

# Healthy Kids Childcare Curriculum Overview and Research Findings

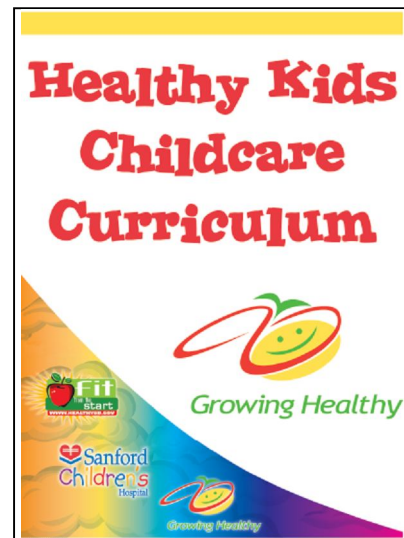
## Healthy Kids Childcare Curriculum Overview

The Healthy Kids Child Care Curriculum was developed in response to the Sioux Falls, SD, Growing Healthy Initiative. It was recognized that child care providers play a key role in influencing healthy habits in children ages 2-5 years old. To assist child care providers in the goal of children developing healthy lifestyle habits, the Healthy Kids Child Care Curriculum was developed. This curriculum:

1. Provides child care providers with knowledge to understand how children's lifestyle choices impact their health and risks for pediatric obesity which, in turn, can impact a child's health into adulthood.
2. Provides child care providers with tools to teach children healthy lifestyle habits.
3. Provides tools to help parents understand the importance of their children practicing healthy lifestyle habits.

The curriculum consists of four classes:

- Class 1- Healthy Kids = Healthy Adults
- Class 2- Learning and Movement Go Together
- Class 3 – Turn Off the Screen
- Class 4 – Healthy Food Choices Matter



## Goals

1. Participants will understand the extent of the problem of obesity in young children.
2. Participants will understand the four Ace Cards of an unhealthy lifestyle that contribute to childhood obesity – large portions; sedentary lifestyles; marketer influence and poor food choices.

## Objectives & Key Concepts

1. Increase caregiver awareness of childhood obesity trends in young children.  
**Key Concept:** Obesity is the number one health threat in the U.S. today. Childhood obesity is a prevalent health threat to the children in the United States.
2. Child care providers will become knowledgeable in promoting a healthy lifestyle for their children.  
**Key Concept:** Lifestyle choices that contribute to a child's unhealthy lifestyle include poor food choices, increased screen time, lack of physical activity, and marketer influence.
3. Increase child care provider access to tools that teach children about physically active lifestyles and healthy food choices.  
**Key Concept:** Caregivers have a daily opportunity to influence children's healthy lifestyle choices by providing a healthy caregiving environment and learning activities. Simple games and daily messages can assist in promoting healthy lifestyle education for children.  
**Key Concept:** Caregivers can assist parents in understanding elements of a healthy lifestyle for their children.
4. Increase child care provider awareness of community resources to assist in providing children opportunities for a healthy lifestyle.  
**Key Concept:** Community resources and websites are available to support and further one's knowledge regarding promoting healthy lifestyles for young children.

## Healthier Environments for Pediatric Obesity Prevention – Child Care

### Growing Healthy Education - Pre – Post Observation Analysis

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#### Promotion of nutrition

There was a considerable amount of change during the pre/post observation. Post observations included more formal and informal documentation such as Healthy Kids Curriculum Posters (over 75% of the post observations), art projects with healthy foods, puzzles for healthy kids, and environmental print.

#### Promotion of physical activity

There was a considerable amount of change during the pre/post observation. Post observations included more formal and informal documentation such as Healthy Kids Curriculum Posters (over 75% of the post observations), South Dakota Early Learning Guidelines, and environmental print.

#### Improved caregiver involvement with physical activities and improved healthy habits role modeling.

There was considerable amount of change between the pre and post observations. Pre-observations indicated a high amount of indirect negative behaviors of healthy living such as soda bottles, doughnuts, brownies, and chocolate left on the teachers' desk or area. . Additionally, during outside time or recess, teachers tended to talk to other teachers or only interact with the children when they initiated the interaction. Post observation was much more positive. Water bottles were more predominately observed; teachers interacted with children during physical play on more regular basis-without cues.

#### Improved promotion of healthy eating and physical fitness with the children

There was considerable amount of change between the pre and post observations. Pre-observations indicated a high amount of direct negative and positive behaviors of healthy living. Negative direct behaviors included the teachers' diets, lack of exercise with children, and having rules such as "must finish art before allowed to go to the gym". Positive direct behaviors observed in the pre-observation included classroom meditation, encouragement of new foods, gross motor being incorporated into circle time, and time scheduled for gross motor play. Post observation was much more positive. More activities were formally scheduled to promote gross motor and nutrition. Snacks and meals were openly discussed with the children (as it pertains to nutrition), and teachers participated with the children during activities.

#### Improved healthy eating encouragement

There were some differences between observations. Children were often told to "finish eating so they could go outside" or "told to finish everything on their plate". This was not observed in the post observation. However, the general observation for both pre and post was encouragement to try new things and to eat their food.