



Dr. Dianne Ward



PHOTO BY LINDA KASTLEMAN

NAP SACC

Helping child care centers
improve preschoolers' health

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF CHILDREN IN
CHILD CARE WERE SERVED GREEN BEANS
INSTEAD OF FRENCH FRIES – OR TOOK
A NATURE WALK INSTEAD OF SITTING IN
A CIRCLE INSIDE?

Then perhaps 26 percent of them wouldn't be overweight, as they are now, reasons UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health nutrition professor Dianne Ward, EdD.

These and other tactics are part of an intervention Ward developed called Nutrition and Physical Activity Self Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC) to help child care centers in North Carolina boost their food quality, improve physical activities offered and augment staff-child interactions for children ages 2 through 5.

"Child care center resources are often limited, and they



PHOTO BY JENNY SANDUM

Three-year-old Emily Sandum
enjoys a daily visit to the playground.

TIP

Go
outside
every day,
without
exception.

don't have a lot of leeway to spend time and money on making changes," Ward says. "This intervention is designed to be used by the motivated, savvy child care provider to institute changes."

NAP SACC is a free, five-step intervention funded by the National Institutes of Health. It also has been recognized and recommended by the White House Task Force on Childhood Obesity, led by First Lady Michelle Obama (www.letsmove.gov) and is part of North Carolina's "Eat Smart, Move More" initiative (www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com).

Centers conduct a 15-part self-assessment and select three or four areas for improvement. A NAP SACC consultant conducts workshops to guide the facility staff through changes and is available for follow-up assistance as centers make alterations. A second assessment helps centers determine whether they've been successful and prompts them to choose additional areas for improvement.

To access the NAP SACC intervention online, visit www.napsacc.org.

—Whitney L.J. Howell