



State of New York County of Broome Government Offices

Broome County Health Department

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Harpursville Students “Bouncing” and “Cycling” in the Classroom

(HARPURSVILLE, NY) - During National Public Health Week 2017, the Broome County Health Department is pleased to showcase how the Harpursville Central School District is taking learning to a new level by providing opportunities for elementary students to stimulate their brains through exercise in the classroom.

In the fall of 2015, the Broome County Health Department received a Creating Healthy Schools and Communities (CHSC) grant from the NYS Department of Health to promote wellness and prevent obesity in the Harpursville school district as well as three other districts in Broome County.

Through the grant, the Harpursville Central School District has purchased DeskCycles, exercise bikes that fit underneath the students’ desks. This new initiative of “cycling in the classroom” allows students to take an exercise for the body and turn it into an exercise for the mind. The DeskCycles are used while students are sitting and are silent so they do not interfere with daily lessons.

“Students need movement and we believe the DeskCycles are the perfect solution for kids who have a lot of energy,” said Josh Quick, Director of Operations for the Harpursville Central School District, “They allow students to keep their bodies moving and their brains going at the same time so they can stay focused on their school work.”

Additionally, Harpursville used funding from the CHSC grant to purchase stability ball chairs for students to sit on during class. These chairs engage core muscles and can help improve balance, focus and concentration.

“Research has shown that students perform better when they are less sedentary,” said Aimee Grace, Public Health Representative at the Broome County Health Department. “By incorporating tools such as ball chairs and DeskCycles into the classroom, we are happy to see the Harpursville Central School District making strides to improve the overall physical and mental health of its students.”

Faculty and staff wellness is also a critical component of the overall health of Harpursville CSD. In March, staff members took part in a healthy Superintendent’s Day event, where they participated in Zumba classes, learned about Learning in Motion, and prepared healthy food items to share.

“We want to create a culture of physical activity that students see and want to emulate,” said Quick.

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The Creating Healthy Schools and Communities grant also serves Binghamton, Deposit, and Johnson City School Districts. Deposit CSD has worked to promote the walking club at the elementary school and used funds to purchase blenders to prepare fresh, healthy smoothies for students.

With assistance from the Creating Healthy Schools and Communities grant, Binghamton City School District has improved the fitness centers at Binghamton High School and East and West Middle Schools. Johnson City High School also has a fitness center which is open to staff and students of all grade levels.

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