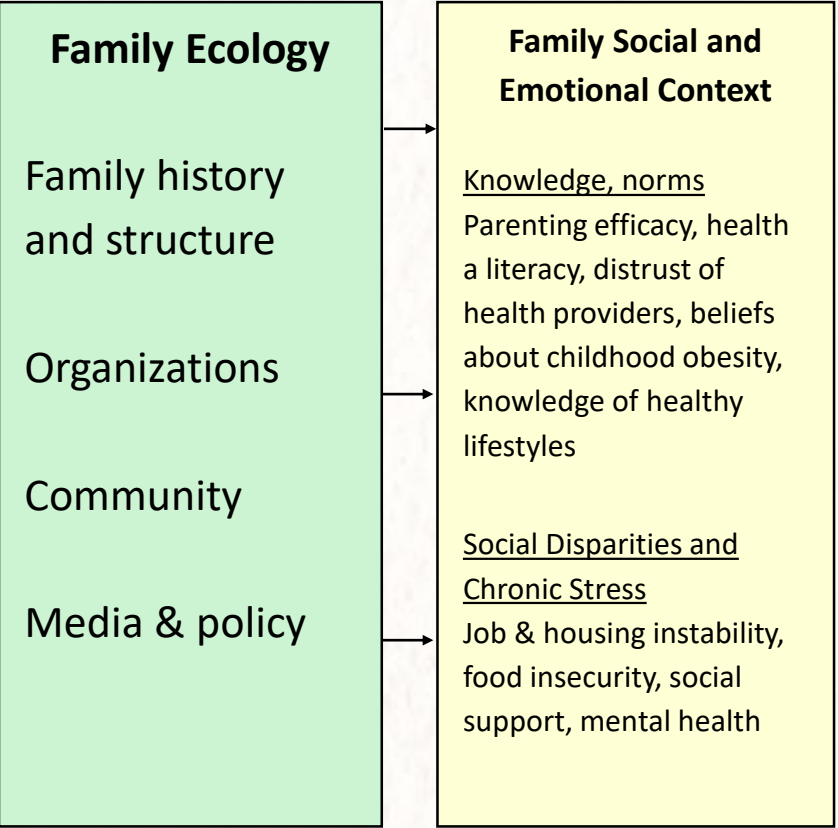
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