



Georgia Department of Public Health

Eat. Move. Talk!

Addressing Health and Academic Disparities in Early Childhood Education Environments

Presentation to: Southern Obesity Summit

Presented by: Audrey Idaikkadar, MPH

Date: October 2, 2017



We Protect Lives.

Learning Objectives

1. Describe the connection between health and education disparities and the relevance in the early childhood education setting.
2. Explain the importance of engaging a diverse set of partner organizations and community members in planning and conducting an initiative that addresses health and education disparities.
3. Describe different methods in engaging partners and community members in an initiative that addresses health and education disparities.

Early childhood is an opportunity.

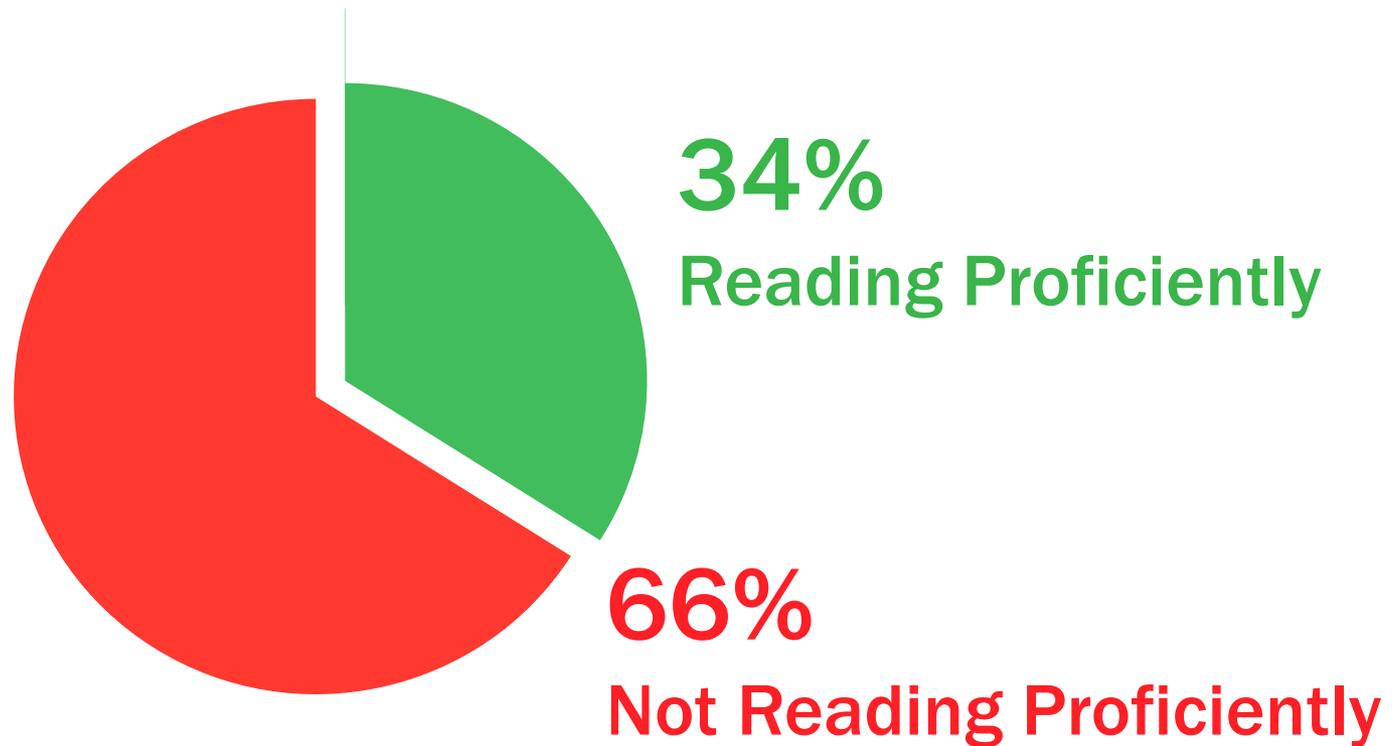
- Poor nutrition in the first 1000 days sets the stage for a lifelong predisposition to chronic conditions, including obesity.
- Physical activity can set the foundation for lifelong movement and healthy habits.
- Early childhood language exposure sets the stage for cognitive ability, literacy, school readiness and, ultimately, educational achievement.

