Pediatric Preventative Health Education

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Identification of Problem

- Pediatric well-child visits provide a unique opportunity to introduce and discuss topics on **healthy lifestyle habits**, including physical activity, diet, sleep, and more.
- However, data shows that the average primary care exam is **only 18 minutes**[1]
    - Short visits and discussion of acute topics limit time available for education of important lifestyle changes/habits
- Current education, specifically related to obesity interventions, is **not effective**[3]
- Current resources provided online and by local clinics can be lengthy and overwhelming.
    - Patients often **do not engage** with the material after the visit, per patient and staff interviews
- A more effective method of **patient education** and engagement for prevention and treatment of healthy behaviors needs to be incorporated[2]

www.freepik.com%2Fpremium-vector%2Fhealthy-lifestyle-icon-concept-with-icon-design_2597838.htm

Public Health Cost

- Chronic disease is the **leading cost of health care** in the United States, exceeding $1 trillion annually[6]
- Chronic disease prevention can, and should, **begin with the pediatric population**[2]
- Regular physical activity for children is one of several specific health habits that has been shown to **prevent chronic disease and improve overall health**[7]

https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/gold-us-dollar-symbol-gm620368864-108234531.

Community Perspective

Members of the local community identify a need for improved resources and better education about healthy lifestyles and habits, responding positively to proposed interventions

"Distribution of resources needs to be better, along with education on why prevention is important. People still tend to wait until something is wrong before making any lifestyle changes. We need to do more education on what impacts prevention can have on their health."

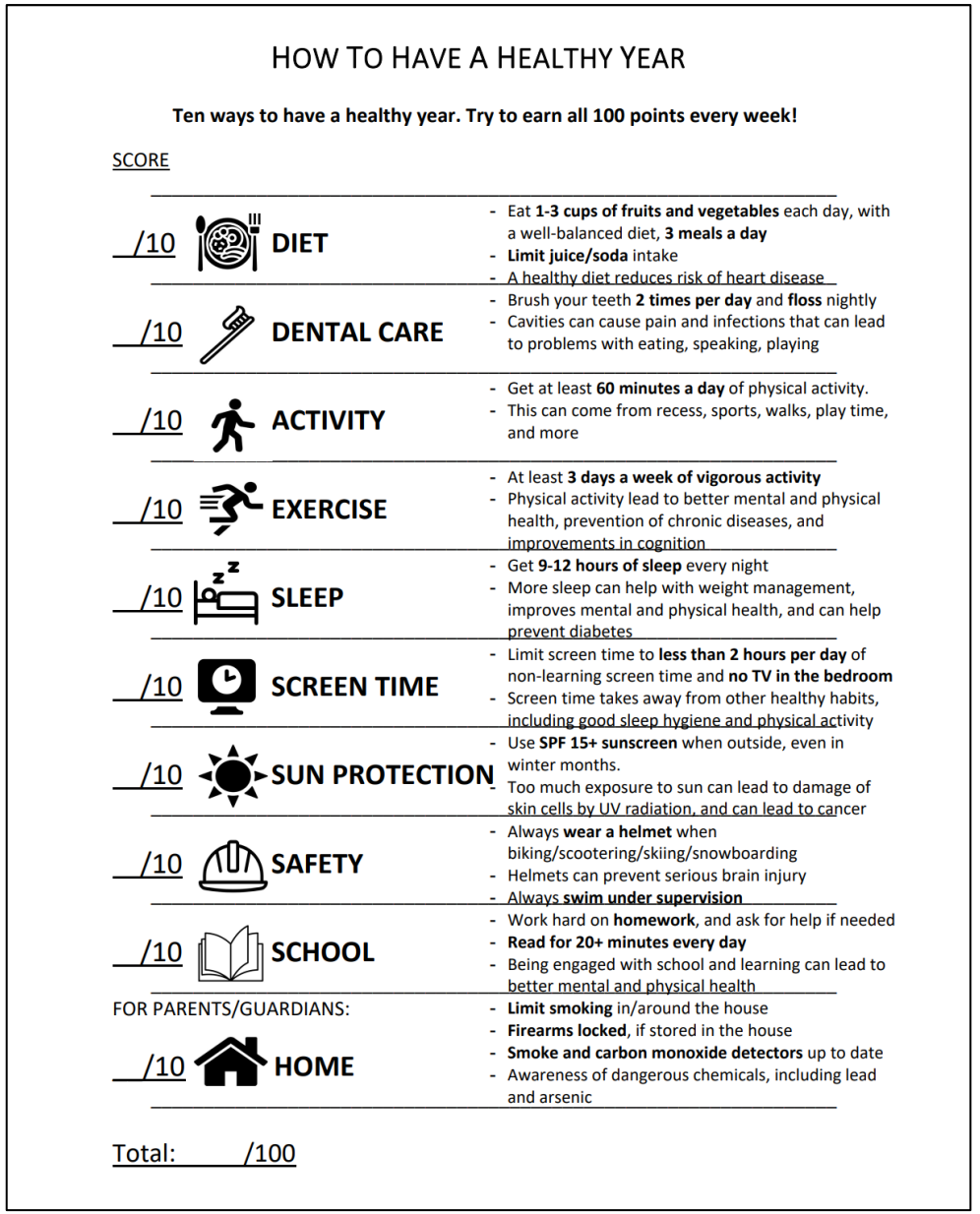
- Kristen Miller, Director of Health and Wellness, Edgar May Health and Recreation Center

