



NH FIVE YEAR REPORT

Embracing healthy out-of-school time in New Hampshire





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IDS LAUGHING, SMILING, PLAYING, HAVING FUN! That is what CATCH Kids Club is all about. As I visit out-of-school sites across NH, I am often reminded of why we started this project. When kids are having fun moving, they become more physically fit, healthy and confident.

Now in its fifth year, with support from Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation, the NH CATCH Kids Club program has reached over 100 out-of-school sites across NH. This is significant. When we first started this work, it was in response to directors and staff at NH out-of-school programs who were looking for ways to increase physical activity and healthy eating in the children they served. They have long recognized the important role they play in keeping kids healthy by providing them with environments to support healthy choices... environments where being active is what you do and healthy food is the norm.

That is why CATCH Kids Club has been adopted by the NH Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) initiative as a key strategy for after-school programs. It is also why it has been welcomed by so many of NH's out-of-school programs. It supports these ideals.



Intentional in its approach, CATCH Kids Club activities promote a positive physical activity environment where all kids are included in the game and fun is the focus. Elimination is eliminated. Kids are moving all the time as they dodge, throw, kick, jump, and play. Is there a better way to increase a child's fitness, skills, and their hunger for more? CATCH's unique philosophy has quite literally, "caught on."

It is with gratitude and appreciation for the work of NH out-of-school programs that we highlight five successful NH organizations we have had the pleasure to work with. While all of these programs are different, they all have one thing in common— **leadership**. The people and programs outlined in these stories display those who have embraced healthy eating and physical activity concepts, empowered staff and children to take charge, achieved success and inspired others to do the same.

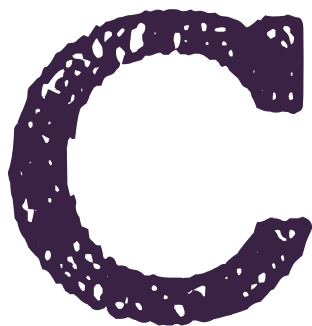
Let's continue to strive to make the healthy choice the easy choice... for our children, our staff and their health.

Beth Gustafson Wheeler
Director of Community Health



KEENE PARKS AND RECREATION

Inspire



CATCH Kids Club in New Hampshire had its start with inspiration from Andy Bohannon, who is director of Keene's Parks and Recreation Department.

In 2004, Keene had just 10 kids enrolled in its after-school program. Since physical activity was a key strategy his organization wanted to focus on through its work with the Foundation for Healthy Communities, Bohannon set out to enhance his program. After researching physical activity and nutrition programs, he landed on the evidence-based CATCH Kids Club as his next big move.

With both enthusiasm and determination, Bohannon and his staff implemented the very first CATCH Kids Club site in New Hampshire with their after-school students. That initial enrollment of 10 students quickly grew to 20, then to 40, and today, more than 70 kids are participating in CATCH Kids Club, where kids are provided with healthy snack options and a variety of all-inclusive games.

In 2008, Andy shared his success with the staff at the Foundation for Healthy Communities, and with the help of the "Growing Up Healthy" grant (made available by the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation), he was able to see his vision of spreading CKC statewide come to life.

Sites that implement CKC frequently see their entire learning environment evolve into a healthier place to work and play.

"An interesting benefit is that the habits of the staff are changing as a consequence of the CATCH Kids program," Andy said "As role models, they are now eating healthier and are more physically active. That feeds into the family and you can really see changes."

As inspiring as Andy is to others both in his region and throughout the state, he has a special story of a little girl who inspired him, and he loves to share that story at the end of every CATCH Kids Club staff training.

During his first year of leading CKC games, there was an eight-year-old girl sitting in the corner crying after one of the games. He approached her to see what was wrong.



“I’m all wet!” she cried out. “I think I need to see a doctor!”

The girl had been playing games with the others, and it took Andy a moment to realize this was the first time in her life the girl had exercised enough to work up a sweat. Andy affectionately explained to her that this was the healthiest thing she could do for her body, and that her body would be stronger and healthier as a result.

Andy Bohannon remains a champion for CATCH Kids Club at the state-wide level, but nowhere is his influence felt more than in the Cheshire County region of New Hampshire, where his many speaking appearances often inspire other parks and recreation sites to offer CKC, and equally inspired staff members go on to become CKC trainers.