Language Nutrition

- The use of language that is rich in engagement, quality, quantity and context that nourishes the child's brain, social skills and language development.
- Includes reading books, telling stories and singing.

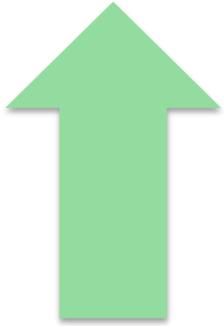


3rd Grade Reading Proficiency in Georgia in 2014



U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Reading Assessment, 2015.

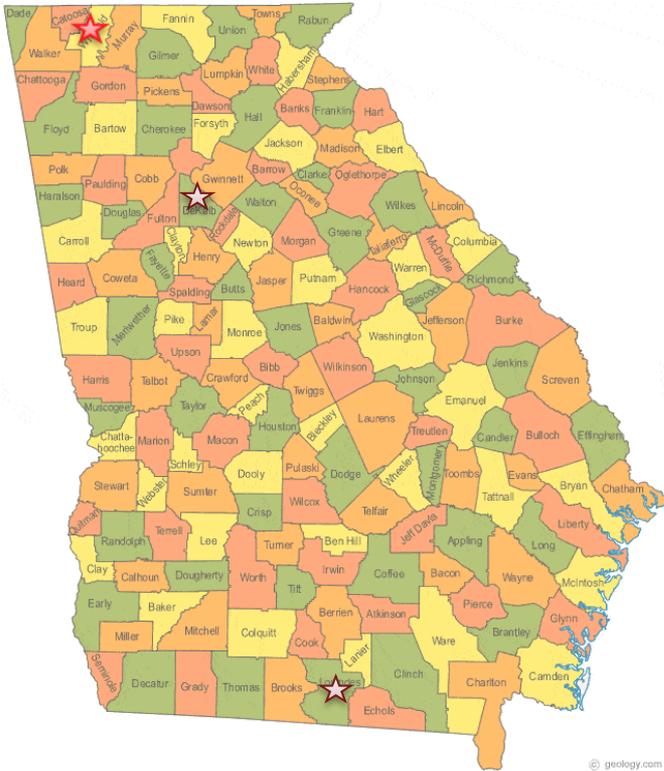
Program Goals



- Fruit and vegetable consumption
- Quantity and quality of physical activity
- Quantity and quality of words spoken

To support healthy body and brain development in early childhood and school readiness.

Target Communities



| | Clarkston, DeKalb | Dalton, Whitfield | Valdosta, Lowndes |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Number of residents* | 7,554 | 33,529 | 56,595 |
| Persons under 5 years* | 9.7% or 761 | 9.1% or 3,051 | 7.7% or 4,357 |
| Under Federal Poverty Level* | 43.9% | 26.8% | 33% |
| White** | 13.6% | 65% | 43.3% |
| Black** | 58.4% | 6.4% | 51.1% |
| Asian** | 21.6% | 1.7% | 1.7% |
| American Indian/Alaskan Native** | 0.4% | 0.6% | 0.3% |
| Multiracial** | 4.1% | 3.2% | 1.9% |
| Hispanic or Latino** | 2.8% | 48.0% | 4.0% |
| Foreign-born persons | 53.5% | 27.7% | 5.0% |
| Percent of 3rd graders in the Healthy Fitness Zone for Body Mass Index | Boys: 69.05% | Boys: 57.41% | Boys: 65.94% |
| | Girls: 70.74% | Girls: 64.81% | Girls: 62.11% |
| Proficient and Distinguished Learners for the 3rd grade English Language Arts | 15.60%/ 14.18% | 23.70% | 25.30% |

