

NEWS



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U.N.D. MEDICAL SCHOOL ASSISTS GRAFTON SCHOOL LAUNCH COMPREHENSIVE CHILDREN'S HEALTH PROGRAM

GRAND FORKS, N.D. -- Staff members from the Center for Health Promotion at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences will be at Century Elementary School in **Grafton** Tuesday (Oct. 5) to help evaluate the children's fitness level as part of a comprehensive program designed to improve their overall health.

The Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) program consists of delivering health education in the classroom, new physical activity and education programs, and providing healthier food choices in the cafeteria. It is designed to increase knowledge of healthy lifestyle choices and improve fitness.

"CATCH is a program that is unique because all school personnel work together to improve children's health," said Dr. Nancy Vogeltanz-Holm, director of the Center for Health Promotion. "The kids will have healthier food choices, fun physical activities, and classroom education that stresses life-long health."

Each of the eight participating schools across the state has created a CATCH team consisting of administration members, classroom teachers, food-service personnel, physical education teachers and community members who will carry out the CATCH program in their schools.

The CATCH team from Grafton participated in training for the program this summer at Bismarck. During this week's visit, Center for Health Promotion staff members will deliver equipment and supplies to Grafton as well as assist the CATCH team while they conduct an initial assessment of the children's overall physical fitness levels.

The Grafton CATCH team will record children's current levels of physical activity, television viewing, and overall fitness as well as their heights and weights. This information will be used to evaluate the results of CATCH at the end of the three-year program.

In addition to Century Elementary School in Grafton, seven other schools across North Dakota, which totally enroll more than 2000 children, are participating in the CATCH Program. These are: Burlington-Des Lacs, Ellendale, Hettinger, Kenmare, Killdeer, Lisbon and Turtle Mountain community schools.

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Contact: Amanda Scurry, Office of Public Affairs, 701-777-0871, ascurry@medicine.nodak.edu
Dr. Nancy Vogeltanz-Holm, director of the Center for Health Promotion, 701-777-4046
Ron Thompson, Principal, Century Elementary School; (H) 352-1739

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