



Activity Summary:

Given the growing problem of obesity in Idaho, it is critical that best-practice and evidence-based programs be implemented to stop the growing epidemic. Over half of Idaho children under the age of six years are enrolled in licensed child care centers and registered family child care homes. Some children spend the majority of their day in these centers and consume the majority of their meals and snacks in them. As a result, child care centers are an important setting in which to address childhood obesity.

The initial goal of the Idaho NLAPH team was to improve nutrition, increase active play and other physical activity and limit television and computer use for children in licensed child care centers. More specifically, the long term objective of the project was to provide training and technical assistance to targeted licensed child care providers the Central District Health Department jurisdiction (four counties served) to prepare them to adopt new policies and practices.

Through leadership training and coaching provided by the NLAPH staff, we were able to understand the benefit of taking a meta-leadership approach to this project. Although taking this approach greatly impacted the original project idea of pursuing mandates, it was through the development and practice of meta-leadership skills we learned the importance of leading through influence versus authority in relationship to this topic area. Ultimately, in an effort to facilitate change, we were able to meet with a diverse group of community partners already engaged in this work and develop relationships, allowing our group to become more fluent in the language and nuances of Idaho's early childcare setting.

During the process of relationship building, we learned community partners were interested in reducing obesity in childcare settings, and were currently positioned to conduct assessment work in 2013. This would result in our original project becoming a duplication of work already being conducted in the state of Idaho. Therefore, our team has chosen to disband and take a supportive role in existing partner efforts.