GEORGIA SHAPE

Location: Georgia (statewide)
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BACKGROUND
Georgia currently ranks 17th in the nation for childhood obesity. Only 52% of middle school students and 43% of high school students in Georgia currently meet the CDC recommendations for physical activity. More than 44% of Georgia’s middle school students and 39% of high school students watch television for three or more hours on a school day and only 17% of high school students in Georgia consume five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day. In 2008, Georgians spent $2.4 billion on the direct medical costs of obesity and lost productivity from disease, disability and death. Furthermore, obesity-related hospitalizations of Georgia children aged 2–19 years increased 338% over the eleven year period from 1999 to 2010.

The Georgia Shape initiative is a statewide, multi-agency, multi-dimensional initiative of Governor Nathan Deal that brings together governmental, philanthropic, academic and business communities to address childhood obesity in Georgia. Over the next ten years Georgia Shape will work towards increasing the number of students in the Healthy Fitness Zone for Body Mass index by 10%. Other objectives set forth by the Governor and Georgia Shape include reaching disparate populations, increasing the aerobic capacity measure of Georgia’s youth, increasing the breast feeding rate across Georgia, and increasing the number of early care centers that excel in nutrition and physical activity measures.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES
The overall goal of the initiative is to improve the health young people in Georgia by offering assistance and opportunity to achieve a greater level of overall fitness and to decrease childhood obesity measures.

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<th>TITLE V/MCH BLOCK GRANT MEASURES ADDRESSED</th>
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<tr>
<td>#8: Percent of children ages 6 through 11 years and adolescents ages 12 through 17 years who are physically active at least 60 minutes per day.</td>
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<td>#15: Percent of children 0 through 17 years who are adequately insured.</td>
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The program goal is accomplished by the following objectives:

- Establishing a basic, benchmark measurement of fitness among GA students through the Fitnessgram standardized assessment
- Collecting rich school baseline survey data around elementary physical activity in schools through the Power Up for 30 Initiative (*currently piloting this instrument for MS and HS populations)
- Using the CDC’s breast feeding report card measures to inform current breast feeding and early care work
- Increasing children’s (and families’) knowledge of their current health-related fitness levels
- Increasing children/family’s capacity to develop and implement strategies for personal improvement

TARGET POPULATION SERVED
This is a statewide initiative. The target audience is all Georgia’s youth, age 0-18.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES
The Georgia SHAPE initiative was launched in 2012. The Georgia Department of Public Health and the Office of the Governor view the Georgia SHAPE initiative as a long-term strategy to reduce childhood obesity. It is not a one-time program, but a comprehensive initiative with multiple projects and programs that aim to build on the strengths of multiple agencies, along with private and public partners, and channel those strengths into reducing childhood obesity in Georgia.

Georgia SHAPE aims to encourage healthy behaviors and promote individual health through coordinated statewide policy and school/community efforts, as well as by offering resources to families and individuals. This ecological approach targets multiple influences on health and aims to
create a supportive and coordinated environment for increase physical activity and health for school-aged children. This initiative is based on the Transtheoretical Model (behavior change). Georgia SHAPE encourages small, achievable health related behavior changes across all Georgia populations from babies to adults.

Georgia SHAPE has several strategies and activities to promote physical activity and health for children and adolescents that are based on national programs, guidelines and evidence-based recommendations.

- **FITNESSGRAM**: Georgia SHAPE begins with a basic, benchmark measurement of fitness among our students called FITTESTGRAM. The FITTESTGRAM tool used for SHAPE's annual standardized fitness assessment evaluates five different parts of health-related fitness, including aerobic capacity, muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility and body composition using objective criteria. It also generates reports providing valuable individual, school, and state-level data to empower parents, schools, and the community to best access the current health needs for children in Georgia.

- All public school physical education teachers (k-12) in Georgia receive professional training about testing protocol and data entry, and they will be supplied with the equipment, software and technical support needed to conduct the assessment in their school through Georgia Shape. Participants are also eligible for the governor’s award and recognition program, which will provide exciting incentives for teachers and schools.

- **Strategies to Increase Breastfeeding**: Strategies include sharing *The Business Case for Breastfeeding* broadly with the Georgia business community, encouraging them to adopt policies that support breastfeeding mothers. In addition, implementing a voluntary program to recognize birthing hospitals (the Five Star Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative) that have taken the steps to promote, protect, and support breastfeeding in their organization. In addition, website messaging, WIC training for Registered Dieticians and projects and partnerships with the Georgia chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Georgia Breastfeeding Coalition are currently being developed.

