



TEN CHILDCARE CENTERS ACHIEVE “HEALTHY” STATUS

Access To Care



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HICKORY, NC – Catawba County Health Partners’ Eat Smart Move More Catawba County (ESMM) coalition, in collaboration with Catawba County Public Health’s Early Childhood Support Team, recognized ten local childcare centers for achieving Healthy Childcare Center status through the Healthy Childcare Center Recognition Program.

The ten centers that received recognition and helped pilot the first-year program are Abernethy’s Child Development Center, Community Ridge, Footsteps, Kids in Motion, Miss Millies, Sheila’s, Tendercare, The Pa Paw Patch, The Sandbox, and Woodlawn Child Development Center. Additional centers will be invited to participate on an annual basis.

The Healthy Childcare Centers Recognition Program focuses on reducing childhood obesity and chronic disease by promoting healthy policies and environments in centers serving young children. The initiative encourages childcare centers to meet the following seven criteria:

1. Childcare center director and staff (including cook) are committed to the health and well-being of the childcare center population, act as positive role models, meet monthly, and communicate regularly with parents
2. Offer fresh fruit and/or vegetables at least 3 times per week at lunch and/or snack
3. Offer water daily
4. 100% childcare center classrooms comply with and exceed the minimum state standards for structured physical activity
5. Have in place a childcare center policy for healthy fundraisers and enforce this policy
6. Have in place a policy for decreased screen time and enforce this policy
7. Have in place a childcare center policy for healthy snacks for parties (birthday, holiday, etc.) and enforce this policy

Developed by Eat Smart Move More Catawba County, the initiative was modeled after the coalition’s successful Healthy Schools Recognition Program which encourages schools to meet similar criteria.

“By partnering with Eat Smart Move More Catawba County to assess health-related policies in childcare centers, our Early Childhood Support Team nurses help bring awareness to the importance of health in these settings,” said Tonya Moss, RN, Early Childhood Support Team, Catawba County Public Health. “Ultimately, we hope to help childcare centers set a positive foundation for children to make healthy choices throughout their lives.”

Catawba County Public Health’s Early Childhood Support Team is a Smart Start funded project through the Catawba County Partnership for Children.

Located off Fairgrove Church Road behind Catawba Valley Medical Center in Hickory, N.C., Catawba County Public Health provides health and education services to eligible men, women, and children in the community. For more information, please call (828) 695-5800 or visit www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth.

About Eat Smart Move More Catawba County

Eat Smart Move More Catawba County (ESMM) is a coalition of volunteers working to reduce childhood obesity in Catawba County. Members represent the three Catawba County school systems, hospitals, physicians, Public Health, school nurses, businesses, child care centers, faith communities, and childhood obesity prevention and treatment programs. ESMM initiatives are designed to make the healthier choice the easier choice for children and families in Catawba County. ESMM is managed by Catawba County Health Partners.

About Catawba County Health Partners

Catawba County Health Partners fosters coalitions that address Catawba County's priority health issues through policy, systems and environmental change strategies. Catawba County's priority health coalitions are Access to Care, A.S.A.P. (Alcohol & Substance Abuse Prevention) of Catawba County, Cancer Task Force, and Eat Smart Move More Catawba County (obesity). Health Partners is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with more than 120 members representing 54 community partners dedicated to generating positive, sustainable impact on the health of our community. For more information, please visit www.catawbacountyhealthpartners.org.