



## Collaborative, Evidence-Based, Statewide, Multi-Strategy, Sustainability-Focused

### Who/what is WECOPI?

The Wisconsin Early Childhood Obesity Prevention Initiative (WECOPI) formed in 2008 and continues to develop and implement successful interventions for the Early Care and Education (ECE) setting. These employ environmental and policy change strategies for improving nutrition and physical activity among young children. The core collaborative includes members from three State of Wisconsin Departments (DHS, DPI, and DCF), UW-Extension, UW-Madison, and several state and regional-level early care and education and child advocacy organizations and agencies.

*"We realized that most obesity prevention initiatives in Wisconsin intervened after eating and activity habits are developed and that we were missing our first opportunity--early childhood. This moved us to start WECOPI and invest in the health of Wisconsin's youngest residents. WECOPI's accomplishments would not be possible without the collaboration of its diverse membership that has given their time, talents, and efforts for this important cause."*

### What have we done?

- Completed a comprehensive formative assessment of the nutrition and physical activity landscape in ECE, including literature, environment, focus groups, funding, curriculum, and training.
- Helped to leverage almost \$3M in funding to support ECE professionals in addressing childhood obesity.
- Facilitated creation of the *Active Early* and *Healthy Bites* guides.
- Received recognition in Washington, D.C. from the First Lady's *Let's Move! Child Care* initiative for exceptional work promoting young children's health.
- Assisted in developing and evaluating numerous obesity prevention pilot programs in ECE settings across Wisconsin.
- Contributed language to strengthen standards around nutrition and physical activity in both child care licensing and the YoungStar Quality Rating and Improvement System.

### WECOPI's Successes!

- The Active Early pilot evaluated 20 child care programs over 18 months and found the amount of teacher led physical activity **tripled** as a result of the intervention (training, technical assistance, and mini-grants).
- The USDA Child Care Wellness Grant found that **75%** of the 294 family child care centers and **95%** of the 62 group centers served healthier meals and improved their eating environment & physical activity practices as a result of the training on child nutrition, physical activity and policy implementation.

### How do we operate?

We use collective impact and logic models to focus our range of expertise into meaningful action. We recently developed a collaborative decision making tool/filter to facilitate choosing priorities and pursuing grant opportunities. We have core meetings every other month and full group meetings twice a year and we are always welcome to new members. WECOPI is also one of the standing project teams of the Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC).

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Access Active Early, Healthy Bites and more resources at [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/physical-activity/childcare.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/physical-activity/childcare.htm) and [activeearlyhealthybites.wordpress.com](http://activeearlyhealthybites.wordpress.com).





## Wisconsin Early Childhood Obesity Prevention Initiative (WECOPI)

### December 2013 Survey Summary

Over 200 Early Care and Education (ECE) providers or individuals working with ECE providers and 48 “others” (community members, consultants, advocates, technical resource staff, etc.) completed the survey. There was a good mix of respondents from both family child care and group centers.

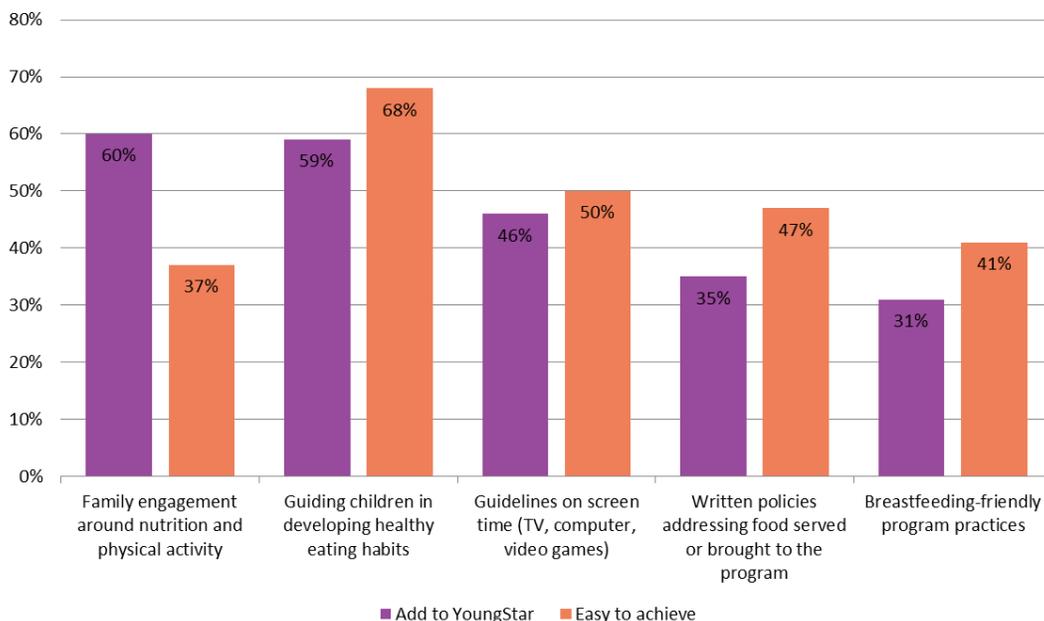
When asked, “What information would help your program earn the nutrition and physical activity points in YoungStar?” the top responses were:

- Cold-weather activities for outdoors
- Infant/Toddler physical activities

When asked, “How would you like to receive this information/training?” the top responses were:

- Written information
- Face to face training (1 ½ to 2 hours)

When ECE providers were asked *what new criteria should be added to YoungStar to strengthen the nutrition and/or physical activity components and which elements could your program most easily achieve*, responses were:



When “others” were asked, “What elements related to nutrition and physical activity would strengthen the Health and Wellness evaluation criteria in YoungStar?”

**3 in 5 said Strengthened Nutrition Standards.**

We are encouraged that these responses appear to support WECOPI’s four priorities:

**YoungStar, Licensing, Training & Technical Assistance, and Family Engagement**