

5-2-1-0 Let's Go!

Living Healthy with Fruits and Veggies, Physical Activity, and Water

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INTRODUCTION

Representing “The Child Group” in this year’s Presidential Scholars, we chose Mary Ford Elementary School as our community partner. Over the course of several visits to this Title 1 school in Charleston, SC, we created a goal to encourage and teach healthy habits to fifth graders, and then assess the extent of improvement in the health knowledge base of these students. Mary Ford Elementary was selected primarily as it is based in one of the most underserved communities in Charleston and group members believed these children had a greater chance of lacking this essential mentorship at home. Furthermore, we chose to adopt a health initiative program named “5-2-1-0 Let’s Go!” to raise awareness of healthy living habits to young children in a fun and interactive way.

METHODS

The program was taught to approximately the same sixty students at each of three sessions over the course of several weeks. The first, second, and third sessions respectively, covered the importance of the following topics in children’s health:

- 1) Fruits and vegetables
- 2) Reduction of screen time and increasing physical activity
- 3) Removal of sugary drinks from the diet

Each session had games and fun questions for the students in order to foster an interactive, capturing learning environment. At the end of each session, we assessed the comprehension of the sixty students and the success of the 5-2-1-0 program by a poll to a set of four questions we devised, as follows:

- 1) **How many fruits/vegetables should you eat each day?**
- 2) **How many hours of recreation screen time should you limit yourself to each day?**
- 3) **How many hours of physical exercise should you get per day?**
- 4) **How many sugary drinks should you drink per day?**

The correct responses to these questions are 5, 2, 1, and 0, respectively. Our results demonstrate the number of students who responded correctly to each of the four questions.

RESULTS

Representation of Correct Student Responses to Each of Four Questions Over All Three Study Sessions

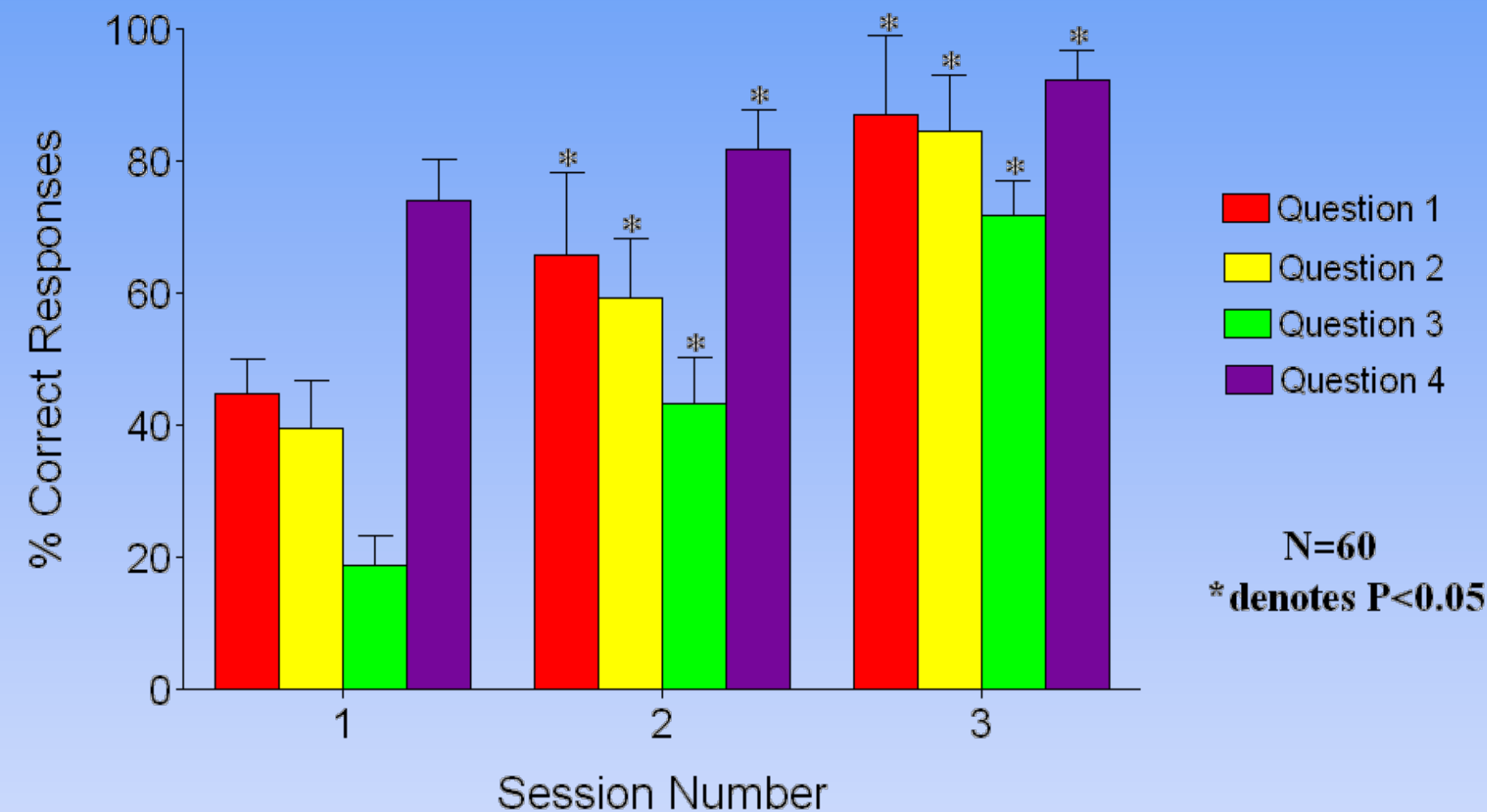


Figure 1. Demonstrates student responses to all four questions from all three sessions. Results based on sixty participating fifth grade students. Results reported as mean ± SE.