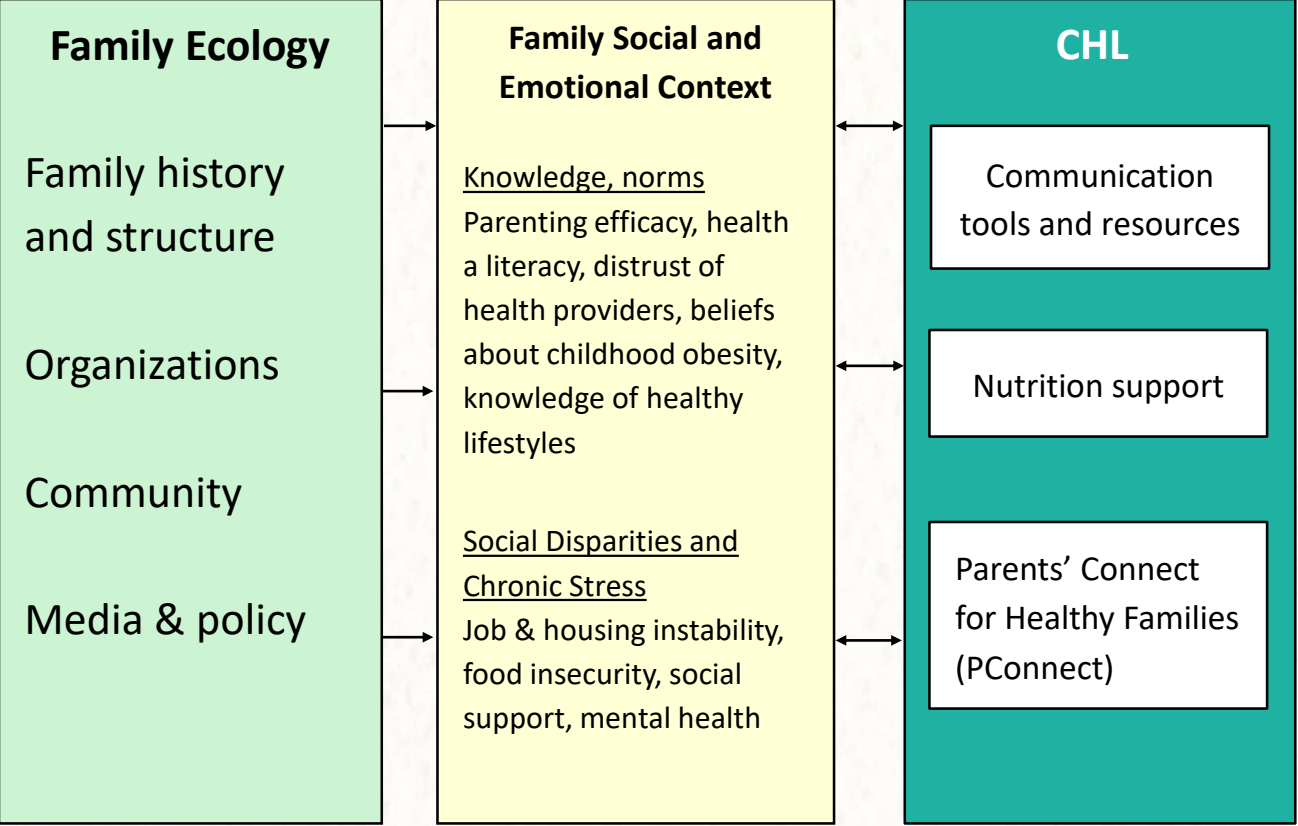
Theory of Change



