

ABSTRACT

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Oregon's Public Health Initiative for Childhood Obesity Prevention ...Continued

Background

The need for a public health action agenda specific to prevention of childhood obesity (0-8 yrs) emerged as one of three top priority areas from Oregon's Maternal and Child Health leadership retreat in March 2010. The vision that emerged from the retreat specific to childhood obesity was increased collaboration between state and local partners, local MCH is seen as experts on this issue in their communities, and that they are included in the planning and policy development related to childhood obesity. Since then, state and local MCH leaders have developed a framework and action plan, presented to key stakeholders for endorsement, and are in process of packaging a dissemination plan along with story collection for sharing and evaluation.

Project Goal

Through a state and local partnership, MCH leaders will develop an action plan for childhood obesity prevention that will serve as a framework for public health agencies across the state.

Methods

At the two-day March retreat an overview of child health was provided: emerging trends and issues, public health approaches to improving health, and alignment of state and local MCH efforts to impact. Through a prioritization process childhood obesity was one of three topic areas selected. A work group of state and local staff formed to meet monthly, with the charge to develop an action plan by June 2011. The work group illustrated their 9-month charge via a logic model to track progress and be accountable to outcomes, and functioned as a learning collaborative. Activities included reviewing the foundation of evidence, the policy landscape, the data, exploring the assurance function and reflect on models to frame the work for both state and local MCH needs. Presentations of the draft plan were made to key groups for endorsement: PHD management, MCH-CHLO, and CHLO. A story collection tool was developed (using CDC guidance) for evaluation and sharing purposes.

Results

The work group finalized the action plan, using a modified 10 essential services of public health framework, and included background and values. The group has increased knowledge about population and infrastructure approaches to impact child obesity as well as functioning in a learning collaborative. Presentations to key stakeholders have been overwhelmingly positive, in large part due to the process used in the group. Some local public health departments have begun to use the framework to meet their needs, such as developing a coalition around child obesity prevention, application for grants in partnership with community stakeholders, and accreditation process.

Summary

This partnership has increased understanding of issues and capacity at state and local levels. Challenges have included local leadership since state staff often drives policy initiatives, the breadth of work in child obesity so ongoing efforts are complemented, and capturing the stories so that this work can be evaluated.