



State of Missouri

2014 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity

Executive Summary

Project or Team Name: Missouri Eat Smart Child Care

Nominator: Ann McCormack

Nominating Department: (Nominations must include names of all agencies/departments/organizations/businesses, etc.)

Department of Health and Senior Services

Category: Innovation

Executive Summary: (Executive Summary page must be 500 words or less, 12 points, Times New Roman font, and left justified. Attach the Executive Summary to the front of the nomination.)

In January, 2010, the Department of Health and Senior Services, Bureau of Community Food and Nutrition Assistance (CFNA) launched its obesity prevention project titled Missouri Eat Smart Child Care (MESCC). The project aims to improve the health and preschool readiness of Missouri's children by encouraging child care providers to meet the Missouri Eat Smart Guidelines, which provide nutrition and nutrition policy recommendations that exceed the minimum standards set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and state licensing requirements. There is no state or federal mandate for this project, and participation by child care facilities is voluntary. The guidelines were developed by a team of nutrition and child care specialists who wanted to be proactive in preventing childhood obesity. The guidelines are based on the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, USDA's MyPlate, and the Institute of Medicine recommendations. Child care facilities that improve the nutritional quality of their meals and adopt practices that promote healthy eating are recognized as MESCC facilities.

MESCC has fostered collaborations between internal and external partners, built networks and brought funding opportunities to the state that have broadened the project's impact. Examples of project successes include:

- In October 2009 and 2011, the Department received USDA Team Nutrition grants to provide on-site coaching and training to help child care centers meet the guidelines. To date, over 70 centers have received coaching services.
- In 2010, the Department received the USDA Child Care Wellness grant that provided mini-grants to child care facilities to help implement the guidelines. The grant also funded focus groups to help identify barriers to implementation and guide resource allocation.
- MESCC has been highlighted at national conferences: the National Child and Adult Care Food Program Professional Association (2012 and 2014), the Southern Obesity Summit (2011), and the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior (2013), and numerous state conferences.
- In 2013, the Department received a grant from the Missouri Foundation for Health to promote Eat Smart in child care facilities in targeted communities.
- The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics has approved MESCC for a poster session at the fall 2014 national conference.
- CFNA has collaborated with the Child Care Health Consultation Program and the University of Missouri Extension to make training and technical assistance available to facilities interested in becoming Eat Smart.
- The Missouri Council on Activity and Nutrition has established MSECC as one of its primary goals for Child Care.

- Child Care Aware of Missouri has incorporated MESCC into its "Taking Steps to Healthy Success" program, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- MESCC has been recognized by the Food Research and Action Center as a state best practice.
- MESCC has been highlighted in CDC's Early Care and Learning newsletter and in the "Let's Move Child Care" newsletter.
- MESCC has been the model for subsequent statewide initiatives, including Missouri MOve Smart Child Care and Missouri Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care.



State of Missouri – 2014 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity

NOMINATION FORM

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Department: Health and Senior Services

1. Project or team name: Missouri Eat Smart Child Care

2. List the name of all team members, job titles, state agency department, and/or other organizations including public, private sector or business: *(Please list alphabetically by last name – 2 to 20 team members maximum.)*

1. Ann McCormack, Bureau Chief, Department of Health and Senior Services
2. Pat Simmons, Assistant Bureau Chief, Department of Health and Senior Services
3. Barbara Keen, Nutrition Specialist, Department of Health and Senior Services
4. Sarah Gaines, Nutritionist III, Department of Health and Senior Services
5. Nola Martz, Public Health Nurse Consultant, Department of Health and Senior Services
6. Cindy DeBlauw, Nutrition Consultant, Missouri Council on Activity and Nutrition
7. Megan Klenke, Project Specialist, Child Care Aware of Missouri
8. Candance Gabel, State Nutrition Specialist, University of Missouri Extension
9. Kathy Quick, Section Administrator, Department of Health and Senior Service
- 10.

3. Nomination Category: *(Check only one.)*

☒ INNOVATION

☐ CUSTOMER SERVICE

☐ EFFICIENCY / PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

☐ TECHNOLOGY IN GOVERNMENT

4. Explain why you selected this category:

This project's approach to improving the nutritional quality of meals in child care settings, and encouraging child care centers to adopt best practices in the feeding of children is a unique program with statewide impact. Missouri was one of the first states nationally to develop such a program, and subsequently, Missouri's Eat Smart model has been used to establish a US Department of Agriculture regional recognition program. Additionally, this project has fostered collaborations between internal and external partners, built networks and provided access to funding that have expanded its scope and impact. Missouri Eat Smart Child Care is a voluntary program. Child care centers and homes are encouraged to participate, but there is no requirement.

II. BACKGROUND

1. When did the team begin its work?

May 2009.

2. What date did the team initiate the implementation phase of the project?

January 2010

3. Is the project:

☐ Time Limited

☐ Completed

☒ Ongoing

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Why was the project necessary?

Childhood obesity has become a national problem. In 1997, 9.4% of Missouri's 2 to 5 year olds were obese or overweight. By 2011, that number rose to 16% (2011 Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance System data). More children are cared for outside the home. In fact, 74% of American pre-school

aged children are in some form of non-parental care, and 56% are in center-based care (2001 National Household Education Survey).

64.5% of Missouri children under age six need child care because both parents work (2007 US census data). Many of the obesity prevention efforts that had been implemented prior to Missouri Eat Smart Child Care were focused on school-aged children. The Eat Smart Team recognized an opportunity to impact children when they were at their most vulnerable, yet adaptable, stage - their preschool years. Children's eating habits begin early in life, and are generally well-established by the time they reach elementary school. This project had the potential to impact children early on, instilling healthy preferences and establishing good eating habits.

