**Using the Health Matters Curriculum with the Project SEARCH® Program Model**

**January 18, 2018**

>> JASMINA: All right. Welcome to using the HealthMatters curriculum with the Project SEARCH program model webinar. My name is Jasmina Sisirak. I'm your host today.

Before we delve into the webinar, I wanted to give you a couple of housekeeping items.

The webinar will be recorded and also captioned and we will make the PowerPoint, captioning and the recordings available after this webinar.

This is the fourth webinar in our series. It is hosted by the HealthMatters program in partnership with Project SEARCH, and it's funded by the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center and Developmental Disabilities and Health. They worked together for about an hour. We have 45 minutes of presentations with 15 question‑and‑answer minutes. And we ask you to hold all the questions towards the end. Please use the question and answer box for your questions as we have many attendees on the webinar, so we want to make sure we get all the questions answered.

Again, like I said, the webinars are recorded and captioned. And we will make the recordings, the transcripts and the slides available online after the webinar.

Today's webinar we will be talking about using the HealthMatters curriculum with the Project SEARCH program model. Project SEARCH partnered with UnitedHealthcare last year to provide the Project SEARCH site with HealthMatters, the exercise in nutrition health education curriculum for people with developmental disabilities. More recently, they were awarded a grant from the Ohio DD Council to study the HealthMatters curriculum in Project SEARCH.

As a first step, they surveyed Project SEARCH instructors and their experience with the HealthMatters curriculum and other health and fitness activities. And the purpose was to learn about both the successes and obstacles that instructors encountered. The results of that survey will be presented here during this webinar.

And then ultimately the goal of the grant is to create and test a clear set of guidelines for integrating the HealthMatters curriculum into Project SEARCH in a manner that will optimize learning of health and fitness principles without interfering with the primary Project SEARCH goal of competitive employment.

Today our presenters are Mary Ellen Daston. I hope I did not butcher your last name. She has a background in biomedical research and technical writing as a Project SEARCH program specialist for data and communications. She's responsible for identifying state and federal funding opportunities, preparing grant applications, and managing the database and website content of Project SEARCH.

The second presenter is Karen Guo, she's an occupational therapy doctorate student the Ohio State University tech lab. At the Ohio State University. She's graduate research assistant for the transition, employment and technology lab and has experience with job coaching for the transition options and post secondary settings program.

All right. I will pass the presentation to Mary Ellen. And get her started. Mary Ellen?

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: Yes, can you hear me?

>> We can hear you, thank you.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: Wonderful. Thank you so much Jasmina for the introduction and for you and Beth arranging for this webinar series.

So I'm noticing some mistakes already on this presentation on the opening slide. But it says it's presented by Karen but it's going to be presented by me, of course, and Karen. I will start. By giving some background on the project and talking about some of our early findings and then I'll turn it over to Karen and she'll talk about our more recent work. And bring you up‑to‑date and then talk about our next steps. So this project is carried out by me. I work with Project SEARCH. Our other collaborators are Julie Christianson at University of Iowa UCED. She's director there. And Karen of course at the Ohio State University and Cleary and Beth Marks and Jasmina Sisirak at University of Illinois at Chicago. So I want to start with those introduction to Project SEARCH. I know many people on this webinar will be familiar with Project SEARCH but just to get everyone on the same page. Project SEARCH is a one year transition to work program with young people with intellectual and intellectual disabilities. The goal is competitive employment and to met that goal we use a system that involves total workplace immersion and that means that the participants spend an entire school year out of the school environment and fully embedded in a workplace where they take part in internships, where they do participate in career exploration and learning specific job skills. And the program culminates in customized job search assistance and employment. And then where necessary and eligible, we try to arrange long‑term follow‑along for employed program graduates.

So the goal for Project SEARCH is employment, but we recognized early on that employment and good health are really inextricably linked. I need good health to maintain employment and meaningful full employment in turn promotes good health. Now, we also are aware that the population of Project SEARCH serves is more likely to experience obesity and other related chronic conditions. And we recognize that this is not inevitable. It's not inherent in the disability. It comes about for a variety of reasons. And we feel like ‑‑ you know, among those reasons are a lack of participation in health and fitness activities and we feel like Project SEARCH has responsibility to address this because of the relationship between employment and good health and also because we are interacting with young people at that critical life stage where they're transitioning from school to adult life at that critical time when they're establishing lifelong patterns for healthy living. So early on, this project was done in Scotland. This is some data from the early years of Project SEARCH in Scotland. And the Scottish government wanted to look at some of the outcomes. And there's a lot of information in this chart. I'm going to use this pointer if this will work. Let's see. Can you see the red dot? So what we found is that the inner circle is the assessment prior to Project SEARCH of two different cohorts. And the outer circle is the post Project SEARCH assessment.

