

## INTRODUCTION

- In 2015, approximately 28-45% of Malden High School students were overweight or obese with <50% performing recommended pediatric exercise goals.
- Female sports participation, although increased since Title X, continues to lag behind that of males
- Female sports participation specifically offers numerous benefits including reduction in obesity

## OBJECTIVES

- Increase childhood female sports participation
- Reinforce healthy nutrition habits
- Introduce underserved families to community-supported nutrition resources in Malden

## METHODS

- A chart review in Spring 2017 identified female patients at CHA Malden Family Medicine Center between 6-12 years old with a BMI >90<sup>th</sup> percentile
- Patients were recruited to attend the expanded second annual "Sports Skills Day"
- Participants were taught various sports skills by female high school athlete role models (lacrosse, soccer, softball, track & field, and volleyball)
- Physician volunteers taught participants about healthy eating and demonstrated healthy cooking skills
- Participants and parents completed de-identified pre- and post-intervention qualitative and quantitative surveys.
- Social work staff helped underserved families sign up for SNAP benefits



Fig 1) Participant families signing up for SNAP benefits



Fig 2) Event organizers kicking off the event



Fig 3) Young female athletes mentoring and teaching lacrosse skills



Fig 4) Participants learning soccer skills



Fig 5) Participants and volunteers after a day of exercise, new sports skills, and healthy eating

## RESULTS

- 23 participants aged 6-12 years old participated in the event
- A majority of participants reported eating sugary treats multiple times a week
- 69.6% of participants ate vegetables less than once a day
- 100% of participants would recommend the event to their family or friends
- 69.6% of participants reported they would be "very likely" to increase their vegetable intake after the intervention.
- 100% of participants indicated they felt more confident about participating in sports in the future.
- Parents really appreciated the event, sharing that they would absolutely have their children participate in the future and spread the word. One parent shared that her child with significant social anxiety "broke out of her shell"

## Discussion / Recommendations

- Early exposure to sports and healthy eating habits may increase future sports participation and reinforce improved nutrition in youth populations
- Due to inclement weather and lack of back-up location, only 23/100 recruited participants were present
- In future iterations of the event, we hope to increase our attendance and improve the nutrition teaching portion of the event by engaging more community members to teach children about healthy eating.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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