



CHATHAM COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE

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Chatham County Receives Eat Smart Move More NC Grant to Help Youth Move More and Sit Less

Chatham County has received an *Eat Smart, Move More NC* Community Grant for 2010-2012 to fund local physical activity projects targeting youth ages 9 to 14. Chatham was one of 20 county/district health department projects funded in the state.

The Chatham County Public Health Department in partnership with Be Active North Carolina will implement Be Active North Carolina's Just Push Play program in three K-8/5-8 Chatham County Schools. The three participating schools –Moncure School, Bonlee School, and Horton Middle School—will receive mini-grants to create changes in their school buildings and grounds, policies, and programs to better promote physical activity throughout the school day. The YMCA will also be a partner in this project, offering expanded physical education opportunities as part of their after-school programs at participating schools.

For the first time, the *Eat Smart, Move More NC* community grants are being awarded for a two-year cycle to study the impact the grants are having in the communities that receive them. Chatham County will receive funding for data collection from 2010-2012. The project will be implemented during the 2011-2012 school year.

Health Department School Health Liaison, Ellie Morris says of the grant, “Chatham County Schools are making some great strides in school health. We are excited to support these three schools in making impactful and sustainable changes to increase the physical activity levels of their students and hopefully work to promote the health of their whole school communities.”

In Chatham County, the 2008 North Carolina Nutrition and Physical Activity Surveillance System indicated that 19.9% of Chatham County children seen in North Carolina Public Health sponsored WIC, child health clinics, and school based health centers were obese. An additional 16.5% were overweight. This means that over one third of Chatham County youth are overweight or obese.

The percentage of children and adults who are overweight or obese rises each year and despite advances in medicine; the current generation of children may be the first to live shorter lives than their parents. *Eat Smart, Move More NC* strives to reverse this trend by making the healthy choice the easy choice.

All the funded projects are described on the *Eat Smart, Move More NC* Web site at www.EatSmartMoveMoreNC.com. *Eat Smart, Move More North Carolina* is a statewide

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movement that promotes increased opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity wherever people live, learn, earn, play and pray. The movement is led by a coalition of more than 60 organizations.

For more information on Chatham County's project, contact Ellie Morris at 919-545-8514 or email Elizabeth.morris@chathamnc.org.

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