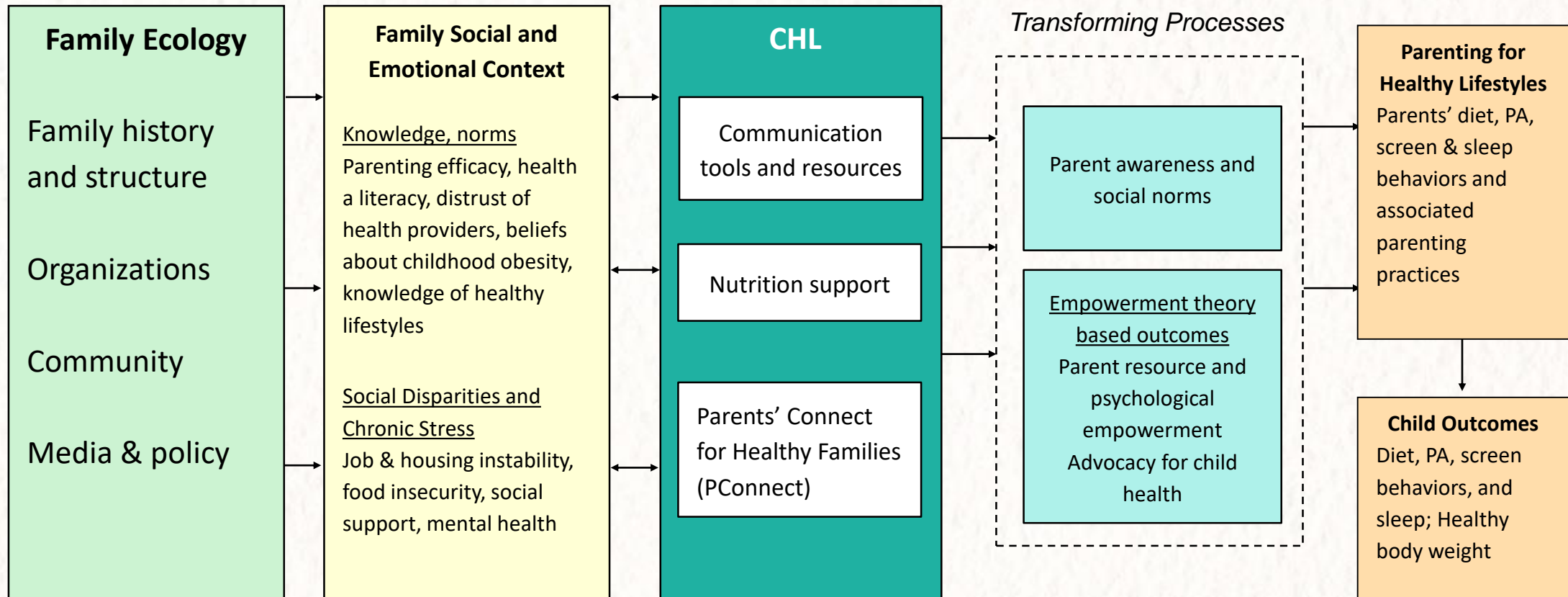


Theory of Change





FOUNDATION: Participatory approach:
Head Start parents + Head Start administrative staff and teachers + researchers co-develop and adapt CHL for the local context.



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Head Start parents + Head Start administrative staff and teachers + researchers co-develop and adapt CHL for the local context.



Study Design

- Cluster-randomized control trial with stepped wedge design
- 16 Head Start programs (total 23 centers)
- Control sites continue programming and engagement as usual
- Intervention sites:
 - Staff training and support materials
 - Resources for parents through school year
 - Parent program



Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

Contemporary Clinical Trials

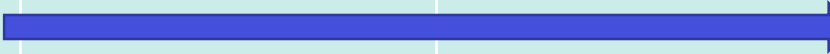

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/conclintrial

Communities for healthy living (CHL) – A family-centered childhood obesity prevention program integrated into Head Start services: Study protocol for a pragmatic cluster randomized trial

Jacob P. Beckerman^a, Alyssa Aftosmes-Tobio^a, Nicole Kitos^a, Janine M. Jurkowski^b, Kindra Lansburg^{a,c}, Crystal Kazik^{a,d}, Adam Gavarkovs^a, Adrienne Vigilante^d, Begum Kalyoncu^a, Roger Figueroa^a, Rachel Klabunde^a, Rachel Barouch^a, Sebastien Haneuse^e, Elsie Taveras^f, Kirsten K. Davison^{a,g,*}, the CHL study team



Stepped Wedge Design

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Group 1	Intervention Start 		
Group 2		Intervention Start 	
Group 3			Intervention Start