Sources: * U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; **U.S. Census Bureau.; American Community Survey, 2010. Note: This geographic level of poverty is not comparable to other geographic levels of these estimates; Governor's Office of Student Achievement, 2015; Governor's Office of Student Achievement, 2015

Engaging Partners

- Build on existing networks focused on childhood obesity and early brain development
- Convene state-wide and local partners in a partner stakeholder group
- Convene a curriculum development team
- Include state early care and learning agency, early brain development and chronic disease experts, and training organizations
- Engage local organizations and networks
- Identify and build more local partnerships

Georgia Coalition
for Dual Language Learners



EMORY

NELL HODGSON
WOODRUFF
SCHOOL OF
NURSING



GEEARS
GEORGIA EARLY EDUCATION
ALLIANCE FOR READY STUDENTS



**BRIGHT
START**
Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning



Friends
of
Refugees



health **M** powers®

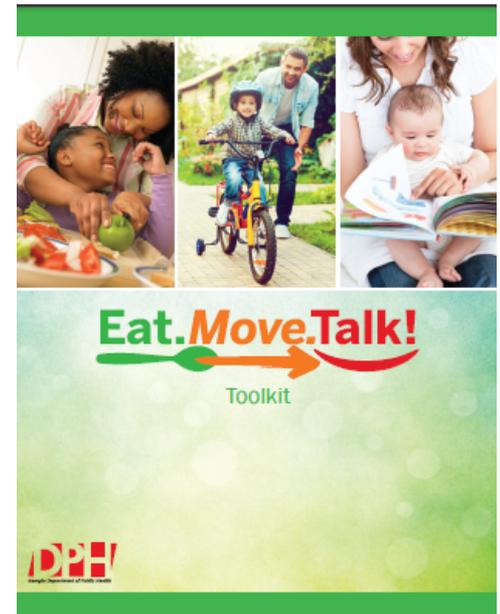
We Protect Lives.

Community Listening Sessions

- Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students conducted six community listening sessions with family members (31) and early childhood educators (39)
- Results:
 - Strategies included trying new foods, including children in food shopping, accessing public parks and play spaces, role modeling physical activity, asking open-ended questions, and reading books.
 - Challenges included access, expense of healthy food and physical activity facilities, and time to prepare food and to support reading.
 - Teachers felt that families saw them as resources.
 - Drop off, pick up, parent teacher conferences, and email and mail communication were opportunities to share information.

Early Child Care and Education Professional Development and Toolkit

- Five hour professional development credits
- Conducted 4 trainings with 118 early childhood education staff from 13 centers
- Toolkit and Resources
- Online Coaching Training: Talk With Me Baby for Infant and Toddler Teachers
www.readrightfromthestart.org



Evaluation

Cumulative Perceived Knowledge Gain

| Healthy Eating | Physical Activity | Language Literacy |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1.61 | 1.51 | 1.40 |

Statistical Significance of Perception of Change in Knowledge

| Paired Sample T-test | Healthy Eating | Physical Activity | Language Literacy |
|----------------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| T alpha at 95% CI | 20.4 | 18.8 | 15.8 |
| Confidence Interval | 1.29-1.57 | 1.18-1.62 | 1.04-1.36 |

WHAT ARE CENTERS DOING?

Eat.



- Introducing new fruits, vegetables, and healthy foods
- “I tried it today” stickers
- Gardening

Move.



- Morning music and movement
- Physical activity in classroom using resources like Go SMART

Talk!



- “Word walls”
- Talking to the older children about the food on the menus and talking to the babies about the food that they are eating

Engage families

- Posting healthy tips for families
- Sending eat, move, talk tips home in the daily infant and toddler reports
- “Book of the Month” program

The project described was supported by Grant Number 5 STTMP151104-02-00 from the Office of Minority Health. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Minority Health.

Thank you!

Contact information:

Audrey Idaikkadar, MPH

Audrey.Idaikkadar@dph.ga.gov

Check out the Eat. Move. Talk! resources:

<https://dph.georgia.gov/eat-move-talk>