- **School initiatives for children and adolescents ages 6-18**:  
  - Power Up for 30 is a statewide program that trains educators to effectively add 30 minutes of daily physical activity for every student throughout the school day in addition to physical education. This program provides training, technical assistance, resources and ideas for additional physical activity before, during and after school in a way that adheres to each elementary school’s needs.
  - The Georgia SHAPE Grantee program is a technical assistance based program that provides schools (elementary, middle and high) with expert advisement and help in planning and implementing wellness policy and programming to their school in a way that fits their wants and needs.
  - Georgia SHAPE promotes joint-use agreements between schools and communities to increase opportunities for physical activity.
  - Georgia SHAPE promotes participation in the Georgia Safe Routes to School program to expand implementation of safe routes to school while increasing students daily physical activity levels.
  - Participation in the national Healthy Schools Program to gain recognition for schools or districts achieving specific nutrition and physical activity or education standards.
  - Work with local school districts to review, modify, and strengthen wellness policies to improve nutrition quality and nutrition education.
  - Participation in the Georgia Farm to School program to expand the USDA Food and Nutrition Service Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.
  - Participation in the Georgia’s annual High Performance, Healthy Schools Summit and Georgia Farm to School Summit, and the Georgia Farm to Pre-School Summit.

**PROGRAM OUTCOMES/EVALUATION DATA**

An overarching evaluation framework is currently being developed for Georgia SHAPE through the work of the Data Collection sub-group, which includes researchers from academic institutions and partner organizations.

Current evaluation data collected includes the five assessment items from the FITTESTGRAMS:

- PACER or One-Mile Run (measures aerobic capacity)
- Push-Ups (measures upper body muscular strength/endurance)
- Curl-Ups (measures abdominal muscular strength/endurance)
- Back-Saver Sit and Reach (measures flexibility)
- Body Mass Index (measures body composition: appropriateness of weight relative to height)

We are collecting baseline elementary school physical
activity surveys through our Power Up for 30 program. Georgia Shape has been very successful in collecting these measures. Each superintendent and principal has been contacted more than once by the Department of Education to complete the surveys. They are also asked to send the survey to the lead PE teacher in each school, and the grade level chair for each grade taught in each school. This allows us to see 8 different perspectives via on survey tool (one administrator, one PE teacher, and 6 grade level chairs for a normal k-5 setting). As of November 2014, the response rate for this effort is over 70% for administrators, and over 60% for PE teachers.

In 2013 Fitnessgram data suggest
• 1,139,998 students were tested
• 41% of Georgia children are at an unhealthy weight
• 19% of Georgia children were able to achieve a healthy score in all SHAPE basic fitness tests
• 25% of Georgia children weren’t able to achieve a healthy score in any SHAPE basic fitness tests

Compared with 2011-2012 data, there were positive strides in reducing the percent of unhealthy weight and increases in the percent of students able to pass all assessments. The data also indicated an increase in the number of students unable to pass any of the assessments, and is currently being analyzed.

Other outcomes include:
• Georgia SHAPE has grown to include over 50 partners, becoming the nation’s largest network of organizations, government agencies and professional athletic teams committed to improving the health of Georgia’s young people.
• In the first year, GDPH funded small grants for hospitals that have moved significantly forward down the path of Baby-Friendly status. As a result, nine hospitals were funded to increase exclusive breastfeeding rates by implementing evidence-based maternity care practices. The Georgia 5-STAR Hospital Initiative provided education, support and partial funding as incentives to make it easier for birthing hospitals to implement The Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding, as defined by Baby-Friendly USA, and thus become eligible for Baby-Friendly accreditation.

PROGRAM COST
Georgia SHAPE has leveraged funding from multiple partners to carry out the initiative’s activities. GDPH does not have a designated funding stream to support the initiative. Rather, Georgia SHAPE has tapped into existing resources to build the initiative, including staff expertise and resources from relevant programs in the Georgia Departments of Education (GDOE), Public Health (GDPH), and Early Childcare and Learning, local athletic teams, and private foundations, for-profit companies, nonprofit organizations, and media outlets with an interest in childhood obesity.

ASSETS & CHALLENGES
Assets
Georgia SHAPE builds on the success of the Georgia School Health and Physical Education (S.H.A.P.E) policy that the legislature adopted in 2009, requiring each local school district to conduct an annual fitness assessment program for all students in first through 12th grade enrolled in Georgia public school physical education classes. In 2011, the Georgia Office of the Governor, under the leadership of Gov. Nathan Deal, identified childhood obesity prevention as a state priority and recognized the need to bring together partners to support implementing the SHAPE policy in the schools. The Georgia DOE, Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta, the Georgia Office of the Governor, GDPH, Atlanta Falcons Youth Foundation, and Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation came together as the Georgia SHAPE Partnership to create a reward and recognition program and support public-private funding, training, and data centralization. This partnership helped SHAPE to quickly expand from an initial five-county pilot program to implementation statewide by the 2011-12 school year.

