



Families and Schools TOGETHER^{INC.}

PROTECTING HEARTS AND MINDS[™]

**Integrating healthy living
practices into school-based
prevention programs**

**Carol Goedken, Director of Growth
Families and Schools Together, Inc.**

cgoedken@familiesandschools.org

888-629-2481 ext. 301



Agenda

- Introduction to FAST™
- Background
 - Why Healthy FAST™
 - What the research says
 - Study of Healthy FAST in Hawaii
- Healthy FAST Activities
- Role of the Nutrition Team Members
- Evaluation of Healthy FAST
- Q&A



Families and Schools TOGETHER INC.™

- Charitable organization - 501 c 3
- Creator of FAST, an evidence-based family strengthening and parent involvement program
- Research and Values based model developed in 1988 by Dr. Lynn McDonald, Professor of Social Worker at University of Wisconsin, Currently at Middlesex University in England continuing research on FAST
- Help children succeed in school and in life
- Family strengthening & parental involvement
- Prevention/ early intervention program
- Program placed in 46 states, plus 9 countries
- SAMHSA/ NREPP model recognition



- Parental involvement via empowerment process within extracurricular format
- Builds lasting, multidimensional relationships
- Nonjudgmental, universal, prevention, intervention
- Experiential & participatory learning
- Professionally led with gradual parental empowerment
- Instills accountability-driven motivation to improve
- A collaborative community effort:
 - Child, Parents, Family Support, School and Community-based Agencies



FAST Models

 Baby FAST™

 Kids FAST™

 Teen FAST™

 Pre-K FAST™

 Middle School FAST™

 FASTWORKS™



Family Unit at Family Table

- Meet & Greet
- Meal
- FAST Hello & Singing
- Scribbles
- Feelings Charades

8 Week Program –
1X per week, 2.5 hours per week

Parents' Time

- Buddy Time
 - Parent Self-Help Group
- (Only Parent Partner and Community Partner)

Peer Group Time

Kids' Time

Children divided by age group for group activities
(Community Partner and School Partner)

Special Play One-to-One Time
(Parent & Community Partner)

Siblings continue **Kids' Time**

Family Table Door Prize
Entire Team

Closing Circle Announcements & RAIN
Entire Team



How FAST Activities Empower Parents

- **Table-based coaching**
- **Parents are in charge of activities**
 - Flag
 - Family meal
 - Scribbles
 - Feeling Charades
- **Parent Group**
- **Parent-Child Time (Special Play)**
- **Lottery**
- **Graduation**

