

How one local school is tackling childhood obesity

ROCHESTER, NY (WROC-TV) - How do you reduce childhood obesity? At a handful of schools in Rochester they've found a solution, and it could serve as a model for schools nationwide.

For example, School No. 10 requires a daily, 30-minute recess, and has recess coaches to help call the shots. The school is ground zero in the fight against childhood obesity. In



Rochester, some 40% of kids ages 2 to 18 are overweight or obese. So beginning in 2012, the Greater Rochester Health Foundation decided to do something about it. It awarded grants to 9 city schools, to design programs to improve student health.

"Each school has a little bit of a different mix of programs," says Dina Faticone, Director of Community Health and Engagement for Common Ground Health. "But all are focused on physical activity and healthy eating throughout the school day."

At School 10, the lunch menu includes a mandatory salad bar, served by staff that's trained in healthy eating. Administrators say the buy-in was hard at first.

Now, it's second nature. One administrator has a trampoline in her office, and kids who are sent to see her are asked to jump first, before they talk. Some teachers incorporate movement into their lesson plans. In one classroom, lessons are followed by brain breaks, where kids sing and dance to songs about math and science.

School leaders say referrals for behavioral problems are down, and more kids are passing stress tests in gym. The GRHF is currently collecting updated obesity numbers, and has high hopes they'll reveal healthier, high-achieving kids.

Besides the Greater Rochester Health Foundation, School 10 partners with Common Ground Health and a national group called Playworks. If you'd like to learn more about the Childhood Healthy Weight Initiative [click here](#).