Without the inspiration of Andy Bohannon, CATCH Kids Club might not have spread so far in New Hampshire. Thanks to him, his vision and his vitality, he has altered forever – and for the better – the lives of thousands of children.

CONCORD BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB

Empower

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ince it's situated in New Hampshire's capital city – the seat of political power in the State – it seems appropriate that the theme of the Concord Boys and Girls Club's approach to the CATCH Kids Club is one of empowerment.

“We've been implementing CATCH Kids Club for a couple of years and it came along at a perfect time when we were restructuring our focus to include more nutritional education and non-competitive physical activity for our members,” said Chris Emond, Executive Director of the Concord Boys and Girls Club, serving 1,200 children in after-school programs in Concord, Suncook, Hopkinton, and Warner.

“Now CATCH Kids Club is more like a philosophy. It is fully integrated into everything we do in our club and both the kids and the staff have fully embraced it,” Chris explained. “I've even heard kids in the club talking about it - they are legitimately thinking about what they eat and being active. We are really helping them adopt healthy, life-long habits.”

Knowledge is power, after all, and thanks to program director Angel Anderson and Kathy Kayros – a former corporate COO turned unstoppable volunteer – the kids are being tutored in both ends of the HEAL equation.

“With Angel in the gym and on the playground, we have more of a curriculum feel to the activity part of the day,” Chris said. “There's no swinging the doors open and saying, 'Have at it, kids!' That's chaos, and we want the structure we get with programming that has CATCH as its basis. We also benefit from consistency. We all have staff turnover, but one of the beauties of CATCH is that it can perpetuate itself. The knowledge is there with the trainers who then pass that knowledge on to new staff members who can become trainers themselves. That's a great legacy of CATCH.”

Meanwhile, Kathy Kayros can often be found in the kitchen with kids, where she imparts the culinary wisdom of the ages in a setting far different than that of her professional past.

“Here she was, the COO of a multi-million dollar corporation and now she’s in the kitchen with a group of nine-year-olds teaching them to make healthy recipes like turkey meatballs and pumpkin muffins,” Chris laughed. “It’s probably easier to control a roomful of executives than kids in a kitchen, but she’s really instilling a love of cooking in the kids which she thinks is a lost art. She’s truly our chief cook and bottle washer when it comes to the healthy eating component of CATCH.”

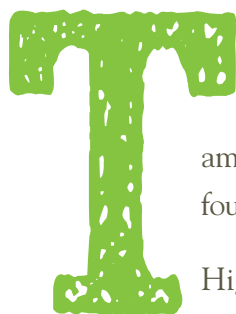
It’s empowerment disguised as fun.

“We’re giving the kids knowledge,” Chris said. “A lot of the things we want to do with the kids comes directly back to them feeling like they have an influence over their surroundings and their own lives. When you learn to have control over your physical well-being, that’s a powerful lesson.



PENACOOK COMMUNITY CENTER

Embrace



he folks at the Penacook Community Center (PCC) truly embrace the ideals of the CATCH Kids Club – you might even call them ambassadors of the program – which might help explain why 40 of them found themselves at the White House in Washington, D.C., earlier this year.

High rollers? More like egg rollers.

You see, the kids and staff from the PCC were invited to the 2012 White House Easter Egg Roll by First Lady Michelle Obama, who – during a March visit to New Hampshire – was struck by the high-energy parallels between the CATCH Kids Club curriculum and her own “Let’s Move” campaign.

In fact, she was so inspired by the pre-schoolers during her visit to the PCC that she joined them in an impromptu bunny hop, much to the delight of the national media horde that was on hand to chronicle her visit.

“With CATCH, we don’t ask the kids to do anything we wouldn’t do ourselves,” laughed PCC Executive Director Deb Cuddahy, “and that includes the bunny hop, as we saw with the First Lady.”

Because her visit lasted just over an hour, what the national media didn’t see was the day-to-day emphasis on CATCH that involves every single child in the pre-school, before-school, kindergarten, after-school and summer camp programs at the Penacook center. It may sound incongruous, but the emphasis on healthy living is infectious.

“I like being able to play games before school because it’s really fun and it helps me wake up my heart!” said Caitlin Habel, a seven-year-old participant in the PCC’s before-school program. “See you can feel it,” she added, hand over her heart. “Thump thump... thump thump ... thump thump!”

