

## THE WHOLE STORY

### Promising Practice

#### We Count Pedometer Wellness Program

Managed by Peaceful Playgrounds

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Component	Theme	Promising Practice
Programming	School Connectedness	<b>Teaching health education in school and using a pedometer counting After School activity to increase physical activity and decrease obesity.</b>

### Activities Related to the Practice

#### Activity 1

Increasing physical activity: Students monitor steps daily in school and in the afterschool program by using the step log and recording daily step counts. Students receive a pedometer, step logs, conduct the counting activity and increase their steps incrementally. The above described procedures and practices follow the Health and Human Services guidelines for successful pedometer programs.

#### Activity 2

Decreasing obesity: Students are educated on healthy eating choices, portion control and the benefits of healthy eating..

#### The Community's Need for an After School Program

The childhood obesity crisis is affecting every school, community and state in the nation. The Center for Disease Control has identified the school as the best beginning place for implementing physical activity opportunities for children. After schools programs provide a unique opportunity for children to experience and be introduced to a variety of physical activities. The We Count Wellness Program teaches students to monitor their physical activity and nutrition habits and connects

parents to this process through weekly physical activity and nutrition newsletters.

### **Community Data**

The 130 annual participants range in age from 5-18, are 50% male and 50% female and are typically Hispanic/Latino, Caucasian and African American who speak English and Spanish. About 50% of the participants qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch.

### **Afterschool Program Capacity**

Started:	2004
Geographic Location:	Urban
Physical Location:	On school grounds
Staffing:	5 full-time
Adult to Youth Ratio:	1:10-1:15
Operation:	M-F 2:00-6:00

### **Link with the Regular School Day**

The We Count Program has leader and teacher materials providing background information on nutrition and physical activities. Students generally monitor activity level (steps) during the school day and in afterschool programs. This overlap serves to introduce the school and family to the afterschool programming.

### **Practice Evidence**

#### **Promotion of Positive Outcomes (social, emotional, cognitive, physical, educational or cultural) for Youth**

Pedometers are inexpensive accurate devices in measuring physical activity. Research on pedometers and children's use supports their use. Studies indicate that children are more physically active. The activities are social in which children participate together. The newsletters are educational and inform students on physical activity and nutrition concepts. We Count program participants increased their step count by 40% in the 16-week program.

#### **Engagement and Accountability of Stakeholders (participants, families, educators and community members)**

Educators at the school site, afterschool personnel, parents, families and students participate in the We Count Wellness Program or are familiar with it.

### **Appreciation for Diverse Backgrounds, Cultures and Families**

The Parent Newsletters reflects the need for family involvement in supporting and reinforcing the program at home. The program introduces the childhood obesity crisis as one that touches, all cultures, most families and all communities in some manner.

### **Promotion of the Experiences and Learning Styles of Youth**

Learning styles are accounted for in the mentoring/leader/facilitator part of the program in which children experience weekly monitoring sessions. This epidemic is a concern in all communities in America