



## COMMUNITY GRANT OUTCOME REPORT

### Wisconsin Partnership For Childhood Fitness

# Improving school fitness programs with eye on health



*Students participate in fitness testing as part of the Wisconsin Partnership for Childhood Fitness program. The project led to improvements both in student fitness levels and in the physical education curriculum offered in Wisconsin schools.*

**School-based fitness testing program sees significant improvements in activity levels and improves physical education programs in Wisconsin's schools**

► **Description:** This successful collaboration between the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, UW Pediatrics Department, and UW Population Health Institute sought to increase the number of youths who are physically fit and have a healthy weight. This project tested a national model school-based fitness assessment, Fitnessgram, and developed a central database to collect data in order to improve physical education programs.

► **Results:** Project leaders recruited 448 schools for the program, reaching 16,474 students. The test of Fitnessgram was successful; students showed increased physical activity and fitness levels. The project team developed a web-based data collection system, allowing for analysis of physical education programs. In addition to improvement across health indicators, the majority of schools improved the opportunities for physical activity they offer to students as a results of their participation in the project.

► **The Partnership:** The academic partners brought expertise in exercise, physiology testing, statistical analysis methods, information technology, and program evaluation. They were key collaborators on project design, implementation, and evaluation, as well as on state policy work that evolved as a result of this project.

► **Next Steps:** Project results have been disseminated to policymakers and researchers. Project leaders testified in support of a bill that would have made fitness testing mandatory in state schools. The Wisconsin Standards for Physical Education now recommend use of evidence-based testing programs like Fitnessgram. DHS received an \$859,043 Recovery Act (ARRA) grant, part of which is implementing an Active Schools program. The WPP awarded \$400,000 in continuation funding to test the predictive power of school fitness data and evaluate strategies and programs for physical education in schools.

### GRANT FACTS

**Grantee:** Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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**Grant Award:** \$424,434 over three years