P44 Building Program Capacity Through Food Environment Assessments

Kendra Auguste, MPH, MA, kauguste@ufl.edu, University of Florida, 1408 Sabal Palm Drive, Gainesville, FL 32611; M. Ruppert, MS, RD, University of Tennessee

Objective: This study will assess the food environment of several low-income communities in Florida to provide a basis for recommendations that enhance healthy food resources and align nutrition education programming with environmental supports.

Target Audience: A community was selected from each of the five Extension Service administrative districts. The five communities or neighborhoods assessed were Linton Oaks (Alachua County), Franklin Park (Broward County), Central Avenue (Osceola County), North Port (Sarasota County), and East Milton (Santa Rosa County).

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: Built environments can influence community well being and affect an individual's ability to access affordable healthy foods. Past studies have shown that less healthful options are available in low-income communities. This study describes the food environment of low-income communities where the Family Nutrition Program (FNP) provides programming.

Description: FNP staff canvassed each neighborhood noting the type and number of food outlets. The Nutrition Environment Measures Survey was used to provide observational measures for several food outlets in each neighborhood.

Evaluation: A total of 46 food outlets across the five communities were evaluated. In each community, convenience stores outnumbered grocery stores and in urban counties convenience stores and fast food restaurants accounted for more than half of the food outlets. Results supported the need for increased access to healthy food in these communities.

Conclusions and Implications: Recommendations to support FNP programming include working with local stakeholders to organize weekly farmers or mobile markets; partnering with organizations to improve food security; promotion of healthy food options in local restaurants; and informing vending machine policy.

Funding: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education.

P45 Employer Sponsored Fitness Programs in the Workplace Improve Employee Health

Damaris Karanja, MA, MEd, PLPC, Karanjad@missouri.edu, University of Missouri Extension, 10650 Gateway Boulevard, Saint Louis, MO 63123

Objective: The purpose of this project was to deliver an effective workplace fitness program to improve the health and fitness of county government employees.

Target Audience: Fifty employees of a local county government (6 men and 44 women) mean age 53 years old (range 30-70) participated in the program. Eight two percent (41) completed the program.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: Regular physical activity prevents disease and improves quality of life. Most people do not meet the minimum recommendation for physical activity. The most reported barriers to activity are lack of time and access to quality programming. Workplace fitness programs can eliminate these barriers and help people reach activity recommendations.

Description: The University of Missouri's Stay Strong Stay Healthy (SSSH) program was delivered once a week for ten weeks. At each session, ten repetitions of eight upper body and lower body strengthening exercises were completed. In addition, 20 minutes of light aerobic/cardiovascular exercise was included. Exercise sessions were led by one instructor trained and certified by the SSSH Program.

Evaluation: Participants completed 5 fitness tests from the Senior Fitness Test (R. E. Rikli and C. J. Jones, 2001) before and after programming. Seventy-four percent of the participants improved in 4-5 measures while 28% improved in 3-4 measures. All 41 participants (100%) who completed the program reported that their health had improved, that they felt physically stronger, and were more flexible.

Conclusions and Implications: The current data indicate significant and meaningful benefits to employees with minimal exercise. Employers should consider offering similar programs to improve the health of their employees and ultimately reduce health care costs.

Funding: University of Missouri Extension, St. Louis County Government.

P46 Healthier Schools: Learning About Nutrition

Ana Maria Corrales, MA, anaco.corrales@gmail.com, Fundacion Alpina, KM 3 BRICENO SOPO, Edificio Alpina, Sopo, Cund 20111, Columbia; M. Sanchez, MA; P. Constanza, MA; A. Liliana, MA; I. Lopez, MA; P. Neira, BS

Objective: Enhancing criteria to improve food practices concerning buying, choosing and preparing.

Target Audience: 3,000 children (5-12 years old) and 300 caregivers. 10 public schools: 100 teachers, 25 directive board members.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: Statistics show that undernutrition and overnutrition affect more than 10% of children in Colombia. This situation is partly due to inadequate food practices. Good practices on nutrition education (Food and Agriculture Organisation) are its main bases. As education has a strong influence in health and nutrition, schools are the program focus, applying meaningful learning practices.

Description: Based on diagnosis on knowledge and practices concerning food, the interdisciplinary team designs educational and communicational strategies. The program is adjustable to the institutional, social and cultural context (i.e. urban, rural). Throughout two years, students

Continued on page S28