So we noticed by looking at this, that areas such as employability, of course, and motivation, even community integration and meaningful use of time, we saw big differences between the before and the after assessments.

But in physical health, there was not those big differences. And these are care assessments or caregiver assessments of the interns, but they also did self‑assessment by the interns and saw similar results.

So that kind of gave us the indication that we could really be doing more. So Project SEARCH is committed to supporting health and fitness. And we wanted to research the best way to really beef up that part of our curriculum. Health and fitness was already part of the curriculum but we wanted to be doing more. So we recognize that had the HealthMatters curriculum is a valuable tool that is specifically designed for the population served by Project SEARCH. So we looked into using it in more detail.

And this is sort of a history. Jasmina mentioned some of these things already. But in 2015 Julie Christiansen in collaboration with the University of Cincinnati piloted Project SEARCH program sites. And health messages is also a curriculum developed by the HealthMatters program and it has more limited range of subject matters but it incorporates a peer to peer learning system.

Then in 2016 as Jasmina also mentioned we partnered with UnitedHealthcare which is a really wonderful Project SEARCH partner company. They've partnered with us in many ways. And in 2016 they gave us the very generous gift of the HealthMatters curriculum and enough to distribute it to every Project SEARCH program site that was represented at our 2016 Project SEARCH annual conference.

And then in 2017, at the beginning of the year we received funding from the Ohio DD Council for this current study that we're going to talk about today.

So I want to talk a little bit about HealthMatters. Again, I think most of you know what it is. But I wanted to just give a brief background in the context of Project SEARCH.

So health matters is exercise and nutrition health education curriculum. It is evidence-based. And it is specifically designed for young adult, or adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The exact population that's served by Project SEARCH.

There's a variety of fully fleshed out lesson plans. And it is consistent with Project SEARCH in that it really takes advantage of the cohort support. And it's very responsive to the individual and kind of assesses where the individual is with regard to health education and meets them where they are.

And it also offers these lessons sort of in the context of the home life, the work life and the community. So all of these lessons are learned in a context where it might ‑‑ it's more likely to stick and be generalized to other life situations outside of the actual lessons. And also another thing we like recognition that this changing of health behaviors, which is the goal of HealthMatters, is not a linear progress. There's the contemplation phase, or the not interested, the contemplation, the preparation, action, actually doing it, doing the exercise and the activities to promote health and fitness, and then the maintenance phase. And we recognize and the program recognizes that people will relapse and move in and out of the relapse phase and come back either into the doing it or planning stage. And this is an ongoing process. It's not a one‑time change that lasts forever.

So health matters is a fully formed curriculum. And Project SEARCH is also a fully formed program. And I'm just giving you an idea of what happens in a Project SEARCH day.

So all activities, as we said before, take place at a host business. The participants meet at the host business every morning of every weekday. And they take part in an onsite classroom within the host business where they do an employability skills curriculum work.

And then the middle part of the day is at the internship site where they're learning specific work skills. And then there is auto a brief period at the end of the day where they return to the classroom to reflect on the day before departing for home.

Now, this is sort of the internship part of the program year. There's greater flexibility in certain periods, a roughly three‑week orientation period in the beginning. And then there are internal week between the 10‑week internships.

So it's a busy schedule. And as we found in talking to our instructors, and we predicted that it is a challenge to integrate the HealthMatters curriculum into the Project SEARCH model.

So what we wanted to do, our primary goal of this entire project is to create guidelines, clear guidelines that will help Project SEARCH instructors truly integrate HealthMatters into the Project SEARCH program while maintaining the primary focus of Project SEARCH, which is to prepare these young people for employment.

So our first year, which we've just completed, has been primarily a factfinding year. We started out with getting our whole team working with Beth and Jasmina to receive the training on HealthMatters so we could become more familiar with the curriculum. And then we engaged in surveys and focus groups with instructors and focus groups with Project SEARCH interns just to find out what their interests and needs and concerns were with regard to using the HealthMatters curriculum.