"I feel we need more community interventions and education. I think if we can get [children] to take some ownership of the community, and they feel very supported by the community, then it will have a positive outcome on what happens here."

- Diane Daniels, School Nurse, Springfield, VT

Intervention

- **Educational handout** given during all well-child visits for **patients ages 5-10**
- Handout designed to provide concise, easy-to-understand information on **10 specific lifestyle categories**
  - These categories identified by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) as important for children to lead healthy lives[4,5]
- **Actionable recommendations** for each health category
  - Information based on CDC and AAP recommendations for children within the population age target range [4,5]
- **Interactive** for children, with a "scoring" system to maximize engagement from parents/guardians and patients



HOW TO HAVE A HEALTHY YEAR

Ten ways to have a healthy year. Try to earn all 100 points every week!

SCORE

/10	**DIET**	- Eat **1-3 cups of fruits and vegetables** each day, with a well-balanced diet, **3 meals a day** - **Limit juice/soda** intake - A healthy diet reduces risk of heart disease
/10	**DENTAL CARE**	- Brush your teeth **2 times per day** and **floss** nightly - Cavities can cause pain and infections that can lead to problems with eating, speaking, playing
/10	**ACTIVITY**	- Get at least **60 minutes a day** of physical activity. - This can come from recess, sports, walks, play time, and more
/10	**EXERCISE**	- At least **3 days a week of vigorous activity** - Physical activity lead to better mental and physical health, prevention of chronic diseases, and improvements in cognition
/10	**SLEEP**	- Get **9-12 hours of sleep** every night - More sleep can help with weight management, improves mental and physical health, and can help prevent diabetes
/10	**SCREEN TIME**	- Limit screen time to **less than 2 hours per day** of non-learning screen time and **no TV in the bedroom** - Screen time takes away from other healthy habits, including good sleep hygiene and physical activity
/10	**SUN PROTECTION**	- Use **SPF 15+ sunscreen** when outside, even in winter months. - Too much exposure to sun can lead to damage of skin cells by UV radiation, and can lead to cancer
/10	**SAFETY**	- Always **wear a helmet** when biking/scootering/skiing/snowboarding - Helmets can prevent serious brain injury - Always **swim under supervision**
/10	**SCHOOL**	- Work hard on **homework**, and ask for help if needed - **Read for 20+ minutes every day** - Being engaged with school and learning can lead to better mental and physical health
FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS:		
/10	**HOME**	- **Limit smoking** in/around the house - **Firearms locked**, if stored in the house - **Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors** up to date - Awareness of dangerous chemicals, including lead and arsenic

Total: /100

Evaluations of Effectiveness

- Due to time constraints, this intervention has not yet been put into place and no data has been collected
- Expected plan for results measurement: Use two different approaches to evaluate effectiveness
  - Measure **patients' reported average score** on handout per week, pre and post intervention. Statistically compare scores.
  - Record achievement of each actionable item on the handout in the **Electronic Health Record**, assessed during the visit. Statistically compare records pre and post intervention.

Limitations

- **Not a comprehensive list** of all preventative health recommendations/guidelines
- Handout **does not provide additional information/resources** for each category
- Handout can be **easily discarded or lost**
  - Providers may not have enough time to provide verbal education on the handout's content
- It can be **difficult to objectively assess effectiveness** of this intervention
- May not see effects of this intervention for **many years**

Next Steps

- Explore **which specific health categories** addressed in the handout require further intervention
- Consider **additional resources** for specific health categories, to provide to families as needed
- **Work with families** to understand the effectiveness of handouts as a means of education

References

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