P34 Rural Adolescents' Barriers and Facilitators to Physical Activity

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Objective: The prevalence of adolescents' obesity is higher in rural than urban areas. Physical activity (PA) is important in obesity prevention. The Bioecological Theory of Development posits that an individual's behavior is influenced by one's interactions with their environment. Interventions promoting PA in context of the environment for rural adolescents are needed. The objective of this study is to identify barriers and facilitators to PA among 6th-8th grade adolescents.

Design, Setting, and Participants: Four focus groups of 6th-8th grade youth (6-10/group) were conducted in a low-income, rural community.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: Focus groups were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using NVivo software (QSR International Pty Ltd. Version 10, 2012) to identify themes influencing PA and categorized into bioecological system of influence (microsystem = face-to-face interactions, mesosystem = connection between environments, exosystem = larger social systems, and macrosystem = policy/values of society).

Results: Adolescent identified barriers in the microsystem (lack of motivation and confidence, and competition from non-physical activities i.e. video games) and exosystem (distance to the activities and lack of options that they like), but None in mesosystem. Facilitators were in the microsystem (acceptance by peers and make the activity fun), mesosystem (more education for the activity by school or others and prohibit bullying), exosystem (better facilities), and macrosystem (more gender equal opportunities).

Conclusions and Implications: Rural adolescents desire greater skills and self-confidence to complete the PA, acceptance by peers, and a greater variety of both competition and non-competition activities. When developing programs to increase PA, it is important to include the adolescent perspective and direct programming at the appropriate environmental system of influence.

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P35 First Year College Students and Barriers to Selecting Healthy Food Choices

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Objective: As first year college students are making their transition into adulthood, it is important for them to establish healthy food habits. Most are aware of healthy food choices, however often they do not make these selections. The objective of this study is to determine if specific,

targeted dietary changes leads to healthier eating patterns among first year college students.

Design, Setting, and Participants: Participants were assigned to one of five food experience groups that received specific, targeted dietary messaging. The groups were: consume fewer foods high in sugar/salt/fat; consume more fruits and vegetables; consume foods currently eaten, but prepared healthier ways; consume healthy food options; and no change in diet (control group). Each group included 20 older adolescents aged 18 or 19 enrolled at an urban university. Participants received four weekly basic nutrition education sessions. Samples of healthy recipes were offered during the sessions. At the completion of the sessions, each participant received instruction on the specific dietary behavior they were encouraged to adopt according to their food experience group. Surveys on nutrition related behaviors were administered at four periods: pre-nutrition sessions (baseline), post-nutrition sessions, 1 month post, and 6 months post.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: Data was quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed.

Results: All participants reported at least attempting to make more healthy food choices. Barriers reported include time, money, quality of cafeteria selections, and food preparation knowledge.

Conclusions and Implications: This research will add to the intervention strategies available to help first year college students make healthier choices. It will also add to the body of knowledge of barriers to healthy food selection among first year college students.

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P36 Youth Understanding MyPlate Improves Behaviors of Elementary School Students

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Objective: To determine whether participation in six lessons of the Youth Understanding MyPlate (YUM) curriculum leads to a change in nutrition and physical activity behaviors in elementary school students.

Target Audience: Elementary school students (N=535) in grades 2-5 throughout Florida participating in the Family Nutrition Program (FNP - Florida's SNAP-Education program).

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: Experiential Learning Theory.

Description: YUM teaches elementary students the basic messages of MyPlate through activities that reinforce the messages and encourage them to make healthy eating and physical activity choices. Each grade-specific lesson contains learning and physical activities, a recommended children's book, worksheets, and a healthy snack. These lessons are designed to be taught in a classroom setting and incorporate applicable Florida Standards.

Evaluation: A seven-item Youth Behavior Survey was developed by FNP faculty to capture nutrition and physical

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