

# Process Review of Grant-Funded Project “Moving is Medicine”

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## Background

Childhood obesity is a public health crisis that is continuing to worsen. According to the World Health Organization data, the rate of obesity among children and adolescents more than tripled from 4% in 1975 to 18% in 2016. Today, approximately 1 in 3 children is overweight and more than 1 in 5 is obese.

While it is well-established that obesity is a multi-factorial disease, there are certain environmental factors and minority groups that are associated with higher prevalence of obesity. These include (but are not limited to) those with lower socioeconomic status and African American and Hispanic/Latino populations.

One study examined the BMI ranges of 1,000 6<sup>th</sup> graders in Massachusetts who lived in 4 different neighborhoods with varying incomes. They found that the prevalence of overweight/obese children rose in communities with lower household income. Children who were residing in lower income communities exhibited poorer dietary and physical activity behavior.



## Goals

The Creating Access To Community Health (CATCH) grants are an initiative of the AAP. Residents can apply for a \$2,000 grant to fund a community-based project. In June 2023, funds were granted for implementation of “Moving is Medicine” project with the intent of providing a free weekly dance class for children. The goal of the class was to provide regularly scheduled and safe exercise for kids. Specifically, the project aimed to serve children with lower socioeconomic status as well as racial minorities (specifically Hispanic/Latino and African-American) both of which are associated with increased for developing obesity. Another goal of the program was to create opportunities for UT Southwestern medical students residents to serve as informal mentors and role models for children attending the program.



## Objectives

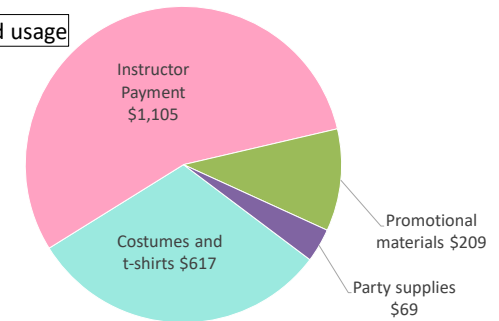
The objectives at the outset of the project are listed below:

1. Implement a regularly scheduled dance classes at the Eloise Lundy Recreation Center for a total of 26 classes.
2. Have at least 30 students enrolled in the class by December 2023.
3. Of the children enrolled in the class, 70% of them will complete the full year of the program.
4. Have at least one community performance throughout the year.
5. Have at least one medical student or resident volunteer assisting with class each week.

## Results

1. The class held 28 dance classes over the course of the year (30 counting community performances.)
2. While there were not 30 children enrolled in a single class, the class has served over 30 different children over the course of the year.
3. Approximately 60% of the children who were in the first dance class continued to participate for the remainder of the year.
4. There were 3 community performances during the year.
5. Of the 28 dance classes during the year, 86% had at least one medical student or resident volunteer and approximately 25% of the classes had two volunteers

Grant fund usage



## Next Steps

Another source of funding is necessary for the continuation of the program beyond the first grant-funded year . Our plan for funding next year is through the Dance Council of North Texas. This program allocates funds to pay dance instructors to teach classes to underserved populations and have agreed to take over funding after the grant period is complete. Additionally, we are currently recruiting a paid instructor for next year. Another resident volunteer will be taking over the leadership of the program for next year. The hope is to continue the program for years to come with the continued help of medical student and resident volunteers.