Representation of Improvement in Correct Student Responses to Questions Between Session One and the Following Sessions

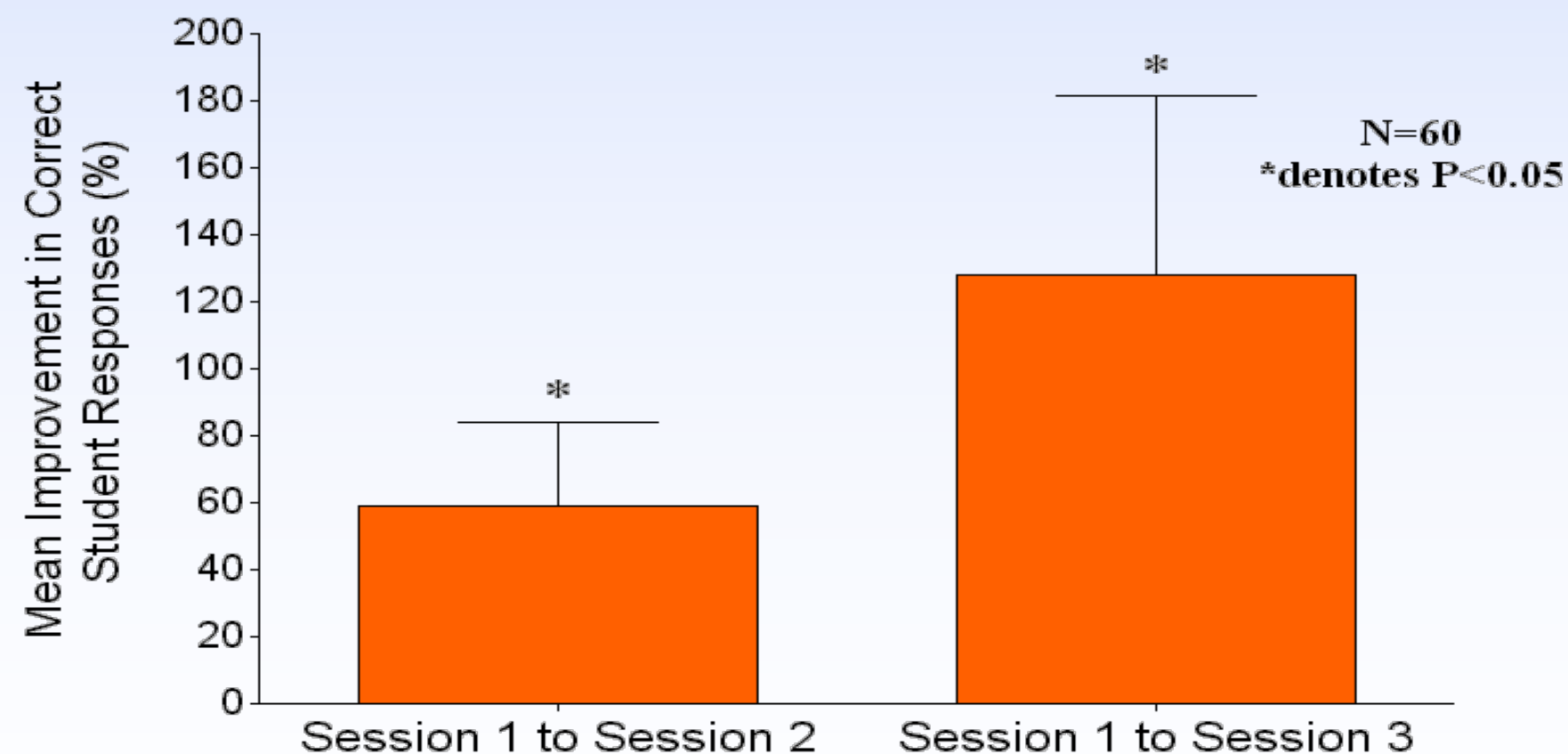


Figure 2. Demonstrates significant mean improvement in student responses to all four questions from the first to second session and from the first to third session. Results reported as mean ± SE.

CONCLUSIONS

- Students demonstrate a significant improvement in healthy choices after interactive learning.
- Teaching important basic concepts by repetition helps improve student comprehension.
- 5-2-1-0 Let’s Go! is a successful program to raise health awareness in underserved fifth grade children.
- Presidential Scholars provides an inter-professional approach to solving community health challenges.
- Future Scholars may expand the project by increasing questionnaire details and frequency of school visits.

SUMMARY

Overall, 5-2-1-0 was a great learning experience for both the children and the presenters and is a significant method to improve healthy habits in children.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Shakaib Rehman, MD and Tiffany Williams, DNP, APRN, CPNP.
 Elizabeth Brady, RN.
 Mary Ford Elementary School, Charleston, SC

REFERENCES

1. 5-2-1-0 Let’s Go Maine <http://www.lets-go.org/>