Participate in CHAT to Inform the Nation’s Understanding of Youth Health Behaviors

About CHAT

The CYFAR Health Assessment Tool or CHAT, is a free, brief, picture-based, online survey tool that assesses health behaviors. The purpose of this assessment tool is to provide data and evidence-informed recommendations that can be used to enhance health programming among vulnerable populations in diverse contexts.

CHAT is a continuous quality improvement tool. After survey completion, a report is prepared with data results and tailored health recommendations in four domains: behavior and environmental modifications, education, and direct strategies. Evidence-informed resources are also provided for dissemination to youth and their parents.

Implementation

CHAT is designed to be administered by community, after-school, and school-based projects to youth ages 6 to 18 years of age. It is intended to be administered at a single point in time, but it can also be used as a pre-post to assess behavior change in a group of participants.

The survey data from CHAT is intended to drive program enhancements. Resources are provided to be (1) incorporated into youth program lessons; (2) used for family education activities; and (3) distributed as take-home handouts, so parents/guardians can reinforce positive behavioral changes in their homes.

Assesses health behaviors such as:
- Nutrition
- Physical Activity
- Screen Time Usage
- Water Intake
- Sweetened Beverage Intake

Resources

Resources are drawn from research literature and established, respected, evidence-informed health promotion campaigns designed to improve families’ and children’s health, such as MaineHealth Let’s Go!, the Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at Penn State’s 5210, and the United States Department of Agriculture’s MyPlate.

MaineHealth

LET’S GO!

Healthy Children

Participation by CYFAR Sustainable Community Projects grantees across the nation could provide valuable insight into national geographical differences in the behavioral domains assessed by CHAT.

A collective data set could provide comparison across similar projects and by factors such as race, gender, and age.

Data could drive local, state, and national policies.
Why is CHAT valuable to CYFAR Sustainable Community Projects?

CHAT informs CYFAR’s collective understanding of youth’s perceptions of health in comparison to their actual behaviors. And, the tool also helps individual CYFAR programs to:

- better understand the behavioral needs of their youth participants;
- be more intentional in planning aligned program content; and
- be more efficient in using program time to address the most pressing behavioral factors related to participants’ health.

Project staff can use the data to inform how their organization or processes can be responsive to the youth behavior change needs identified by the assessment results.

The provided recommendations and youth and family-friendly resources make it easier for program staff to promote targeted healthy behaviors.

CHAT also has the potential to influence behavioral domains in the home. It equips program staff with resources that offer parents/guardians guidance and creative strategies for modeling and fostering healthy behaviors (e.g., healthy recipes or family-centered physical activities).

Data Reports, recommendations, and resources can be used in various contexts to:

- Influence continuous program improvement
- Influence behavior change
- Influence local policy reform
- Be shared with community partners for the procurement of local funding dollars

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