

P1 Lessons Learned for Enrolling Parents in a Text Message-based Nutrition Education Program

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Objective: Text2BHealthy is a nutrition and physical activity promotion program for parents of elementary school children. Short-term outcomes include increased offering of fruits and vegetables and increased opportunities for physical activity. Longer-term outcomes include increased fruit and vegetable consumption and physical activity.

Target audience: Parents of elementary school-aged children.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: Text2BHealthy utilizes text messages, which have been effective in promoting health behaviors such as weight loss (Patrick, et al., 2009), physical activity (Fjeldsoe, et al. 2010), and smoking cessation (Free, et al., 2011, Rodgers, et al., 2011) to reach parents of low-income children participating in school-based nutrition education. Nutrition education that includes children and their parents has a greater impact than programs for children only (Golan, Fainaru, & Weizman, 1998; Flynn, et al., 2006).

Description: Other text message-based health promotion programs, such as Text4Baby, have had mixed success with outreach strategies and have struggled to meet their recruitment goals in some target populations (Whittaker et al., 2012). Our presentation will present several lessons that we learned about recruiting and retaining participants in Text2BHealthy. We will also detail the program changes that allowed us to increase the number of Text2BHealthy participants from 203 in the first year to 1,101 in the second.

Evaluation: Recruitment and retention efforts were evaluated using administrative data collected by the online platform used to send text messages and focus groups conducted with both participants and non-participants.

Conclusions and Implications: This presentation will provide practical information for individuals planning text message-based programs or adding a text message component to existing programs.

Funding: USDA.

P2 Using a Monthly Calendar to Promote Food, Nutrition, and Health Themes

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Objective: The purpose of creating a monthly, web-based food, nutrition, and health themed calendar was to provide information about and reinforce healthy behaviors to consumers and multiplier groups working with consumers.

Target audience: The general adult population, educators, and health professionals.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: Similar to MyPlate, which was “designed to remind Americans to eat healthfully,” and “not intended to change consumer behavior alone,” the themed calendar utilized the same rationale to also “help consumers make better choices.”

Description: The calendar provides resources, tips, and recipes for selected national food and health themed days, weeks, and months. A calendar approach helped optimize the use of social media and search engines in promoting content, leading to visits and links to our organization’s website.

Evaluation: According to Google analytics, the calendar received over 45,875 pageviews, a 17% increase over the previous year. It has been linked 493 times from 186 websites, including other universities, blogs, and social media sites. The calendar was listed in the top 3 recommended webpages by search engines. A web feedback form indicated the helpfulness of this monthly content curation; a sample comment was, “Having all this information in one place makes it easy when looking for something specific like pumpkin. Gave me lots of ideas!”

Conclusions and Implications: The calendar multiplies our efforts by assisting others find research-based, unbiased information and is a “go to” resource for the public, educators, and health professionals. It has helped us move from “good to great;” statistics show increased visits to our website as people have become more aware of our calendar.

Funding: None.

P3 Picture This! Increasing Online Engagement by Using Photos and Videos

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Objective: Our objective was to increase visits to a website by using highly visual social media. The content on most social networking sites is fairly short. The Pew Research Center’s Project for Excellence in Journalism found the median length of the most popular YouTube videos was 2 minutes and 1 second. Tweets are 140 characters. For more information, it is frequently necessary to direct people back to a website.

Target audience: The target audience was online users of internet social networking sites.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: PEW Internet & American Life Project statistics show 71% of adults use video sharing sites such as YouTube and Vimeo. Additionally, 46% of Internet users post their own photos and videos. When Hubspot, a company devoted to inbound marketing, evaluated 8,800 Facebook posts, they found photos on Facebook generated 53% more likes than other posts. Clearly, people are attracted to visual images.

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