

MN childcare programs focused on nutrition and physical activities, study finds

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Existing state and local programs focused on good nutrition and physical activities for children have led to measurable improvement in practices by the state's child care programs between 2010 and 2016, says a new University of Minnesota Medical School study.

"What's important to note is that these improvements are based on existing programs in place and required no new regulations," said study lead author Dr. Susie Nanney of the Medical School's Department of Family Medicine and Community Health. "This change happened by informing and engaging [child care](#) providers rather than implementing costly regulations that can reduce access to quality programs for those families who need it most."

Programs cited as having a positive impact included the Minnesota State Health Improvement Program (SHIP), Let's Move! Child Care, Farm to Childcare (National Farm to School Network), Minnesota Food Charter, and Minnesota's Born to Thrive initiative.

The study, published in the June edition of *Preventive Medicine Reports*, shows that both childcare centers and [family](#)/home early childhood programs had increased good practices for ensuring children in their care had access to healthy and nutritious foods, as well as appropriate physical activity opportunities.

"It's promising to note that we're doing better at serving healthier food and limiting screen times," said Nanney. "We just need to sustain our investments and implement what we know works to improve nutrition and activity for the state's children."

Provided by University of Minnesota Medical School

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