

CSI and HealthMPowers Partnership Has Positive Impact on Head Start Families!

Our Head Start program is currently in its second year of a three year pilot program with HealthMPowers, a non-profit organization in Georgia whose mission is to, “empower healthy habits and transform environments where children live, learn and play”. This organization has been providing direct services to schools since 2002. In 2011-2012, however, HealthMPowers provided professional training for select teachers across Georgia as the training partner for the Georgia Student Health and Physical Education (SHAPE) Initiative.

CSI staff from Head Start and Early Head Start centers in 9 counties attend triannual trainings to learn delivery methods for a variety of healthy eating and wellness topics. The counties currently involved in this pilot program are Appling, Atkinson, Bacon, Brantley, Jeff Davis, Pierce, Toombs, Ware and Wayne.

Recently, CSI training specialist Carol Clarke conducted HealthMPowers trainings in Jeff Davis and Brantley counties. During these sessions Head Start parents and children were involved in a smoothie taste-testing and given an opportunity to get up and moving as they learned valuable and fun activities they can do with their children to increase physical activity and nutrition. Mrs. Clarke said of the smoothie taste-test, “It is always fun to see the faces of the parents and children when they find out the secret ingredient in the smoothies is spinach!”

Pictured below: Left-A group of parents show off their “MyPlate” plates. Right-Amy Brewer found out that her daughter, Lovely Sellers, loves Spinach-Blueberry smoothies!



In addition to materials and activities presented to parents and children, involvement in the HealthMPowers program also includes a monthly newsletter being sent to each Head Start/Early Head Start household with various tips for leading a healthy lifestyle. Families have also received free “MyPlates” and a free cookbook full of healthy recipes. The “MyPlates” are a nutritional tool developed by the USDA that provide an easy visual of the portions of each food group that should be included in each meal.

As we continue to see an increase in childhood and general obesity, CSI is committed to promoting good health as a part of the education our Head Start and Early Head Start children and families receive. We are appreciative of the opportunity to partner with HealthMPowers to provide such useful resources for our families to help accomplish this goal.