

APHA Conference Abstract Submission to School Health Education and Services Section

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Nutrition Friendly Schools and CommunitiesSM environmental model to prevent overweight in children

Rates of overweight children and adolescents have steadily risen over the past 30 years. Many environmental factors including several school related issues such as student access to unhealthy foods and lack of physical education and activity contribute to the epidemic of overweight children. The Nutrition Friendly Schools and Communities (NFSC) program is an ecological model, which impacts the entire school environment including students, staff, and families to promote good nutrition and physical activity. The NFSC model builds upon school strengths to prevent the development of overweight in children. School community stakeholders and the UCLA Nutrition Friendly group collaborated to develop the 15 Steps to a Nutrition Friendly School criteria and self-evaluation tool. The NFSC criteria were modeled around the eight components of the Coordinated School Health Model.

The goals of the session are to introduce participants to the NFSC model and demonstrate the NFSC process. Selection of the criteria, use of the self – evaluation tool, stakeholder involvement, school action plans and application to other settings will be discussed. Presenters will highlight the progress of their current CDC funded pilot study of the NFSC model in a large, urban school district. By the end of the session, participants will be able to: describe the Nutrition Friendly Schools and Communities environmental intervention; identify the process and steps through which a school can take to meet the Nutrition Friendly criteria; and apply the Nutrition Friendly School model to their environments.