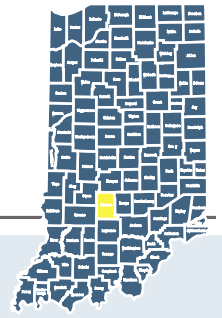


Physical Activity Supports for Special Needs Classrooms in Monroe County



SUMMARY

Students with special needs, in self-contained classrooms within Monroe County Schools, have been identified with emotional disabilities and struggle significantly with behavior. Within the school systems, these classrooms are referred to as “Bridges” classrooms and each student has an individualized behavior plan, many of which include accommodations such as additional movement opportunities, breaks, and alternative learning formats like sitting in alternative locations (e.g., on the floor). IU Health Bloomington, in southern Indiana, has seen improved behavior in students when additional environmental supports and accommodations are provided.



CHALLENGE

The Bridges classrooms often are overlooked when it comes to new and innovative ideas, as well as physical activity opportunities. The special needs population is often seen as children who misbehave and won't use equipment in the appropriate manner.

With the highest priority for Bridges students being the focus on skill and behavioral development, within the context of teaching academics, IU Health Bloomington took a chance on these classrooms. IU Health Bloomington partnered with Monroe County Schools to seek and provide accommodations and environmental supports that would minimize the likelihood of a significant behavior altercation occurring, thus allowing the Bridges students to engage in academic instruction to increase academic performance.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IS KEY

For more information about Monroe County Schools, visit <https://www.mccsc.edu/>.

More information about DNPA can be found at <http://www.dnpa.isdh.in.gov>.

This project is supported by the Indiana State Department of Health, Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity in collaboration with Maternal and Child Health Title V funding.

“Our children struggle with controlling their emotions. Some people were hesitant to provide our classroom the materials for fear of them being destroyed. However, our children have done the opposite. They have cared for the equipment, learned to take turns, as well as use it as a resource for self-regulation.”

– School Teacher at Monroe County Schools

Contact

Kelsey Barrick, MS
Indiana State Department of Health,
Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity
2 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
Phone: 317-234-3435
Email: Kbarrick@isdh.in.gov
Website: <http://www.dnpa.isdh.in.gov>

SOLUTION

In partnership with the Monroe County Schools and the Indiana State Department of Health, Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity (DNPA), IU Health Bloomington was able to supply the Bridges classrooms with kinesthetic equipment, signage to promote the equipment, and training for Bridges staff to implement more kinesthetic practices into their daily teaching.

RESULTS

At the elementary level, Bridges students had access to a surfboard, swivel desk, pedal desk, strider desk, and reading discs, which they used an average of 21.8 times throughout the week. In middle school, the equipment consisted of a strider desk, which was used an average of 10.9 times per week. At the high school level, students had access to a strider desk and foot fidget desk, which were used an average of 24 times per week. All data were recorded by a combination of teachers, paraprofessionals, and students.

The teachers in the Bridges classrooms have seen the equipment have a positive impact on students in terms of ability to focus and release of energy. The equipment was used as an antecedent intervention, meaning it was used to prevent problem behavior from occurring. Students have developed ownership over taking care of the materials, sharing the items with others, and developing self-advocacy skills.

U.S. Department of Health and Human
Services
Centers for Disease Control and
Prevention
NCCDPHP

Contact CDC

<http://www.cdc.gov/cdc-info/requestform.html>

Website

<http://nccd.cdc.gov/nccdsuccessstories/>

The findings and conclusions in this success story are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position of the funding agencies or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

SUSTAINING SUCCESS

Since the equipment has been provided, it will continue to remain in the Bridges classrooms. For classrooms that were not able to be involved the first time for various reasons, those classroom teachers have been able to continue to work with IU Health Bloomington, the Indiana State Department of Health, and other funders to secure additional grant funds to purchase additional equipment.



Indiana State
Department of Health