Gov. Deal wanted to build on the success of the SHAPE initiative and Georgia SHAPE Partnership. In 2011, he selected GDPH as the lead agency for a broad campaign to reduce childhood obesity across the state. The SHAPE initiative had already gained widespread name recognition and was ideal for branding and marketing the campaign statewide.

Challenges
The biggest challenge was to overcome the negative attention fitness testing is often faced with. By piloting the assessment and implementation, Georgia SHAPE was able to effectively train teachers and educators to administer the assessment in a way that did not promote embarrassment or attach a negative connotation to fitness or fitness levels. By promoting the “Healthy Fitness Zone” and not a culture of pass or fail, educators across the state are trained and able to promote health rather than fear, fatness promotion, and/or negative obesity labeling.

Overcoming Challenges
Georgia SHAPE has created four multi group goal based strategies. These strategies allow all Georgians, young or old, to create change in small, meaningful ways. These four strategies include: Promote increased physical activity through role modeling and encouraging others, Constantly create and develop an atmosphere of health rather than fear, fatness promotion, and/or negative obesity labeling, Emphasize and promote real, whole, local foods including breastfeeding to all populations with an emphasis on disparate populations, and Encourage small, achievable
Georgia SHAPE Initiative

health related behavior changes across all Georgia populations. The second multi group strategy (italicized) is communicated and woven into all of our work. This has allowed Georgia SHAPE to remain cognoscente of exactly what we are promoting, how to effectively teach others to present content in this way, and to always be aware of the affect behind communication efforts.

LESSONS LEARNED
Agency partners are key. Our partnerships with the Department of Education, Department of Agriculture and of course the Governor’s Office has been instrumental in our success. The private/public partnerships have also been instrumental in our success. New relationships include the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Administrative Services.

FUTURE STEPS
The Georgia SHAPE initiative is a long-term strategy to reduce childhood obesity. The Dept. of Public Health and SHAPE partners have leveraged existing funding and resources to sustain this initiative going forward.

One of the newest campaigns of Georgia SHAPE initiative is “Power Up for 30,” which encourages 30 minutes of integrated physical activity before, during, and/or after school. In partnership with The Georgia Department of Education, the Georgia Department of Public Health hosted a series of three Power Up for 30 webinars in fall 2013. Each webinar involved 2-3 school wellness champions describing stories and examples from their programs. The goal moving forward is to inspire peers in other school districts and empower them to work toward similar initiatives. Since then over 400 schools have joined the program and have been trained by our partner, HealthMPowers, how to effectively implement the 30 minutes daily in a way that meets the needs and wants of their school. As of November 2014, over 166,000 students have been touched.

COLLABORATIONS
Led by the state health agency in partnership with the Georgia Office of the Governor, a strong network of partners has been built to support Georgia SHAPE and its various strategies. These partners include but are not limited to the Georgia Department of Education, Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta, Atlanta Falcon’s Youth Foundation, Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, Georgia Grown, Alliance for a Healthier Generation, the Atlanta Braves Foundation, Georgia Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Georgia Association of Family Physicians, Georgia Chapter of the American Association of Pediatrics, Georgia Organics, Georgia Chamber of Commerce, Georgia Hospital Association, Georgia State Board of Education, HealthMPowers, Action for Healthy Kids, Georgia Family Connection Partnership, and Georgia Public Broadcasting, Centene Insurance, the Cooper Institute, and numerous academic institutions. These partners provide funding, training, data centralization, reward/recognition and a sustainable plan for long-term results.

A full list of partners can be found at: www.georgiashape.org/story/our-partners.

PEER REVIEW & REPLICATION
GA SHAPE has been presented at the several conferences, including:
- Annual Georgia PTA Summit
- Annual OBGYN Conference
- Annual Georgia Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance Conference
- National Active Living Conference
- Georgia Association of Educational Leaders Conference
- Obesity Week
- Southern Obesity Summit

While the practice has not been replicated to date, GA SHAPE program staff have consulted with representatives from Alaska, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Texas.

RESOURCES PROVIDED
The Georgia SHAPE digital portal has many resources, including:
- Fitness at your Fingertips app to help individuals locate local health and fitness activities throughout Georgia by entering their ZIP codes and the number of miles they are willing to travel.
- Extensive resources around fitness testing implementation (using FITNESSGRAM)
- Resources for students, families, and schools on healthy eating and exercise.
- Low-cost fitness ideas
- Videos and webinars

For more information, visit www.georgiashape.org.

Key words: Nutrition & Physical Activity, Healthy Weight, Obesity/Overweight, Chronic Disease, Health Promotion, Health Screening, Data Assessment & Evaluation

★ This program was highlighted at AMCHP’s 2015 Annual Conference as an Emerging Practice
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