Caitlin is just one of 116 children in the PCC’s school-year enrollment, with an additional 75 kids coming in during the summer months. Given those strong numbers, PCC staff members have been trained in the CATCH Kids Club program dating back to October of 2010. That’s when they began incorporating the CATCH Kids Club games and activities into the curriculum.



“The kids are really getting into the moderate and vigorous physical activities that are inherent in the CATCH Kids Club program,” said Program Director Carol St. Pierre. “They’re going from active, to active and then back to active.”

Plus, activity and imagination go hand-in-hand. Thus, smiles abound as the kids play Foxes, Trees, and Squirrels, plus a new game called Spider Tag – it’s what Deb Cuddahy calls a PCC CATCHified activity idea! – and then again, the kids can always fall back upon one of their tried and true pastimes.

“The three-year-olds might start off with a group movement song like ‘Ring Around the Rosie,’” she said, “and it’s a means to an end. We’re building a healthier community of kids here. We’re coordinating activities that encourage healthy living, and that includes getting parents and other adults to take part in CATCH activities.”

To do that, the PCC staff hosts quarterly Family Fun Nights.

“That includes getting the adults on the floor doing the CATCH games with the children,” said Carole St. Pierre. “Afterwards, we’ll bring out nutritious snacks like yogurt and milk, and as much as we enjoy what happens here, we know the parents are going home with a lot of ideas about things they can do with their kids.

“That’s what we mean by modeling behavior,” she added. “Every member of our staff has gone through CATCH training and now that we have two of our own trainers on staff – that would be me and Kim Laclair – we can go out and bring the message to other facilities.”

Other facilities? Like the White House, perhaps?

SOUTHERN DISTRICT YMCA

Lead



Southern District YMCA joined in the CATCH Kids Club movement while emerging as a leader in the healthy eating and physical activity movement for after-school programs. Kimberly Meyer, who is the Director of Community Based Programming – and a devout fitness enthusiast – has been working to transform the YMCA's 15 after-school programs around the seacoast area into healthy environments for kids to learn and play.

By aligning with national YMCA standards, she's establishing policies that support providing healthy snacks and daily physical activity – specifically weaving the CATCH philosophy of all-inclusive and non-elimination games – into her after-school environment.

“We were looking for ways to show the community that Southern District YMCA was committed to healthy eating and active living,” Kimberly explained, “so we said, ‘Let’s walk our talk with current programs, and expand what’s out there with CATCH Kids Club.’”

In 2011, after completing an assessment of their healthy eating and physical activity practices, Kimberly and her staff wanted to bridge the gap and establish a universal evidence-based curriculum at all of their after-school sites.

Every day, their 15 sites are required to provide a healthy snack that consists of a whole grain and either a fruit or vegetable. Additionally, staff members teach CATCH Kids Club games for at least 30 minutes most days of the week.

“This isn’t a babysitting service,” said Jenn Carter, School Aged Childcare Coordinator and certified CATCH Trainer. “These kids are our kids, and we wanted to have a program we’d feel happy and proud to put our own kids in.”

Jenn has seen the lives of children transformed by playing CKC games, none more than a little girl she watched on the first day she took part in a CATCH Kids Club game. When the girl was tagged out, she slumped her shoulders and immediately left the play area ready to sit out the rest of the game.

Jenn explained how she could do a re-entry task to get back in the game. The girl was thrilled at the chance, and even though she proceeded to get tagged out time and time again, she consistently re-entered with determination. By the end of the game, her face was red and her smile was ear-to-ear.

Sometimes staffers have noticed that some kids just want to do their own thing... especially the older kids. At Southern District YMCA, site directors have turned these older students into leaders. Odds are if you drop in for a visit at one of their sites, you'll see the older kids helping to set-up, teach, and play the games. One student might DJ the music for "Walk the Track" while others join in with the teacher to explain the games and help the younger kids with their re-entry tasks.

What's unique to the staff at Southern District YMCA is the high level of commitment they invest in sustaining their program for years to come. In addition to including CATCH Kids Club in staff and parent handbooks, they continue to build on their program by developing the leadership skills of their site directors at weekly staff meetings. Jenn Carter has sites take videos of the games they play and enjoy the most. At weekly meetings, the staffers watch the videos, learn new games, and have the chance to discuss successes and challenges.

