

**Southwest Health Equity Research Collaborative
PILOT PROJECT PROGRAM**

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Project Title: “*Addressing health disparities in childhood obesity, one summer at a time*”

Proposal Abstract:

In Flagstaff, obesity is highly concentrated in 4 schools including mostly Native American and Hispanic children, placing them at high risk for early mortality, diabetes and poor quality of life. To improve health equity, gaining insight into the most effective ways to support high-risk children is urgently needed.

Recent research has demonstrated that the 'obesity gap' facing minority students is largely due to summer weight gain, confirmed in our local data. However, statewide, only 22% of children participate in summer activities. Thus, we know which populations are at highest risk, at what developmental age changes occur most rapidly (ages 7-11) and that interventions are most needed in the summer, but that this need is not being met.

Fit Kids of Arizona was founded in 2008 to address childhood obesity in our region, but currently does not have a summer-long program. A modest amount of research has evaluated summer programming, but almost none among Native Americans/Hispanics. In 2004, the CDC developed a 'Summer Scorecard' intervention, a partnership with local businesses to provide children with a 'scorecard' of subsidized or free local activities. The VSS has not been tested among Hispanic and Native American children. Therefore, Fit Kids and NAU propose to assess the effectiveness of the VSS among children ages 7-11 in the 4 highest risk schools in the Flagstaff area utilizing a randomized design. Primary outcomes include objectively measured participation, body composition (BMI), physical activity, sedentary behavior and self-efficacy using survey instruments previously developed and tested by the CDC.