

## THE MOVE MORE AFTER-SCHOOL COLLABORATIVE: FINDING COMMON GROUND

Finding common ground is one of the first steps of successful partnership. The Move More After-School Collaborative found common ground around the need to support physical activity in N.C. After-School Programs.

In July of 2007, the N.C. Division of Public Health, Physical Activity and Nutrition (PAN) Branch convened a group of after-school providers, funders and community partners to discuss the possibility of working together to support physical activity in after-school programs. It did not take the group long to decide to work together and to become the Move More After-School Collaborative (MMAC).

Before the MMAC could promote physical activity in after-school programs, we needed to determine what the “best physical activity practices” were that we would support. We wanted to create a consistent, coordinated message across programs. However, once we began talking in more detail about the best practices, it became clear that after-school programs were different from each other - they were offered in various settings, had different funding requirements and some were licensed while others were not.

Finding common ground in the midst of these differences was challenging at first. It was important for the partnership to discuss individual differences while keeping focused on the goal of working together to support physical activity in after-school programs.

The group was able to acknowledge that after-school programs are different AND physical activity should be a part of all programs. Funding requirements for after-school programs are different AND providers can find a way to make physical activity fit with those requirements. Each after-school program has a different focus, yet the MMAC members agreed to create one common set of best practices. The members of MMAC acknowledged individual differences then



returned to the common ground – working together to support physical activity in after-school programs.

North Carolina had successfully created standards for healthful eating and physical activity during the school day. It seemed appropriate that standards also be created for after school. The MMAC knew it was critical to include input from a variety of professionals representing different aspects of after-school programs throughout the process. A participatory process that included an on-line survey, focus groups, a consensus panel and external review was used to obtain such input.

Gathering feedback from a variety of after-school program providers required resources such as funding for facilitation, printing, meeting space and access to on-line survey tools. Each partner determined what resources they could contribute to the project. The MMAC was able to work together to generate the resources necessary to undertake a comprehensive, participatory development process. Each partner contributed to the development process.

*The Move More North Carolina: Recommended Standards for After-School Physical Activity* was publically released in April 2009. The *Standards* represent “best physical activity practices” for after-school programs. They outline recommended, voluntary steps for making physical activity an intentional part of after-school programs.

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The *Standards include* recommendations for time/intensity, qualified staff/training, program size, equipment, curriculum, facilities and evaluation. The *Standards* also provide a frame that after-school providers, funders and community partners can collaboratively use to support physical activity in after-school programs.

The MMAC continues to support after-school programs across the state in putting the *Standards* into practice. The MMAC partners are aligning organizational and collaborative efforts to support the statewide achievement of the *Standards*.

By finding common ground, the MMAC was able to create a common language and a shared vocabulary around physical activity in after-school programs.

### Move More After-School Collaborative:

4-H Youth Development, North Carolina State University

East Carolina University, Brody School of Medicine

North Carolina AfterSchool Coalition

North Carolina Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs

North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs

North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Support Services Section

Healthy Schools Section

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Division of Public Health

Physical Activity and Nutrition Branch

Children and Youth Branch

Division of Social Services

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund

North Carolina Parent and Teacher Association

North Carolina Recreation & Park Association

WakeMed Health and Hospitals Corporate and Community Health

YMCA's of North Carolina