Southern District YMCA is a leader in creating an environment where living a healthy lifestyle is both encouraged and supported. The leaders have established a system to keep healthy living and physical activity at the forefront of their mission, and has cultivated a staff that supports the effort.



UPPER VALLEY HEAL CATCH KIDS CLUB

Achieve

Just what do you think you've achieved if kids ask you to play "Crayons?" A quiet, leisurely hour for the little ones with a coloring book in hand?

Not if you're a little one traveling the same circles as Marla Ianello, who manages the early childhood Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) program in the Upper Valley Region of New Hampshire and Vermont. To Marla, an invitation from the kids to play "Crayons" means they're in for a heart-pumping, floor-thumping romp that is sure to leave them laughing.

"That's the thing about the CATCH Kids Club," Marla explained. "If you tell grown-ups they need to run around and get their heart rate up, it feels like work. Kids might feel that way, too, but with CATCH, you're just playing games. That's the secret with 'Crayons.' I get the three-to-five-year-olds and tell them we're going to play 'Crayons' and that means rolling all over the floor like 'Crayons' rolling around on a table.

"I don't know the last time you've rolled all over the floor, but you use a lot of muscles to control your body when you're doing it," she laughed. "The next day, my grown-up muscles are very sore, but the kids don't notice. They also don't notice that they're learning body control and spatial relations and even if they did, it's just so much fun for them because the adults in their lives are doing it right along with them. That's one of the joys of CATCH."

Thanks to Marla and the staff at the Lebanon Recreation and Parks Department, CATCH has caught on big time in the Upper Valley, where Paul Coats is another major proponent of the program.

"Rather than having another book on the shelf that tells you how to play a certain game or how to get more fruits and vegetables into the kids, CATCH is all about a hands-on approach with administrators and teachers," said Paul, a CATCH Kids Club trainer who also serves as recreation director in Lebanon. "You don't just throw out a ball and tell the kids to play. It's about thinking it through. How do you get the kids to move from a warm-up to a good vigorous game and then to a gradual cool-down? Instead of having some of the kids moving some of the time, how do you get all of the kids moving most of the time? A secret is that no one gets eliminated."



Paul cited old-fashioned games like kickball and dodge ball as those that could be modified – or CATCHified! – to better embrace the CATCH philosophy. Someone catches your kicked ball? You run the bases anyway. You get eliminated in a game of Tag? Twirl a Hula Hoop for two minutes or dribble a ball 20 times and get back in the game. The central message?

“Eliminate elimination games,” said Marla, who brought the gospel according to CATCH to 10 different sites in the Upper Valley, sites that range from recreation programs to home child care providers, after-school programs and center-based child care.

“In the end, CATCH is about setting the tone for a lifetime,” she said. “We move. This is what we do – we move – and since social and nutritional habits are virtually established by the age of five, if we can embed that habit of movement in kids at an early age, they will take that philosophy forward with them throughout their lives.”



HOW ARE WE DOING?

CATCH Kids Club is a successful, evidence-based program focused on healthy eating and physical activity. Its goals and overarching theme support the notion that the healthy choice should be the easy choice for kids-- and that providing a supportive after school environment is a vital contributor to the health of children.

It is because of this philosophy that we chose CATCH Kids Club (CKC) as a key strategy in our Childhood Obesity Project in 2008. As it sparked interest among after school administrators and staff alike, CKC quickly expanded throughout NH and has now evolved into a comprehensive program for increasing healthy eating and physical activity in out-of-school settings. In just five years, CKC spread its reach to a total of 108 sites representing 9 out of 10 counties in NH. These include private after school programs as well as parks and recreation departments, YMCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs, and in-school recess and energizer programs.

THIS EXPANSION OCCURRED IN TWO WAYS:

1. Each year, the NH CATCH Kids Club Project selected 5-12 sites to receive intensive technical assistance to implement a comprehensive approach to integrating healthy eating and physical activity in their out-of-school programs. This assistance included:
 - assessment of current policies and practices.
 - identification of opportunities and the development of an action plan.
 - training for staff and administration to implement CKC.
 - evaluation of healthy eating and physical activity outcomes.
2. NH CATCH Kids Club also provided support to HEAL communities as they worked to implement CATCH Kids Club in their area out-of-school programs. This includes HEAL communities of Cheshire County, the Greater Franklin area, Lakes Region, and the Upper Valley.