So I'm going to talk first about our survey, our initial survey of Project SEARCH instructors. So this is Ahoy‑based study. But we started out by surveying as many Project SEARCH instructors as we could worldwide. We sent out 167 Project SEARCH, sorry, invitations to Project SEARCH instructors to respond to a Survey Monkey.

And we asked ‑‑ we wanted to find out, first of all, were they among the Project SEARCH instructors who had received the HealthMatters curriculum either at the Project SEARCH conference or through another means? And if they did receive it, how did they use it? Did they use it? And if so, how? And if they didn't use it, why not? What sort of barriers did they encounter? And also regardless of whether or not they were using HealthMatters, what other sorts of health and fitness activities were they incorporating into their Project SEARCH classrooms.

So this is just very sort of basic baseline survey. So I'm going to in the next few slides show you some of the things we found out.

So we got 54 responses. Sorry, I'm having trouble. There we go.

And this is just sort of a basic description of the industry sector of the host businesses from the instructors that responded. It pretty much mirrors the distribution of host businesses for Project SEARCH. So we felt like we were getting a representative sample of different types of workplace environments. Most of them are in healthcare environments, which is where most Project SEARCH programs are. But there were representatives from academic settings, distribution centers, insurance, hospitality and manufacturing, as well.

So, of the 34 respondents who actually had received the HealthMatters curriculum and had it in their possession, we asked how many of those had used it? And of the 34, we learned that 28, or 63 percent, had actually used it. So we knew that just by handing out the curriculum there were some people who were going to just ‑‑ there's a wide variety of interest level and comfort level among the instructors. And some of them we knew would just take it and run with it with little instruction or guidance.

Among those, the six who had received the HealthMatters curriculum but didn't use it, all of those, or five of the six said that they were using other health and fitness activities in their Project SEARCH programs. Of the 21 who did not receive the HealthMatters curriculum, all of them said that they were using other health and fitness activities in their Project SEARCH classrooms. And this isn't really surprising. We know that health and fitness has always been ‑‑ or health education is part of the standard Project SEARCH curriculum. But this other health and fitness activities really incorporates a wide range of, you know, a commitment and level of involvement of the types of activities and the amount. And we really want to sort of, through this project, bring everyone up to a higher level and a more standardized level.

So as I said before, one of the things we really wanted to find out is if you're not using it, why not? And what sort of barriers and obstacles are you encountering to actually using the curriculum?

And, really, the one that was most often cited was not having enough time. And this, as I said before, was not surprising to us and really pointed out to us that we need to really provide guidelines showing exactly where the lessons and the concepts of the HealthMatters curriculum can be incorporated and integrated within the Project SEARCH curriculum and not adding it on, overlaying it on top of what they're already doing, but really integrating it and incorporating it into the typical Project SEARCH day and into the goals that already exist in Project SEARCH.

Another reason that was fairly commonly cited was that they felt like they already had enough health lessons. And again we'd like to see if we can get instructors to reconsider that opinion. And then the other responses, although it's a large number, since I grouped them all together, each one was only represented by one or two respondents. And these were things like they were new instructors, they were just starting out and feeling overwhelmed and just the basic Project SEARCH was all they could manage in their first year. So I would expect that some of these individuals would be picked up in subsequent years when they're more established and more comfortable in their routines.

So the next slide, sorry, it's not wanting to advance. There we go. We asked the instructors what they felt, what they thought that among the topics included in HealthMatters, which they thought would be most interesting to interns. And this is the top six. Ones that received the most ‑‑ we asked them to rate them from 1 to ‑‑ I can't remember what the topics. There were around 20 or 25 topics. And these were the top 6. And most of them are related to exercise and food. But the self‑advocacy and goal setting was also often cited as the number 1 topic that instructors felt that their interns would be interested in learning about.

And Karen had talk in the next half of the talk about what we found out when we talked with the interns. And it aligns, for the most part. But we learned some more things, too, in addition to that.

Another thing we wanted to know, and this sort of gets to the time and the room, space in the curriculum. We asked how often they were using HealthMatters lessons. And we got answers all over the maps. On this side are the programs using it throughout. So most of them were introducing the lessons periodically throughout the year. Some, about a quarter, were concentrating it within one portion of the program year.

