



Success Stories: Teller County Welco Team

Wii...Promote Healthy Rewards

Our Welco Committee is addressing the problem of offering food as a reward. By providing food as a reward to children, we reinforce the emotional connection to food. Therefore, we are setting the child up for a life of unhealthy habits and behaviors. Currently, 83% of our staff reports using food as a reward up to five times a month. Eleven percent of staff members reported using food as a reward six to ten times a month.

The entire K-12 student and staff population are currently eligible to use the Wii program. The Wii systems are available for checkout at anytime. For example, our junior high students who make positive choices are rewarded quarterly by using the Wii system during school hours. Teachers use the Wii activity in lieu of food as a reward. In our elementary school, the Wii system is used during our monthly Pride Parties. These parties are geared toward the kids who consistently engage in behaviors that deserve to be recognized. The program is evaluated by an online teacher survey.

As indicated by the online survey results, we will identify the change in the percentage of teachers using food as a reward versus using the Wii system. As of today, there has been a noticeable increase of teachers interested in the Wii program.

Fit Ball Focus

"Children with attention disorders have a sleepy cortex and exercise combats that mental disengagement," according to Dr. John Ratey of Harvard University. Indications are that the tiny movements kids make while balancing stimulate their brains and help them focus, according to Dr. Ratey in his book *Driven to Distraction and Spark*. With our high special needs population, fit balls can assist with focusing issues in the classroom.

Fit balls are available to all students K-12 with parental consent. If students or teachers feel they need help with a focusing issue, they are able to use the balls for any length of time. Students have been observed using the fit balls appropriately, resulting in higher levels of classroom participation.

Teachers using the fit balls in their classrooms will be asked to evaluate their effectiveness at the end of the school year. Currently we are receiving positive feedback from the teachers.

For more information:

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