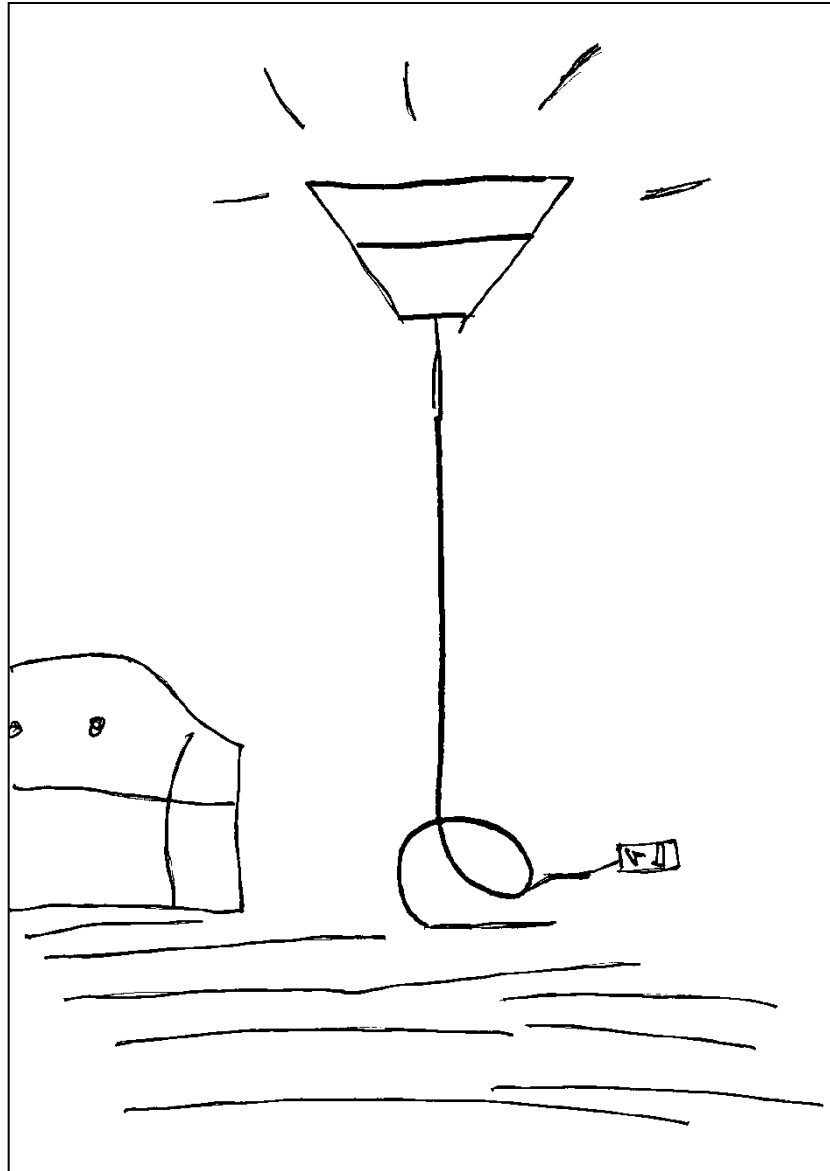


Learning through Repeated Experiences

- **Children practice respectful behaviors towards their parents (300X in 8 weekly sessions)**
- **Children practice taking turns, waiting for a turn**
- **Children practice talking about their drawing, their feelings, and their play with their own parents**
- **Parents practice taking charge, making requests**
- **Parents practice listening to their children**
- **Parents practice playing with their child**
- **Parents practice asking for social support**



SCRIBBLES





Family Meal





Family Flag





Family poses with Family Flag





BUDDY TIME





Lottery



Graduation





Healthy FAST™

- The obesity epidemic
 - % of overweight 6-11 year olds has more than doubled in the last 30 years, and that of 12-19 year olds has nearly tripled
- Funders are interested in obesity prevention
- Requests for “Healthy” FAST



Dangers of Obesity

Overweight children are at increased risk of:

- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Type 2 diabetes, and other diseases
- Face increased discrimination
- Are viewed as lazy, academically unsuccessful, unhealthy and unhygienic
- Severely obese children report a lower quality of life than children with cancer undergoing chemotherapy



Research

**There are good reasons to
make FAST “healthy”!**



Family-Based Programming

The Surgeon General recommends empowering families to eat healthy and exercise through skill-building in the areas of parenting and behavioral management and creating community-based prevention programs. (2001)



Research

Many of the same factors play a role in ATODA prevention and successful health programs

- Social support
- Feelings of self-efficacy
- Family functioning
- Family meals
- Parents' involvement in school



School-based Approaches

- Change environment (change menu, reduce soda machines)
- Increase physical activity
- Can reduce caloric intake and increase physical activity, but limited effect on BMI and uncertain effects on nutrition and physical activity



Family Involvement

- Evaluations of school-based interventions attribute part of the lack of change to a lack in parents' involvement
- Parents play an important role in the development of healthy eating and physical activity habits
- A number of studies have shown that involving the whole family is more effective in achieving and maintaining weight loss



Why include parents?

- “Do as I do” is more effective than “Do as I say”
- Parents engage in behaviors that facilitate overeating, e.g. excessive TV viewing, provide television for children’s room
- Parents of younger children control food selection, preparation and children’s activity levels



Targeting Elementary School Children

- Adolescent obesity is best predictor of adult obesity
- Activity and eating habits change drastically during puberty
- Parental influence is stronger with this group than with older children



Study of Healthy FAST™ in Hawaii

Healthy FAST can make a difference:

- Statistically significant increase in encouragements from family members to eat fruits and vegetables
- Significant increase in comments from friends if they ate unhealthy foods
- Significant increase occasions when family members offered to exercise with them



What parents said...