2. What were the primary goals of the project? *(150 words or less.)*

1. Improve the nutritional quality of meals in Missouri Child Care settings.
2. Improve the nutrition environment by encouraging child care centers and providers to adopt practices that support and promote healthy eating.
3. Establish and maintain a collaborative system of training, technical assistance and resources for the child care community on the principles and practices associated with Missouri Eat Smart Child Care.

3. Describe the project: *(200 words or less.)*

The Missouri Eat Smart Child Care project is a collaborative effort to improve the health and preschool readiness of Missouri's children by encouraging child care providers to meet the Missouri Eat Smart Guidelines, which are nutrition and nutrition policy recommendations that exceed the minimum standards set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and state child care licensing rules. The standards upon which the guidelines were developed are shown to be effective in preventing and reducing childhood obesity and are supported by the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Key nutritional components of the Eat Smart Guidelines include, more fruits and vegetables; whole grains; lowfat dairy, lean meats, and reduced refined sugars. Key nutrition environment and policy components include family style meals, adult role modeling, healthy celebrations and no foods brought from home.

Centers that meet the guidelines are recognized for their achievement and receive a banner and certificate. In addition, the center's story is posted on the Eat Smart web page and featured in an article in the Healthy Child Care newsletter.

This project has become a statewide effort with the collaboration of many partner organizations, which has significantly increased this project's visibility, recognizability, and impact.

4. Explain how the accomplishment of the team exceeds its regular duties and responsibilities. *(150 words or less.)*

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is required to monitor child care facilities to assess compliance with federal meal standards, however, there is no state or federal mandate for this project. This project is the collaborative effort of the team to address the problem of childhood obesity. Much of the funding for this project has come from the CACFP and grants. The CACFP has been able to multi-purpose staff to monitor both CACFP requirements and Eat Smart requirements at the same reviews.

5. Which of the following describes the intended benefits of the project? (Check all that apply and provide an explanation.)

- ☐ Cost Reduction ☐ Time Savings ☒ Increased Effectiveness
☐ Improved Process ☐ Other: Describe

IV. RESULTS / MEASUREMENT

1. Explain how the success of the project was measured and what outcomes were achieved. (Explanation should not exceed 300-500 words.)

1. 135 child care centers and 3 family child care homes have received recognition as Missouri Eat Smart Child Care facilities. These facilities serve a combined 7,345 children, of which 76% are from low-income families.

2. The Bureau of Community Food and Nutrition Assistance, the Child Care Health Consultation Program, and University of Missouri Extension combined efforts to provide 736 hours of in-person Eat Smart training to 3,470 individual child care providers from 2010 through 2013.

3. 296 individuals took Eat Smart training on-line.

4. 66 child care centers completed the Team Nutrition Eat Smart Intervention during the 2011 grant period. Of those participating in the intervention, 28 have been recognized as Eat Smart. Pre- and post-assessment of centers demonstrated improvements in the following areas:

- 56% decreased the number of sweet items served at breakfast
- 59% increased the number of whole grain foods served at breakfast
- 53% increased the number of days they served solid fruit at breakfast instead of fruit juice
- 56% increased the number of whole grain foods served at lunch
- 56% increased the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables served at lunch
- 62% decreased the number of sweet snacks served
- 62% increased the amount of fruits and vegetables served at snack
- 69% increased the number of whole grain foods served at snack

5. Mini-grants were awarded to 75 child care centers, eight sponsors of centers and three sponsors of homes, who identified becoming an Eat Smart Child Care as a goal. Pre- and post-assessments were used to evaluate the facilities' improvement in 38 measured variables. Of the 38 tested variables, 26 variables showed to have statistically significant improvements (test p-value <0.05). Some of the variables showing improvement included: reduced use of high sugar foods, adults eating with children, increased use of no-sugar added fruits and vegetables at breakfast, lunch and snack, healthy celebrations, family style dining, increased use of whole grains at breakfast, lunch and snack, more nutrition education for the children, and increased availability of written policies regarding the food service and nutrition environment.

2. Are the benefits derived from this project: (Check only one.)

- ☒ Recurring ☐ One-time

3. If recurring, how will the benefits be sustained? (Explain in 150 words or less.)

The collaborations that have developed between the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services and other organizations creates a innovative model of program outreach and implementation. Through these collaborations, the Eat Smart program has reached a far greater number of individuals and child care facilities than could ever have been reached by just one organization alone. The Department's Eat Smart collaborations create a model that can be followed and utilized by other state agencies and organizations. The USDA Mountain Plains Regional Office used Missouri Eat Smart Child Care to create a similar regional award system.

V. RECOGNITION / AWARDS

1. Has this project previously been nominated for the Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity?
If yes, when?

no

2. If yes, for which category was it nominated?

3. Has this project received any other awards or recognition? If yes, describe.

VI. NOMINATOR'S INFORMATION

Nominating Department: Department of Health and Senior Services

Name: Ann McCormack

Signature:

Telephone Number: 573-751-6269

E-Mail Address: ann.mccormack@health.mo.gov

VII. DEPARTMENT COORDINATOR'S INFORMATION

Name: Susan Thomas

Signature: Susan Thomas

Telephone Number:

E-Mail Address:

VIII. DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR APPROVAL

Department Director's Name:

Signature:

Gail Watson

Nomination must be signed ONLY by the Department Director to be eligible for consideration. Nominations not signed by the Department Director will be returned to the agency coordinator.