Trial Timeline

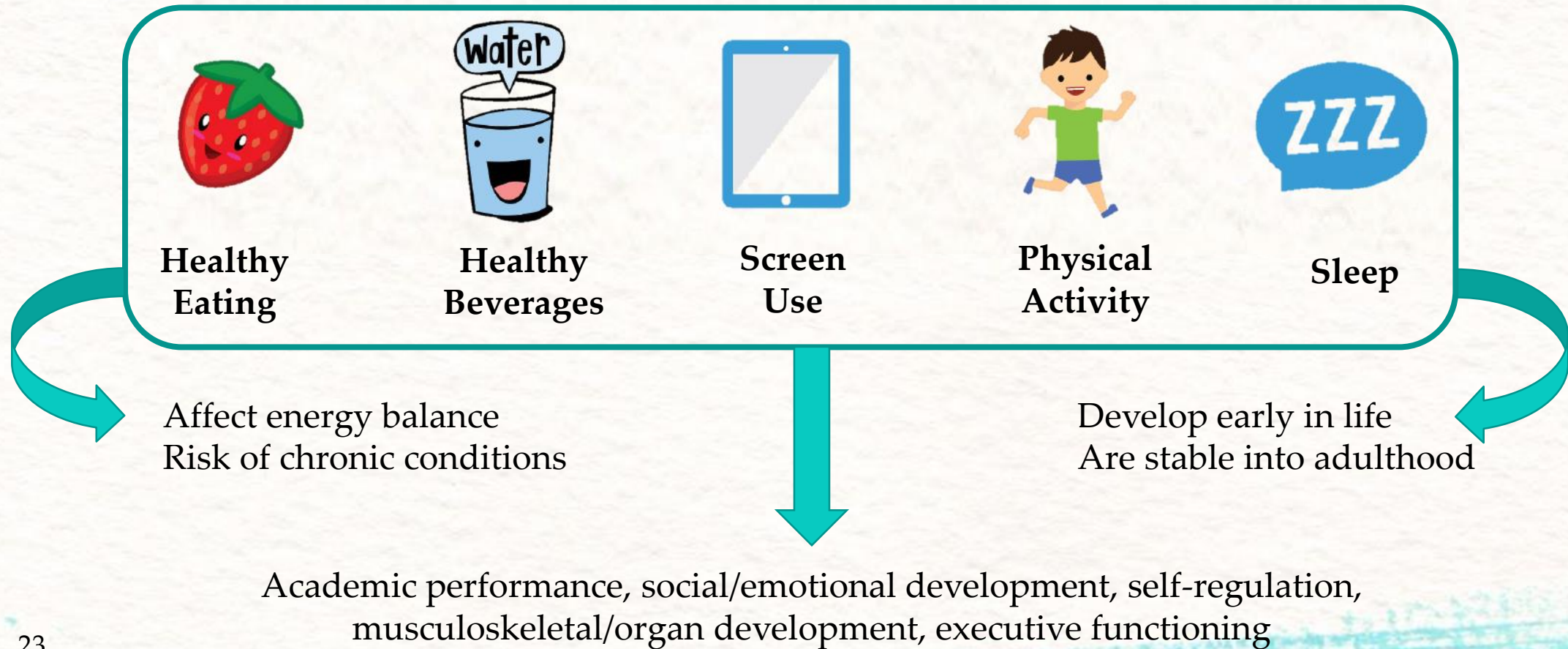
- **Year 1 (2016):** Development Phase
- **Year 2 (Spring 2017):** Pilot Study
- **Year 3-5 (Fall 2017 – Spring 2020):** Full Intervention Trial