So we really want to encourage this integrating it throughout the year. And on the next slide I've shown some of the ‑‑ these are the existing Project SEARCH curriculum areas in the recommended Project SEARCH curriculum that is used during that curriculum time in the beginning of the Project SEARCH day. And what we would like to see ultimately in the guidelines that we create would be ways to take health matters lessons, lesson plans and incorporate them into these areas so it's not just an isolated, siloed activity but it's something that's integral to everything they do.

For example, we could imagine that team building could be a physical activity done as a group technology, might incorporate wearable devices, wearable activity tracking devices and the software that goes with them. And health and wellness, of course, is obvious.

Self advocacy. Maybe we could talk about learning about the fitness and health activities that are available in the workplace and how to make use of those things and how to make sure that they're accessible to everyone.

So those are some examples of ways that we envision incorporating and integrating the HealthMatters program. And I'm going to turn it over now with some help from Jasmina, turn the presentation over to Karen and let her talk to you about our focus groups and our plans for the future. So thank you.

>> KAREN GUO: Hello, can everyone hear me? Hello?

>> Yes. Yes, we can hear you.

>> KAREN GUO: Thank you. Thank you, Mary Ellen. Hi, everyone, I am Karen Guo and I am occupational therapy doctoral student at the Ohio State University. Thank you Jasmina and Beth for hosting and. Us here for the webinar today. I'm excited to see that there's a lot of people here listening in. So this past fall, here let me change it.

So this past fall we really focused our time on conducting focus groups and gathering information for insight from the users of the HealthMatters curriculum thus far and using the information to guide how we will approach our next two steps through this grant. So now I am currently working on a few trial and errors for implementation to see how that's working out and how we can further support our instructors so that they will start using health matters.

So at the annual conference in a few regional meetings, we conducted focus groups with Project SEARCH instructors. And the questions really focused on ‑‑ we really focused are on the screen. We really wanted to see if the instructors valued what a health education curriculum could bring to the existing curriculum, how people had been incorporating health and fitness education, what the barriers were to implementation, and the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum HealthMatters or other programs that they've been using in the past.

So our major findings really echoed the survey that Mary Ellen had described previously. It revealed that the major perceived barrier is the lack of time. So some instructors noted that the preparation time and the curriculum was overwhelming. And that might be coming from new instructors or instructors that might not feel as comfortable with the material. But hopefully through our piloting process we can provide easy‑to‑use resources so that we'll increase the feasibility of implementation of HealthMatters for these instructors.

Many Project SEARCH instructors have come up with creative ways to incorporate health and fitness into everyday activities or even taking community trips. That involves bringing in resources and personnel from the community to talk to their students about certain topics. So this is something I will highlight a little bit later on to give either you guys or other people some more concrete ideas of what this is like.

Project SEARCH instructors, because ‑‑ well, because every classroom is a little bit different, each instructor has a different style and probably a model of practice. So instructors are interested in a more structured guideline of how they should be using their curriculum and aligned with the employability curriculum to make it more feasible. And that's something that I will touch upon later to kind of describe the different usage models that people have been using as of right now.

And, finally, some instructors aren't feeling very comfortable or the interest levels are variable throughout instructors on this topic of health and fitness and wellness.

Then, additionally, we conducted focus group discussions with the Project SEARCH interns. They are the main users of the HealthMatters curriculum. And many of us know that little research has been done with this population in terms of health education programs. And we wanted to hear straight from the source of what their wants, their needs and what they're interested in, their insight and voice is invaluable. And we want that to be the core of what we are doing.

So I went directly to some of the sites and held about hour‑long discussions with a few groups of students on these questions on the screen just to see if being healthy is something that they're actually interested in and to see what they're spending their free time doing and what health‑related topics they're most interested in learning more about.

So from these discussions, we found some interesting information. Not only were interns participating, but they're very engaged and interested in the topic of health and fitness. And they wanted to learn more. So that was exciting. So that was step one of gaining their buy‑in into this program.

But their identified leader activities mostly consisted of sedentary activities such as watching TV, playing on their phones, reading and activities such as that. Some interns did mention that they liked playing sports, but the majority of them identified those sedentary activities, which we want to kind of encourage them to step away from.

So another finding that was pretty interesting was there are lots of misconceptions of sugar levels and appropriate water intake. So a quick example of this was a student reported that one should drink about 8 gallons of water each day, which all of us know that 8 gallons is a lot of water for one day. But that just shows that down the line, they had gotten some of that education because you knew that the number was 8, which isn't the most accurate but also kind of is a standard number of cups for a generic person as to how much they should be drinking a day without considering other factors. But the awareness of measurement sizes, like was not there.

