



NutriSTEP® Licensee Progress Check

Case Study Six

New Heights Community Health Centres, Toronto, Ontario

Fall 2009





Background

New Heights Community Health Centre is located in a multicultural, low income neighbourhood of Toronto. NutriSTEP® was first used by the pediatric dietitian there in 2008 when doing nutrition assessments and counseling of clients in her practice. As well, it has been used at three Healthy Child Screenings. These screenings are partnerships between local public schools, New Heights and other community agencies. Children attend with a parent. At these events, their nutrition status, as well as other health parameters (vision, hearing, dental, physical and speech development) and behaviours, are evaluated.

Launch of Implementation

2008

Geographic Location

Toronto, Ontario

Focal Audience

Parents of preschoolers from low income and new immigrant families, served by the New Heights Community Health Centre's geographic area, which includes Eglinton-Steeles and Bathurst-Keele in Toronto.

Delivery methods

| # | Method | Reach | Implementation Notes |
|----|---|---|---|
| 1. | Integration of NutriSTEP® into healthy child screenings organized by New Heights Community Health Centre (New Heights). | Approximately 22 children are screened with NutriSTEP® at each event. | <p>These are held at local public schools, as needed. There is no set schedule.</p> <p>Since May, 2008, we have held three healthy child screenings and are planning another for April, 2010.</p> <p>We used NutriSTEP® for the first time at the screening at Rockford Public School in Toronto on June 10, 2009.</p> <p>Teachers refer children between the ages of 2 and 6 years old if they have a concern about the child in the areas of physical health and development, nutrition, speech and language, behaviour, or learning.</p> |





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|----|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| | | | A Registered Dietitian (RD) interviews the parents and completes the questionnaire. The dietitian does a brief counseling, on the spot, based on the NutriSTEP® results. If significant issues are raised, the parent is referred to the New Heights pediatric dietitian for a more intensive session. The pediatric dietitian is employed part-time by New Heights. |
| 2. | Integration of NutriSTEP® into nutritional counseling by pediatric dietitian at New Heights | Approximately 2 children per month. | Most of these parents live in the area bordered by Eglinton- Steeles- Bathurst- Keele. Parents may get referred to the RD by primary health care staff at the New Heights. A dietitian interviews the parents and completes the questionnaire herself. |

Follow-up methods

Sometimes, clients return for a follow-up appointment after an initial visit.

Implementation team

| Job title | Roles | Time investment |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| Early years RD | Planning and Coordination of NutriSTEP (for example, helping other RDs become familiar with the screening tool before Healthy Child Screenings) | Two hours/screening |
| | Planning the Healthy Child Screenings | 50 hours/screening |
| | Nutrition assessment and counseling of children within New Heights using NutriSTEP® | Two hours/month |
| Early years RD, Community RD | Nutrition assessment at Healthy Child Screenings | Three hours per screening (in 2009, we held two screenings). |



Community partners

| Partner | Role | Notes |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Local elementary schools | Identify and refer children to Healthy Child Screenings | <p>The school administration works with us to conduct the Health Child Screenings within the schools.</p> <p>Teachers refer children between the ages of 2 and 6 years old if they have a concern about the child in the areas of physical health and development, nutrition, speech and language, behaviour, or learning.</p> |

Annual Costs (excluding staff)

The funds to run the Healthy Child Screening come from our core funding. The cost is minimal and is used to pay for snacks and gifts for the child for participating (for example, a book).

Program challenges, proposed solutions

| Challenge encountered | Possible solution, or way to avoid |
|---|--|
| "As a pediatric dietitian, my clients are mostly children from birth to ten years old. I can only use NutriSTEP® with a small slice of this population i.e., children 3-5 yr. I would love to have a tool such as this to use with children younger and older." | Expand the age range for the tool, or provide another related NutriSTEP® tool that is validated for use with other ages. |

Additional support required

None required.

Outcomes expected

- Use of a valid screening tool for nutrition counseling.
- Use of a valid tool for screening larger numbers of children in a short period of time.



Evaluation data

New Heights has no plans to formally evaluate the program.

"It is nice to have a valid tool to use with the preschool population. Our health centre is all about 'evidence informed' so I'm happy I can report that the tool I use has been thoroughly tested and validated."

Expansion plans

It would be ideal if all children at New Heights who are three to five years old coming for well-child visits could be screened. Parents would complete the survey which would then be forwarded to New Heights Community Health Centre staff for tallying and follow-up where indicated. Most children do not visit us for primary care except during illness. Our points of opportunity include immunizations which are done at 18 months, then again at 4-6 years old. We are discussing the possibility of placing reminder phone calls to parents of three-year-olds, prompting them to book a well-child check up at which time NutriSTEP® could be implemented.