What did you like best about Healthy FAST?

- Forming relationships with others who share concerns
- Trying new and more healthy meals and life habits
- Exposure to nutritionist's knowledge
- Encouragement and advice



What parents said...

What changes did you make to your eating habits?

- I have started eating a lot more fruits and vegetables than before. Cut down on trans fats, salts, fast food
- I have tried smaller portions and better ratios
- More fruits for snacks. Read more labels than before!



What parents said...

What changes did you make to your physical habits?

- Joined a gym, with a personal trainer
- Take walks and monitor BP
- Awareness and kids activities
- Encouragement to be more active



What parents said...

What changes did you notice in your child's eating habits?

- They enjoy trying new things; they are more aware of nutrition
- More willing to at least try vegetable dishes and balance food intake
- Awareness and sports



Component Changes for Healthy FAST

Program duration:

- After the 5th week: add 15 minutes to the parent group for a separate health-focused parent group. Nutrition partner leads this “Healthy” parent group engagement



Component Changes for Healthy FAST

Family Meal:

- Parent and the Nutrition Team Partners provide guidance in preparing a healthy main course (requires commitment to parent empowerment)
- Team members can accompany parent to the supermarket and provide education about nutrition labels, integrating fruits and vegetables into the meal (parent's retain choice)
- Team members provide water, juice and low-fat milk rather than soft drinks
- Team provides a healthy desert, and healthy side dishes



Component Changes for Healthy FAST

“Healthy” Parents Group:

- Separate from parents group
- Starts after 5th week
- Led by the Nutrition Partner
- Parents are in charge of deciding what they want to discuss/learn
- 15 minutes after the “regular” parent group
- Move to a separate location
- Introduce this new component during the 5th Week Special Presentation



Component Changes for Healthy FAST

Kids' Time:

- Nutrition partner can use this time for nutrition and fitness activities
- Kids learn how to make snacks and serve them to families
- Engage children in active play
- Nutrition Partner plays key role (suggesting activities for Kids' Time)
- After 5th week, children will spend an extra 15 minutes in Kids' Time
- Kids must have fun!



Component Changes for Healthy FAST

5th Week Special Presentation:

- Nutrition Partner presents
- Introduce parents to “healthy” parents group which will start in Week 6
- Walking Club: Encourage parents and children to get together outside of FAST to walk
- If funding is available,
 - Distribute pedometers to participants (can chart progress)
 - Provide health-related gifts (certificate to gym, cook books)



Component Changes for Healthy FAST

Special Play:

- Coaches parents in how to spend time with their children
- Non-directed, don't teach, don't judge, follow the child's lead
- Focused on physical activity
- Age-appropriate
- Provide toys (balls, hula-hoops, etc..)



Component Changes for Healthy FAST

Resource Table:

- Display health related materials (starts the 1st week)
- Nutrition and physical activity materials
- Child safety materials



Role of the Nutrition Partner

- Resource to parents
- Lead “Healthy” Parents Group
- Provide advice to parents in meal preparation
- Lead 5th week Special Presentation
- Help structure Kids’ Time
- Select materials for resource table
- Advise team on food provided for family meal (side dishes, deserts)
- Available for FASTWORKS



Evaluation

Additional survey:

- Frequency of family meals
- Eating out
- Family meal practices
- Fruit and vegetable consumption
- Physical activity
- Confidence in one's ability to change nutrition and physical activity habits
- Social support for healthy eating and physical activity
- Open-ended responses
- Will provide a Healthy FAST report in addition to regular FAST report



Same FAST Values & Norms

- **No teaching for the first four weeks**
- **Parents are family-empowered**
- **Focus on creating social support**
- **Giving families time to bond**
- **Parents take charge**
- **Parents have a choice**
- **Building relationships with community agencies**
- **Creating a cohesive family unit**
- **Give the FAST process a chance to work**



Families and Schools TOGETHER^{INC.}

PROTECTING HEARTS AND MINDS[™]

Headquarters Address:

**Families and Schools Together, Inc.
2801 International Lane
Madison, WI 53704-3151**

www.familiesandschools.org

**888-629-2481 ext. 301 – Carol Goedken
*cgoedken@familiesandschools.org***