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The American Academy of Pediatrics Institute for Healthy Childhood Weight Expands Motivational Interviewing Skills Building App for Pediatricians

Free Role-Play Simulation Prepares Pediatricians and other Healthcare Professionals to Lead Real-life Conversations with Parents and Kids

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The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Institute for Healthy Childhood Weight is launching an expanded version of its free Change Talk: Childhood Obesity™ role-playing teaching tool to prepare pediatricians and other health care professionals to lead real-life conversations with children and their parents about healthy weight.

The role-play simulation equips healthcare professionals to use motivational interviewing techniques to evoke “change talk” and help patients build their motivation to change behaviors, set goals, and develop an action plan to improve their health. Multiple studies show that the amount of “change talk” in a conversation is a strong predictor of actual change.

“Motivational interviewing is a proven strategy to help families make positive behavior changes around healthy eating and exercise,” said Sandra Hassink, MD, FAAP, past president of the American Academy of Pediatrics and Medical Director of the AAP Institute for Healthy Childhood Weight. “This expansion to the Change Talk simulation demonstrates the Academy’s commitment to equipping its members and other health care professionals with the tools and skills needed to navigate sensitive health behavior related conversations with families.”

The Change Talk simulation was created in collaboration with Kognito. Since its debut in 2014, nearly 30,000 individuals have accessed the simulation to develop their motivational interviewing skills in a virtual office environment by practicing a life-like patient encounter. The expanded version of Change Talk offers the learner additional opportunities to practice basic motivational interviewing skills and introduces more complex techniques. The update also includes new interactive mini-lessons on motivational interviewing techniques, as well as dashboards that give detailed feedback to users about their performance in each virtual conversation.

“Conversations are powerful tools to improve health outcomes and change behaviors, but having the competency to effectively lead them in real life is not commonly taught in medical schools,” said Ron Goldman, CEO and Co-Founder of Kognito. “We are excited to partner again with the AAP to expand Change Talk, providing additional clinical cases where pediatricians engage in practice conversations with our virtual patients and gain competency in managing critical interactions in real-life with parents and their kids on the important topic of childhood obesity.”

Change Talk is built using the Kognito Conversation Platform. Over the past seven years, Kognito has applied this platform to address topics including provider/patient communication, chronic disease, PTSD, substance use and mental health. Several empirical studies have shown that Kognito simulations result in statistically significant and sustainable changes in attitude, skills and behaviors. Change Talk is available for free download from the Apple App Store, Google Play and the Amazon App store. The web version can be accessed at <http://ihcw.aap.org/resources> or <http://www.kognito.com/changetalk>.

Change Talk: Childhood Obesity was developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics Institute for Healthy Childhood Weight and Kognito. Development of this app was made possible by a grant from Danone Early Life Nutrition. The Institute gratefully acknowledges the shared commitment and support of its Founding Sponsor, Nestlé.

About AAP

The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 66,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults. For more information, visit <http://www.aap.org>.

The American Academy of Pediatric Institute For Health Childhood Weight (IHCW) serves as a translational engine for pediatric obesity prevention, assessment, management and treatment; and moves policy and research from theory into practice in American healthcare, communities, and homes. A diverse portfolio of funders supports the work of the Institute, with Nestlé as the Founding Sponsor. For more information, visit <https://ihcw.aap.org/>