

The Colorado Health Foundation Supports Healthy Learning Paths' Be Well, Learn Well©.

Broomfield, CO – October 22, 2009 - Healthy Learning Paths has received a grant from the Colorado Health Foundation to expand the Be Well, Learn Well© school wellness program at Emerald Elementary School in Broomfield, Colorado. Be Well, Learn Well© program teaches students the importance of sleep, movement, and nutrition using fun, hands-on activities for the classroom that are science-based. Be Well, Learn Well© brings medical professionals who are experienced in child development into the classroom to engage students. The goal is to empower children and parents to make healthier choices, such as eating fruits and vegetables, while training teachers on how to incorporate sound wellness practices into their curriculum.

This is the third year that Healthy Learning Paths is working with Emerald students and families. This school year started with a lesson in hand washing. Using a black light, students witnessed first-hand how well, or not, they washed their hands. Many were surprised to see that a quick rinse was not good enough to get those germs off their hands. September was also sleep month at Emerald and the school was buzzing with how sleep impacts the brain in learning, growth and development.

“Children must be well, so they can learn well,” explains Dr. Chris Marchioni, a family medicine physician and executive director of Healthy Learning Paths. “Be Well, Learn Well© teaches children medical research that shows the connections between healthy behaviors and learning success. We teach to the kids’ interests and needs. Quoting research statistics such as 1 hour less of sleep per night equals a 2 year loss in cognitive maturation and development isn’t going to grab their attention¹.

However, students are glued to their seats when we explain how enough sleep and other health habits will make them better readers, mathematicians, writers, musicians, and even soccer players. Kids love to learn the science of how the brain and body work. Furthermore, kids are delighted to learn they have power over making things work to their best abilities,” comments Marchioni. When one preschooler was asked why it is important to eat fruits and vegetables, he replied, “because I want to be a fireman and I need to have strong bones and muscles.” Be Well, Learn Well© makes health pertinent to kids, so they understand how healthy behaviors take them where they want to go, whether it is learning the alphabet, mastering math skills, or becoming a fireman.

In addition to the Colorado Health Foundation, Healthy Learning Paths has other visionary partners in this children’s health and learning project. The Broomfield Rotary Charitable Foundation donated seed money to initiate this project and the University of Colorado Denver Medical School sends medical students to help track the outcomes of the project for a study that will be published in the future. The Jared Polis Foundation has also supported Be Well, Learn Well© over the last two years demonstrating their commitment to children’s health and education.

¹ Dr. Avi Sadeh of Tel Aviv University

Healthy Learning Paths is a nonprofit partnership of medical and educational professionals who recognize and teach the critical connection between learning and wellness for children's success. Seminars are taught by licensed experts who provide comprehensive resources for teachers, childcare professionals, parents and children.

To learn more about Healthy Learning Paths, or to bring Be Well, Learn Well© to your school or community, contact us through our website: www.healthylearningpaths.org, or by phone, 303-464-7191.