That shows that some education has been carried over, but further reinforcement through more interactive activities and continued education is definitely needed.

That is the case with many concepts. They may or may not know about the healthy habits, but definitely would benefit from more guidance on how to realistically incorporate those into their daily routines to facilitate that change and learn behavior.

In addition to physical activity and nutrition which were by far the most popular topics of interest, the interns identified mental health, specifically stress management techniques, and healthy relationship areas that they wanted to learn more about.

So like I mentioned before, there are a few different ways that people have been using the health matters curriculum thus far. The curriculum was developed with 36 modules. And originally implemented in 12 weeks. So that would be 3 lessons per week. From what I have heard from focus groups and some instructors will dedicate one full day to health and fitness where they do a module or two each Friday, for example. Or some instructors will pick and choose relevant topics for their specific class that they would like to incorporate into their curriculum due to their specific class's abilities, needs and interests of that cohort that year.

And there are ways to incorporate health and fitness components into everyday routines, whether that's utilizing handouts provided buy the curriculum or just pieces of the modules to use in the classroom or your community program. This curriculum lends itself to flexibility. And the additional supplemental modules at the end, I think there's about 12 additional ones, on top of the main 36 are great topics to include in your program, as well.

As I promised before, here's a few activities that have been thrown around from ideas from other Project SEARCH instructors that either they are looking into or have already tried to implement. So one of them is taking a trip to the cafeteria or a local restaurant to talk about healthy options and making choices when you have a lot of options and a lot of temptations in front of you.

This is a great time to talk about whether it's nutrition labels, looking at what's in certain items on the menu. It's a great realistic application of looking at nutrition.

Another great one is bringing in relevant health professionals who talk about topics that either had instructor or you are not comfortable talking about or have little experience in. These experts in their field not only bring an exciting new face but also their experience in those topics. So I listed a few just for a reference and an example if you wanted to take a look at that.

Or another activity is you can plan a meal together. So the skills that go into that are creating that plan, making a budget, shopping for the ingredients at their grocery store. And then actually making that meal. This targets a lot of those life skills that Project SEARCH looks for and can be applied to employment, as well.

Finally, dedicating time throughout the week to provide opportunities for individuals to explore what types of exercise they enjoy, which leads them to my next slide about community collaboration.

So one thing that I know a lot of instructors have had success with is reaching out to local fitness centers such as the YMCA, community centers, and such facilities for free tours or like a trial day or week. Many places are very accommodating to this. So you can also recruit hell care professional students to assist with programming ‑‑ healthcare. Not only are they helping you with implementing the curriculum, but also it's a great learning experience for them. And, lastly, engaging in local community programming that already exists. So that's not extra planning work for the instructor or community program lead or anything of that sort. So even if you just Google events near me or anything like that, the listing of upcoming events will show up and all you'll need to do is find events that fit your group of students or individuals, register if needed and then plan transportation. And then the other logistics are kind of taken care of. That's an idea just for those that are having a hard time with having the time to plan these events. So these are already set for you.

And all these extra activities are great to reinforce and provide real life application of lessons or the modules learned from the health matters curriculum.

So for our next steps in our second year, we are using the information that we've gathered to draft a guideline like Mary Ellen had said to align the HealthMatters curriculum with the Project SEARCH employability curriculum for a smooth integration so that it is easy for instructors to use and won't be an additional thing that they have to plan.

The goal is to complete this guideline in order to pilot it this following school year, 2018‑2019, so that we can evaluate and revise the guideline. And then this whole effort aims to provide a general model for introducing health and fitness education into high school transition programs.

Mary Ellen, do you have anything to add to that?

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: I think I'm muted there. Okay. Sorry, I was muted.

>> KAREN GUO: You're fine.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: I think you covered it. That was great.

>> KAREN GUO: Awesome. Do we have any questions?

>> JASMINA: Thanks, Mary Ellen and Karen, we did have one question come through. Do you have any ideas for team building as HealthMatters integration?

>> KAREN GUO: Is this specifically ‑‑ I guess it doesn't matter if it's specifically towards Project SEARCH. But one activity that I saw that was really effective and really fun was done at a Project SEARCH site. And they in terms of team building, they had all the materials for like a camping trip, per se. And they had to work through all the pieces and parts of a tent. And until you actually build a tent, you don't realize how many pieces are in it. And if you have a group of let's say four or five students or individuals, they really have to work together to problem solve how to put the pieces together, how to delegate roles within the group. And also as kind of a good activity if you really wanted to go camping, that would be a good prep activity and team building activity.