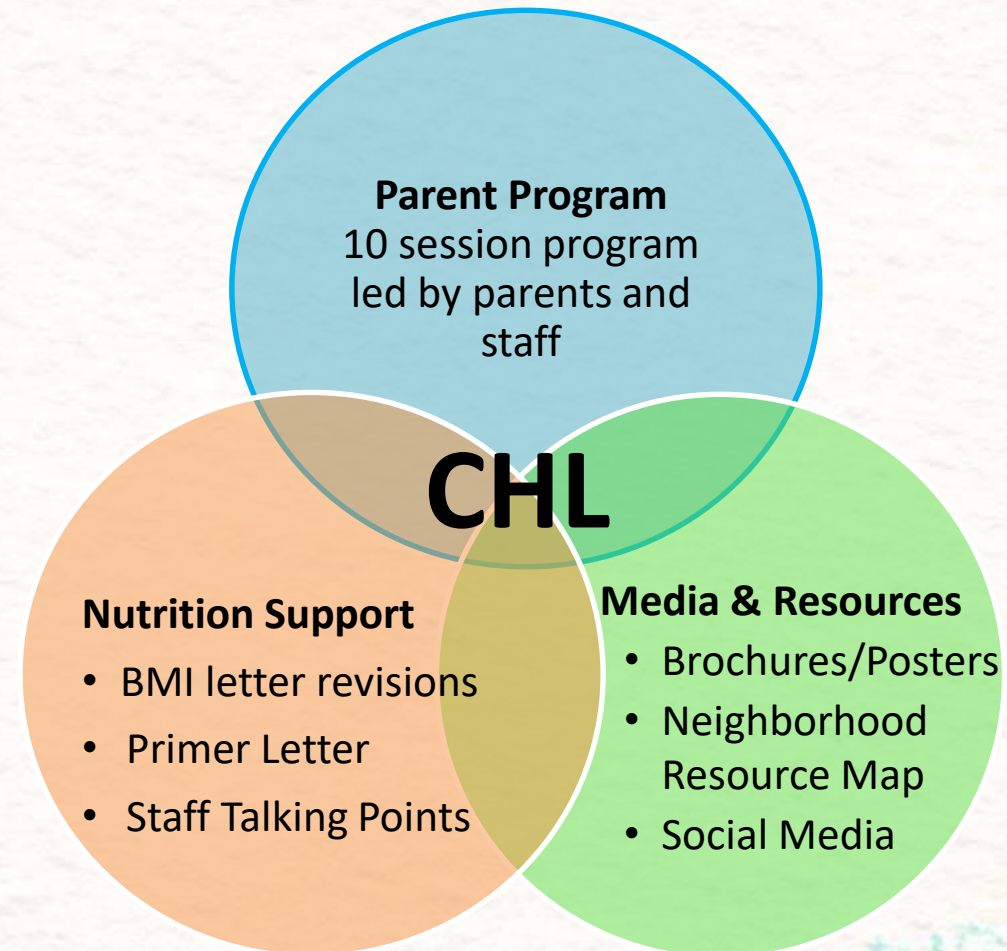
Data Collection

- Family Demographics
- Child Health Outcomes
- Parent Health, Parenting, and Empowerment Outcomes
- Process Evaluation

Five Key Health Behaviors Linked with Obesity



Intervention Components



Participatory Approach





Continually Engaging Staff and Parents

- Community Advisory Boards
- Project Leader Meetings
- On-the-ground liaison
- Direct staff engagement



- Conversations started early
- Joint decision making
- Common goals
- Consistent with Head Start mission
- Shared funds
- CHL staff site within Head Start

Community Advisory Boards

- Head Start Staff, Parents, Community Members, Researchers
- Met from January 2016 – October 2018
- Main decision making body
- Cultural sensitivity, literacy level, appropriate content and messaging



Parents Connect for Healthy Living Program





Parents Connect for Healthy Living (PConnect)

- 10 session Health and Empowerment program for Head Start parents/primary caregivers
- One program implemented per year at each intervention site
- 2017-2018 School Year:
 - 31 parents recruited; 22 graduated across 5 intervention sites
 - 50% of parents reported they would like to be a program leader

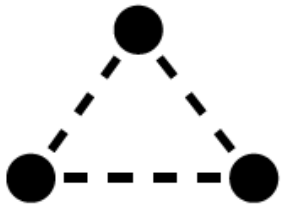




Parents Connect for Healthy Living (PConnect)

- Designed to leverage parents' own knowledge and expertise
- Co-facilitation model
- Learn to advocate for their family, find solutions that make sense for their circumstance, and identify/share existing community resources

