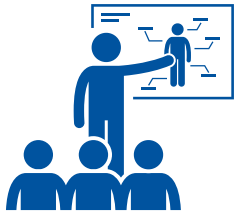


Helping Delaware's youth build healthy habits

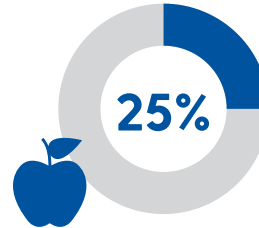


UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION

ISSUE



Delaware students in grades 5 - 8 receive 35 to 60 hours of health education to build healthy behaviors and long-term health outcomes.



But only **25%** of these students get the recommended fruit and vegetable intake.

RESPONSE

The **Healthy Habits** program worked with schools and community partners to implement a **healthy-living series** for middle and high school students.



Teens assisted with teaching while building public speaking and leadership skills.

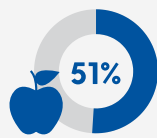
Online live and recorded versions of **Kickin' Nutrition** and **Get Experience in Mindfulness (GEM)** helped the Healthy Habits program continue during the pandemic.

IMPACT

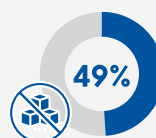
Healthy Habits reached **1,897** youth in 2020!

15 teen ambassadors assisted as teachers.

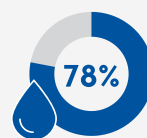
As a result of **Kickin' Nutrition**...



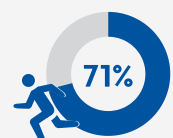
plan to eat the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables



plan to drink less sugary drinks

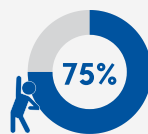


plan to drink the recommended amounts of water



plan to stay physically active

As a result of the **GEM** online series...



said they would practice the stretches



said they would practice the breathing techniques

ISSUE

According to Delaware academic standards, students in grades 5 through 8 must receive 35 to 60 hours of comprehensive health and family life education. This education is essential to improve both healthy behaviors and long-term health outcomes for students. The percentage of students reporting fruit and vegetable intake at the recommended level is approximately 25 percent. It is important to find ways to partner with schools and other organizations to increase knowledge and the likelihood of behavior change related to healthy living.

RESPONSE

The Healthy Habits program works with schools and community partners to implement a 6-hour series that promotes healthy living behaviors for middle and high school-aged students. The teens-as-teachers model was implemented for teens to assist with teaching while building public speaking and leadership skills. With the COVID-19 pandemic, the team pivoted to virtual opportunities, working with virtual classrooms to implement the new curriculum (Kickin' Nutrition) and offer Get Experience in Mindfulness (GEM) online sessions.

IMPACT

In 2020, the Healthy Habits program reached 1,897 youth, 1,877 of which received the entire 6 hours of education. Additionally, 15 teen ambassadors were provided the opportunity to teach and develop leadership skills throughout the year.

With the pandemic, the team also created social media and website content for youth, teens, families and the partners that work with them. Social media reach averaged 700-1000 individuals per post and website information averaged around 100 visits per month, depending on the topic.

As a result of the GEM online series, 75 percent of students said they would practice the stretches independently and 30 percent said they would practice the breathing techniques on their own. As a result of the Healthy Habits series focused on youth engagement:

- 51 percent plan to eat the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables,
- 49 percent plan to drink less sugary drinks,
- 78 percent plan to drink the recommended amounts of water, and
- 71 percent plan to stay physically active.