



Georgia SHAPE Grant Management at Central High School



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Abstract

This Georgia Department of Public Health funded opportunity, GA SHAPE – Central High School, Macon, GA- discusses the collaboration between the Bibb County School District-Nutrition Department, Mercer University, College of Health Professions-Master of Public Health Program, and Central High School to promote healthy behaviors among high school students through implementation of school gardens, cooking demonstrations, and training sessions on administering Fitnessgram. Georgia is ranked in the top 10 in the nation with respect to the prevalence of overweight and obese children, with 37% of adolescents categorized as overweight and obese (Lyn, O'Meara, Hepburn, & Potter, 2012). Consequently, the Georgia legislation recently (2009) passed the School Health and Physical Education Act (SHAPE) requiring certified physical education teachers statewide to annually utilize Fitnessgram, a fitness assessment tool, in all public schools. In hopes of enhancing this effort, the Georgia Department of Public Health (GA DPH) also began sponsoring several projects, including Georgia SHAPE grants, to promote community partnering in incorporating a nutrition component, with the physical fitness component, based on the USDA's Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, into core SHAPE projects.

Introduction

From 2011-2012, approximately 12.7 million children aged 2-19 years were obese (Fryar, Carroll, & Ogden, 2014). In Georgia, 37.3% of adolescents aged 10-17 years were overweight and obese; thus, Georgia is one of the top ten states in the US with the highest prevalence of childhood obesity (Lyn, O'Meara, Hepburn, & Potter, 2012). Evidence-based studies indicate that overweight adolescents are more likely to become overweight or obese once they reach adulthood (Story, 1999; Biro & Wien, 2010; CDC, 2012). This increases their risks for chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, and type 2 diabetes (Wang, Gutin, Barbeau, Moore, & Hanes, et al., 2008; Gonzalez-Suarez, Worley, Grimmer-Somers, & Dones, 2009; (CDC, 2012). Despite the alarming rates of obesity and initiatives aimed to reduce obesity, the prevalence of obesity still exist (Alliance for a Healthier Generation, 2015; Office of Health Indicators for Planning, 2015). This may be attributed to environmental factors that are difficult to control and contribute to poor nutrition and lack of physical activity. This is one aim of the Georgia School Physical Activity and Nutrition Grant Round IV (Reference Award Number 3B01DP009013-15S2).

The SHAPE grant was developed by the Georgia Department of Public Health to supplement the 2009 School Health and Physical Education Act that requires certified physical education teachers to utilize Fitnessgram as a fitness assessment tool every year in all Georgia public schools. The initiative also strives to meet the recommendations depicted in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. In collaboration with the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act requires schools to offer more fruits, vegetables, whole-grain foods, fat-free or low fat milk and other nutrition provisions to improve students' access to healthy food (GA SHAPE, 2014). The purpose of this project is to apply for the Georgia SHAPE School Nutrition and Physical Activity Grant Round IV on behalf of Central High School in Macon, GA in order to assist Central High School's effort to address the GA SHAPE Act and promote healthy behaviors among high school students through implementation of school gardens, cooking demonstrations, and training sessions on administering Fitnessgram. We also present our evaluation of the effectiveness of these efforts on student health outcomes and the lessons learned from the SHAPE grant at Central High School.

Methods

Action Plan for Accomplishment of Activities, 2014-2015 school year	
Actions	Timeline
1. Grant Application Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with the Bibb County School District Nutrition Department and Central High School Administrators and faculty to discuss possible grant activities Submit the application to Georgia Department of Public Health Submit financial paperwork after being awarded the grant 	August-October 2014
2. Develop and Revise Budget	August 2014-February 2015
3. Participate in monthly trainings about nutrition and physical activity promotion in schools	November 2014-April 2015
4. School Health Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a school wellness council Conduct monthly meetings with the wellness council and provide meeting reports Complete the Alliance Healthy Schools Program Inventory Create an improvement plan based on assessment results Create an evaluation plan for each activity 	November 2014-April 2015
5. Provide the Bibb County health and physical activity teachers a refresher workshop on Fitnessgram.	December 2014-February 2015
6. Healthy Cooking Demonstration Series <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Film high school students, under the supervision of chefs, teaching how to cook healthy meals/snacks Distribute 17-item pre-cooking demonstration surveys to investigate the students' history in preparing healthy meals at home and their previous attitude toward incorporating fruits and vegetables in their everyday activities. Distribute 12-item post cooking demonstration surveys to determine how to improve the students' cooking demonstration experience and discover what they have learned about healthy cooking. 	December 2014-March 2015
7. Expand school learning garden <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct 6 raised bed gardens Distribute 7-item pre garden surveys to assess the students' attitude and knowledge about school gardens. Distribute 5-item post garden satisfaction survey contains open ended questions to determine how to improve the students' garden experience in the future and discover what they have learned about gardening. 	December 2014-April 2015

Results

- Established a Central High School Wellness Council consisting of 7 members inclusive of school administrators, athletic director, nutrition staff from the high school, district nutrition director, Mercer University MPH student, parent, and Title I parent facilitator.
- Revised action plan and budget to accommodate nutrition and physical education departments' needs based on Healthy School Program Inventory and additional grant requirements
- Approximately 70 students participated in four healthy cooking demonstrations. The sessions were videotaped for future use and posted to youtube.com by a communications class at Central High School. A majority of students indicated positive attitude toward incorporating more fruits and vegetables in their diets.
- Members of the Student Nutrition Advisory Council (8 students) assisted in constructing and planting 4 raised bed gardens. Following the activity students indicated they learned more about the gardening process and had positive attitudes toward healthy eating.
- Fitnessgram Booster Training participants felt the training was very helpful and enabled them to discover more ways to overcome challenges faced at their schools when conducting the assessment. The greatest challenges identified were time constraints, lack of communication about Fitnessgram improvements, and getting students to retain knowledge about the benefits of being active.
- Installed bike racks to promote more physical activity through riding bikes to school

Results Continued



Discussion and Recommendations

With the assistance of the Georgia SHAPE funds, Central High School was able to identify its strengths and weaknesses in school health policies related to physical activity and nutrition, expand their raised bed gardens, initiate a healthy cooking series, and improve physical education teachers' confidence in implementing the Fitnessgram assessment. Additionally, the grant management process for the Georgia SHAPE grant instills and enhances managerial, leadership, and public health skills necessary to guide future public health professionals to make pivotal decisions. Because of these accomplishments, Central High School students have gained a better understanding of the importance of healthy eating and being active inside and outside of school. These efforts will be sustained through:

- Greenhouse development and maintenance education is ongoing
- Remaining funds will aid in "Parent Day" planning to increase parent support
- Incorporating more community members in wellness council
- Broadcasting healthy cooking series through media sites

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