Connect parents to each other to share information, experience, and resources



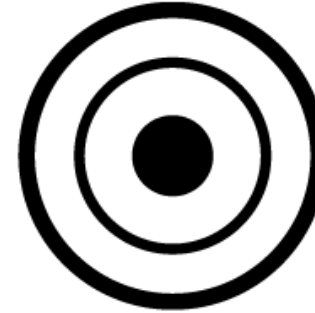
Health Connections



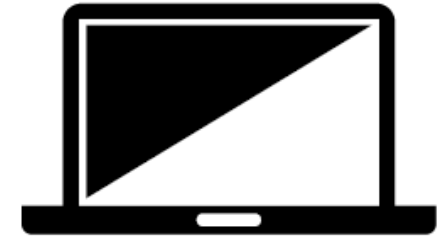
Nutrition & Physical Activity



Sleep and Screen Time



Goal Setting



Supporting Resources



Child Personality



Mindfulness



Communication & Healthy Relationships



Advocacy



Neighborhoods & Social Networks



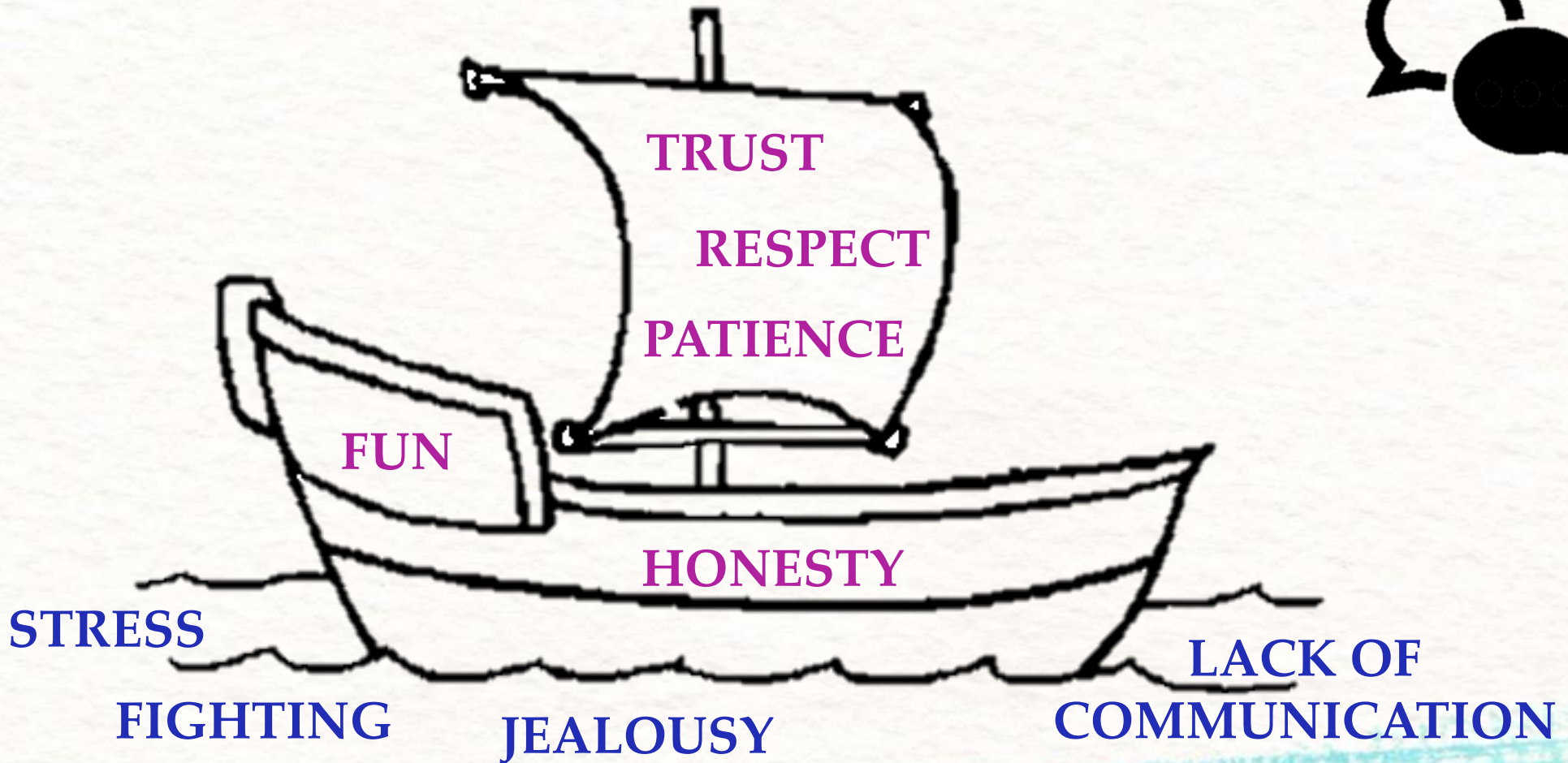
Activity 1: My Family RelationSHIP



What makes a relationship healthy?