>> JASMINA: Thanks, Karen. And the same person had asked a question, Gail, she also said the health rhythms is a group drumming modality that is team building, fun. There's discussion and life metaphor platform and it's geared to social and emotional elements, research‑based, stress management and reduction health ‑‑ so the rhythms is another team building activity Gail was giving.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: That's awesome. Sounds like a great idea.

>> JASMINA: And it's exercise in disguise, which is true. Yeah, that's great.

>> KAREN GUO: I think that's great for this population. When it's kind of hidden within the activity and it's something that's just super fun, that gets them moving.

>> JASMINA: Yeah.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: Right, I would agree.

>> JASMINA: Any other questions, please put them in question and answer box. And I will read them out.

I did have a couple of questions on my end while I'm waiting for the questions to come through.

>> KAREN GUO: Sure.

>> JASMINA: They're kind of related to instructors. Can you elaborate on they needed more structural guidelines on how to use HealthMatters curriculum?

And then some of them not feeling competent in teaching topics.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: So I think what a lot of instructors are struggling with ‑‑

>> KAREN GUO: Is that the curriculum that they're already using for Project SEARCH is already jampacked with things that they have to cover in terms of employability. So I think they're seeing HealthMatters as an additional curriculum. So what we're trying to do is seeing how the modules align with the modules that they'll potentially be teaching through the employability curriculum and how can we kind of mesh them together so that they become one versus two separate things that the instructor has to work on? If that makes sense.

>> JASMINA: Yeah, thanks, it does.

And then what about the competency?

>> KAREN GUO: I think that also ties in with their interest level. So depending on how invested the instructors are in this topic I think really determines how much time they're dedicating to health and wellness in their curriculum: Competency might be, I guess ‑‑ not competency but more of their comfort level. So if they themselves don't participate in these healthy behaviors, they may not feel like the appropriate person to be teaching those things, as well.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: Right. Am I muted? Or can you hear m e? Oh, okay. I see. Okay, good. Yes, I would concur with Karen on that answer. I think there is a wide variety of comfort with teaching this. And a lot has to do with the activity level and other habits of the instructor themselves. And I think reaching out to the community, like Karen was discussing, is a really a good way to help overcome that. And I also think that the clear guidelines and the really specific and clear lesson plans in HealthMatters would really help kind of overcome that discomfort and increase comfort level for the instructors themselves.

>> JASMINA: Great, thanks.

We also had a couple questions that I can actually answer. Where can the curriculum be obtained? If you mean the HealthMatters curriculum, it can be found on Amazon. You can purchase it.

Also, are the trainings offered for the hell matters curriculum? If yes, what types?

We do offer a webinar training, it's a three‑day training. So just contact me and I will send you information on that.

And whoever needs information, I can ‑‑ I will send the website so you can find that information on the website. Any other questions?

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: Could I add something to that?

>> JASMINA: Yes.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: If anyone who is associated with a Project SEARCH site, we still have some left from the initial UnitedHealthcare gift and they could contact me and I will mail that out to them.

>> JASMINA: Oh, that's great.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: Yeah.

>> JASMINA: I did have another question. How do we shift instructor perceptions that employment without health may lead to unemployment?

>> KAREN GUO: Well, there is research out there that those that are ‑‑ whether they physically look more fit or participate in these healthy behaviors do have increased rates of employment. So there's research already out there on that. In order to change the perception, I'd say, I think that'll take modeling and being concrete examples of that for the students and for instructors.

And of course a behavior change like this is not something that's going to happen within a day, a week or even a year. It's something that's going to be a long‑term thing.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: I think there are some ‑‑ oh, sorry.

>> KAREN GUO: Go ahead.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: I think there are very concrete things that you can see benefits as far as increased stamina for work and for working longer hours and also attendance. Of course better health goes along with better attendance. I think those things are not so hard to explain and to see. And I think we can all experience that and relate to that in our own lives.

>> KAREN GUO: Yeah, definitely.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: As Karen said, these are things ‑‑ it's a matter of education. And I think that's what we hope to do.

One of the goals in presentations like this and also in the guidelines that we create and make available to instructors that will incorporate those ideas and then show practical ways to achieve that goal.

>> JASMINA: Thank you.

