

**A Preschool Aged Obesity Prevention Project Designed to Increase Moderate to Vigorous Physical Activity**

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ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** The purpose of Juntos Y Saludables (Get Healthy Together [GHT]) is to reduce the prevalence of childhood obesity by focusing on physical activity and healthy eating. GHT is an ongoing project, with phase one of three completed in May 2010. The GHT program was implemented in the Edgewood Independent School District's Head Start centers located in San Antonio, TX. These centers were selected due to high prevalence of obesity (50%) and diabetes in children and adults living in the community. **Methods:** The gross motor intervention was implemented at two of the three centers. The intervention consisted of teacher training and supplemental gross motor resources (lesson plans and activity resources). The System for Observing Fitness Instruction Time (SOFIT) was used to assess the amount of time spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA) and the Learning Accomplishment Profile - 3rd Editions (LAP-3) were used to evaluate the program's effects on gross motor development. **Results:** At the start of the project, the two intervention centers were spending eleven minutes (roughly 24%) of their gross motor class period engaged in MVPA while at the end of the program sixteen minutes (roughly 35%) of the time was spent engaged in MVPA. There was an overall increase in physical activity ( $P < 0.001$ ) and MVPA ( $P < 0.019$ ) levels in both intervention and control centers. A similar linear improvement was also observed in the LAP-3 results. At the conclusion of the project, all of the students either met or were above their gross motor developmental ages. **Conclusions:** Through the implementation of the GHT Gross Motor intervention a significant increase occurred in the student's gross motor skills and the percentage of time spent in MVPA.

KEY WORDS: Obesity Prevention, Pre-school, Gross Motor, Physical Activity, System for Observing Fitness Instruction (SOFIT), LAP-3