What does family mean to you?

Activity 1: My Family RelationSHIP





Activity 2: Welcome to the Neighborhood



How do our neighborhoods positively and negatively impact health?

What would you tell them are positive and negative things about where you live when it comes to family health?

Healthy Habit	Supports (+)	Challenges (-)	My Solutions
Healthy Eating	WIC	<i>No large grocery store nearby.</i>	<i>Learn recipes that use healthy foods I can get easily.</i>
Healthy Drinks			
Physical Activity			
Limiting Screen Time			
Sleep			

Engaging Parents as Leaders & Participants





How do we aim to Empower?

Communities for Healthy Living explicitly addresses:

- Relational Empowerment

- Power gained through the transfer of resources, knowledge, and skills
- Shared decision making, bridging social divides, mobilizing networks, facilitating others' empowerment, passing on a legacy

- Cognitive Empowerment

- Increase knowledge and critical consciousness about ecological factors influencing health outcomes
- Critical awareness, resource mobilization, skill development

- Emotional Empowerment

- Beliefs about ability to influence one's own life
- Parenting efficacy



Data Collection

Process Evaluation

- Facilitator Qualitative Interviews: n=13
- Staff Qualitative Interviews: n=8



Parents as Leaders

Challenges

- Time commitment
- Professionalism
- Communication
- Leader not participant

Strategies

- Re-evaluated training protocol
- Staff modeling
- Coaching



Parents as Leaders

Successes

- Gain, use, and share new knowledge
- Connecting with other parents
- Bridging social divides
- Professional Development
- Typically worked well as a balanced partnership

“Being a facilitator actually made me connect with a few of the moms that were here; so we built relationships outside of here. We’ve used the resources we’ve learned, and kind of united and became more like a family structure – giving resources to one another, providing support.”



Parents as Participants

Challenges

- Language Barriers
- Engagement
- Attendance
- Full-time work/school parents

Strategies

- Training bilingual facilitators
- Calling/texting reminders
- Staff Training & Engagement



Parents as Participants

Successes

- Connecting with other parents
 - Within and outside of sessions
 - Use resources together
- Heard and Supported
- New content learning, resources, and strategies
- Safety Net
 - Connect with Head Start agency resources
- Relationship with Staff

“Some parents need help but they don’t have the support, and wouldn’t be able to find a solution on their own. With PConnect, if you have a problem they help you find a solution.”

“PConnect is like an open road for parents to investigate and connect with each other as parents, and to give ideas to other parents as well.”



Benefits for Parents and Staff

- Up-to-date information on wide range of health topics
- Practical strategies for starting – and keeping – healthy behaviors
- Sharing and learning about strategies to overcome barriers
- Build relationships
- Reflect on parenting
- Leadership toolkit
- Empowering experience





Lessons Learned

- Need for simultaneous buy-in from administrative staff and engagement at the center level
- Regularly involve and update staff
 - Identify key staff to assist with recruiting
- Mindful of all programs/classes happening during the year
- Language needs of families = critical for engagement
- Organization-level and center-level factors
 - Staffing (turnover)
 - Readiness to implement





Innovations

- Co-Facilitation model for parent program
- Developed in direct partnership with Head Start
- Alignment with Head Start Performance Standards
- Coaching Model
- Implementation led by Head Start (not researchers)
- Implemented in two Head Start organizations (small, large)

Practical Behavioral Trial

**“Individually we are one drop.
Together, we are an ocean.”**

-Ryunosuke Satoro



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