Is it necessary to be a Project SEARCH qualified instructor to use it? The HealthMatters? No. No, it's not necessary.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: No.

>> JASMINA: I was just reading. I didn't read it first, sorry.

[Laughter]

I was reading Gail's question.

And then I will provide the name and the contact information for Project SEARCH sites to contact Mary Ellen to get those their free HealthMatters curriculum.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: Yeah, thank you.

>> JASMINA: Any other questions?

All right. We will stick around for a couple of more minutes to see if there are any questions that come through. Let me see the chat. I was checking only the question and answers.

Oh, there is one. As a job coach for interns after school is out, is there anything besides encouraging healthy eating and walking or other activities that we can help promote for them to be successful after school is done?

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: Go ahead. I was just going to say some of the instructors, this is just one idea. There's so many. And I'm sure, Karen, you have a lot. One is we touched on the idea of the fitness or activity trackers. And some of the teams and classes had created sort of competitions in the class that would ‑‑ they don't necessarily need to involve activity trackers, but that's one way to count steps and to compare and also over the weekend, coming in on Monday morning and showing maybe having sort of a competition of who can report back and what they did over the weekend or in the evening, what sort of physical activity they took part in and comparing and just bringing that back to the class.

>> KAREN GUO: Yeah, definitely. That's a great way to kind of encourage the students to participate when they're not just in class or in an organized event.

>> JASMINA: And then ‑‑ oh, sorry. A suggestion from Barbara. She said they started challenges, for example, for the month of January, they're challenged to only use elevators if it's required, using carts and heavy boxes.

>> KAREN GUO: Goat gotcha, yeah.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: Yeah, that's a good one.

>> KAREN GUO: There's also this cool kind of game‑based app that you can use that encourages people to set their goals and then you can add like allies, people that support you who can send you reminders of like oh, drink of your bottle of water today or take the stairs today. I think it's something that's cool. It's called super better. And you can find it online. Here, I can type it into the message. And it's kind of just like ‑‑ it like makes it into a game which might be more fun for students and individuals.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: And it also sort of puts a positive spin on the appeal of screen time.

>> KAREN GUO: Yeah.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: And use of devices.

>> KAREN GUO: Definitely.

>> JASMINA: Thank you.

Any other questions? All right. We will wait a couple of more minutes to see if there are any questions.

I wanted to thank our presenters for this. It was very, I was taking notes as you guys were presenting. That was pretty exciting to me.

Thank you again. Please join us for our last webinar, the fifth webinar, on February 15th, and it's mindfulness, strategies for building success and wellness in the 21st Century workforce. I will be sending out that information through our listserve, as well. Thank you again, Karen and Mary Ellen. For those of you who are still on, please feel free to sign up off. We're still going to wait for a couple minutes to make sure if there are any questions that come through. Other than that, again, this presentation was recorded and captioned and we will be making those available after the webinar.

Just to clarify, only Project SEARCH sites can get free HealthMatters curriculum, otherwise you would have to be purchasing it. And then I will send all that information on the webinars and where to find all that information through the emails. And for all of you who have attended. Thank you again and have a great rest of the day.

>> KAREN GUO: Thank you, Jasmina.

>> JASMINA: Thanks.

And Melissa, yes, you need to be a part of Project SEARCH for the free HealthMatters curriculum.

>> KAREN GUO: Is there some way that I can connect with Gail about the health rhythms? I think she said she was a facilitator for that. I don't know if you're still on, Gail.

>> JASMINA: I think Gail may be off. I will share her email, her contact information with her. She says you can contact her. So she's a trained facilitator. So I will share her information.

>> KAREN GUO: Thank you.

>> JASMINA: I will make a note.

And, Karen?

>> KAREN GUO: Yes.

>> JASMINA: Do you mind sharing some of the research when you were talking about people who are healthier are more employable, do you have some of that research handy?

>> KAREN GUO: I do not have it up right now, but I can get that to you.

>> JASMINA: That will be great.

>> KAREN GUO: And then you can send that out, if anything.

>> JASMINA: Great, thank you.

>> KAREN GUO: Yep, no problem.

>> JASMINA: Arrest. I don't think there are anymore questions coming through so I'm going to sign off, everyone. Thank you.

>> KAREN GUO: All righty. Thank you for having us.

>> JASMINA: Thanks for being a part of this. Bye.

>> MARYELLEN DASTON: Bye.