



Learning and Local Wellness Policy Cherokee County Schools

Cherokee County Schools have embraced health and wellness for students as evidenced by local wellness policy efforts.

The Lead School Nurse serves as Chair of the Cherokee County School Health Advisory Council, handling monitoring and reporting on implementation progress with the State Board of Education Healthy Active Children Policy and local wellness policy. The SHAC includes diverse representation: the superintendent, Child Nutrition Director, SIMS, school principals, teachers, attendance counselors, HOSA, school nurses, school-based health center, Murphy Medical Center, Cherokee County Health Department, Smoky Mountain Mental Health Center, N.C. Dental Hygienist, Department of Social Services, Cherokee County Cooperative Extension, Tobacco Prevention Coordinator, Alcohol Prevention Program Coordinator, Chief-School Resource Officer, Sheriff's Department, Juvenile Justice, parents, students and community volunteers.

CARE Teams utilize school nurses, social workers, and counselors to identify at-risk students and create family-centered plans to assist.

The Tri-County Tobacco Prevention Initiative, funded by the N.C. Health and Wellness Trust Fund, brought together Cherokee, Clay and Graham counties for Teens Against Tobacco Use (TATU), part of the statewide TRU (Tobacco Reality Unfiltered) youth initiative. Student-led clubs, presentations and a Kick the Habit art contest promote tobacco cessation and support the 100% tobacco free schools policy.

Cherokee, Graham and Swain Counties joined forces to receive a Safe Schools Healthy Students (SSHS) grant, which has facilitated establishment of a Project One Accord Director, Health and Fitness Coordinator and Data and Evaluation Coordinator. Grant activities support the wellness policy. For example, the Fitness Coordinator provided training to all teachers on utilizing

Energizers and incorporating physical activity into the classroom. In addition, meetings were scheduled with elementary teachers to share ideas. Physical education teachers host "Walk & Talk" with students in the mornings in the gyms. Miles are logged and rewards are given at the end of the grading periods. Health information is shared with staff and families through the Web site and SSSH newsletter.

Cherokee Child Nutrition Services (CNS) has implemented the N.C. Nutrition Standards for school meals. In addition, any vended beverages or snacks must comply with the N.C. Nutrition Standards; for example, only water and sports drinks are allowed for vending in middle and high schools. Soft drinks are not allowed for sale on any campus during the school day. Universal breakfast is offered to all students before school. As a result, more students are eating breakfast. School lunch participation has also increased. Teachers are reporting less discipline problems. CNS reaches out to faculty through orientation and staff meetings. Outreach is

provided to families through the Child Nutrition Web site, flyers, posters, school menus, and the Nutrition Nuggets section on menus.

The motto of Cherokee County Schools is "Where learning is for life". Learning healthy lifestyle skills prepares students for a productive life now and in the future. A safe and supportive learning environment supports student achievement.



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