



Spotswood Public Schools

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SPOTSWOOD C.A.R.E.S. PROGRAM TO IMPLEMENT THE COORDINATED APPROACH TO CHILD'S HEALTH (CATCH) CURRICULUM

SPOTSWOOD, NJ - Increasing physical activity and encouraging healthier eating among school-aged children is of the utmost importance. According to the 2012 Community Health Needs Assessment conducted by Saint Peter's University Hospital and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, increasing healthier behaviors in our youth is a top priority in Middlesex County. To that end, the hospitals created the Community Health Consortium for Central Jersey (CHCCJ) which developed the Physical Activity and Nutrition Workgroup led by the Raritan Valley YMCA. Together the CHCCJ and YMCA partnered with the Spotswood School District to implement the Coordinated Approach to Child's Health (CATCH) curriculum in Spotswood's after-school program (CARES). CATCH focuses on increasing physical activity, consumption of fruit and vegetables and other nutrient rich foods, and promoting behavior changes in children, and their parents, leading to healthier lifestyles. Through a generous grant from The Horizon Foundation's Healthy U program, the YMCA was able to purchase over \$2,000.00 worth of equipment, and provide training to 26 of the CARES staff.

The training was necessary to effectively implement the CATCH curriculum and focus on school wellness policies and increased physical activity in each student's day. Over the course of the program, the school district hopes to see reduced body mass indexes, an increase in physical activity levels and healthy nutrition choices among the 209 students that will be participating.

Superintendent of Schools, Scott Rocco stated, "On behalf of the Board of Education, thank you! The implementation of this program is timely and we thank the staff at Saint Peter's University Hospital, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, the Raritan Valley YMCA and The Horizon Foundation's Healthy U Program for coordinating this effort and for the donation of equipment and training."

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