NH CKC PROJECT GOALS:

1. Increase the number of targeted after school organizations that include healthy eating and physical activity/health in their overall **mission and/or organizational goals**.
2. Increase the number of targeted after school organizations who **adopt policies** that support physical activity and healthy eating.
3. Increase the number of targeted after school programs that **designate at least 15-20 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA) time every day**.
4. Increase the number of targeted after school programs that **offer healthy snacks/foods**.

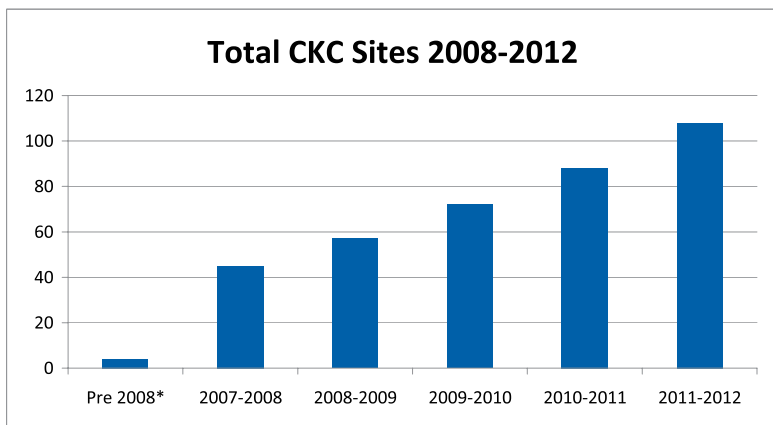
SO HOW DID WE DO?

108 NH out-of-school sites trained in CATCH Kids Club

53 trainings completed since 2008

29 individuals trained as CKC Trainers in two CKC Train the Trainer Academies.

919 out-of-school and in-school staff trained



POLICY AND PRACTICE CHANGES

In addition to using the CKC program as a tool to transform the after school activity environment, we began utilizing the NH After School Environment and Policy Assessment in 2010. This tool has allowed us to take a broader look at the healthy eating and physical activity policies and practices of out-of-school programs, arming us with the information needed to provide the necessary technical assistance to help them reach their goals.

Of the 25 sites who utilized the assessment from 2010-2012, 92% made **4 OR MORE** environmental or policy improvements. The areas of greatest improvement include:

- Inclusion of physical activity and healthy eating in organizational mission and goals.
- Physical activities are inclusive, non-elimination, and focus on maximizing time spent in physical activity.
- Policies adopted to provide and promote healthy snacks.
- Non-educational screen time is discouraged.

Furthermore, new policy and practice changes at project sites resulted in increases in time children spend in physical activity. Site observations and reports show that most project sites offer CKC games at least 25-30 minutes 3 to 5 days a week.

These results are an important reflection of the quality of the CKC Program. Through training and technical assistance, sites have shown that they are able to meet a major goal of the CKC program - to decrease sedentary time by increasing activity time for **ALL KIDS**.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS!

We would like to thank the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation for funding the NH CATCH Kids Club Project over the past five years as part of its *Growing Up Healthy* initiative. Their support was invaluable to the success of the NH CATCH Kids Club Project.

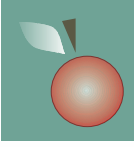
We would also like to thank our past and present partners on the project who provided us with guidance, advice, and were key CATCH Kids Club champions in their communities and organizations.

- Founding partners include: NH Recreation and Parks Association, Boys & Girls Clubs of NH, Greater Manchester YMCA, Southern District YMCA, and the former Plus Time NH.
- Statewide and community partners: HEAL NH and the Round 1 HEAL communities (Cheshire HEAL, Greater Franklin HEAL, Lakes Region HEAL, and Upper Valley HEAL), and our new statewide partner, BOOST NH. They have contributed immensely to the promotion of CATCH Kids Club across NH.
- Lastly, a big THANK YOU goes out to all CATCH Kids Club sites!

HIGH SATISFACTION!

- Over 81% of staff and 96% of directors would recommend CKC to other programs.
- Over 85% of staff and 100% of directors are satisfied with the CKC program.
- Over 85% of directors feel that CKC helps them meet their organizations health goals.





FOUNDATION FOR
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

