Background
Childhood obesity and early-onset diabetes are on the rise. The American Heart Association Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics indicate that the unhealthy behaviors that are the risk factors for stroke begin with school-aged children. In 2009, our organization created a stroke awareness program for high schools and youth groups that demonstrated retention of knowledge in a pre-post test format. The content was developed to be relevant for that specific age group.

Purpose
Building on previous success and the need for earlier education, we developed a Stroke Detective Summer Challenge for elementary age children.

Method
- Information on the stroke center website
- Packets also placed at three local libraries
- Packets to 3rd graders at a local summer day camp
- Packet content:
  - stroke detective pledge
  - activity book
  - exercise & healthy eating log

To qualify as a stroke detective, participants were required to:
1) sign the pledge
2) share their stroke knowledge with 5 people by giving them a F.A.S.T. card and getting their signatures
3) return the signature page, completed exercise & healthy eating log, along with their T-shirt size

Results
A summer’s end celebration for the 22 new “stroke detectives” included stations for making a healthy snack and for some simple physical activity competitions. They each received a detective bag, healthy snack recipes, giveaways, and a Stroke Detective T-shirt. These young detectives, along with their parents and siblings were greeted by our hospital mascot and were given a tour of our helicopter. The students, supported by their parents, enthusiastically described their pride in becoming stroke detectives.

Conclusions
Our previous successful experience with making educational content relevant for specific age groups was repeated in this unique initiative. We demonstrated that stroke awareness education does NOT have to be complex or scary; in fact, by introducing simple facts at a young age, we may help eliminate the fear and ignorance that has made community awareness of stroke such a challenge in the past. They could become the first generation of adults to know that a stroke does not occur in the heart.

T-shirt Design
We are stroke detectives.
We’re healthy every day.
We eat our fruits and veggies.
We run and jump and play!
We are stroke detectives.
Sharing what we learned is key.
We help our friends and family stay healthy and stroke-free!

We are stroke detectives.
Act F.A.S.T. to increase recognition of and response to stroke symptoms!
F-Face
A-Arms
S-Speech
T-Time (CALL 911)

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