

Own Your Own Health: Influencing Healthy Behaviors in Underserved Areas Through On-line Challenges

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Own Your Own Health (OYOH) is an on-line health promotion program of Louisiana's Bureau of Minority Health Access. It uses community-based recruitment techniques in underserved areas to engage participants in game-like fitness challenges, nutrition/fitness/health messages, and communication of strategies and successes to encourage healthy lifestyle choices.

OBJECTIVE

The OYOH program evaluation explores the influence of annual on-line fitness challenges on adoption and maintenance of healthier eating and physical activity behaviors among Louisiana's adult, first-time OYOH annual challenge participants.

METHOD

Two on-line surveys were implemented annually for three-years (2016-2018). A baseline survey was linked to program registration; a 6-month follow-up survey was linked to baseline survey participation. Healthy eating indicators included vegetable, fruit, whole grain, sodium, and fat consumption. Physical activity indicators included time spent being active/inactive. Demographics were collected; data was self-reported.

RESULTS

OYOH Survey Participants 2016, 2017, 2018

Demographic Indicators:

		Initial Survey (N=598)	Follow-up Survey (N=128)	Louisiana
Race/ Ethnicity:	Non-Hispanic White or Caucasian	45%	48%	~59%
	All Other (NHBAA)	55%	51%	~42%
Age:	31 – 40 years	20%	20%	Median age = 36 years
	41 – 40 years	27%	26%	
	51 – 60 years	24%	36%	
Sex:	Female	78%	79%	~51
	Male	13%	12%	~49
Food Security:	Enough food	93%	97%	~17% struggle with hunger
	Not always enough food	3%	2%	

Values refer to the percent of those responding to that particular survey item. LA values are from 2010 US Census or FeedingAmerica.org (accessed 2019).

Key Diet Indicators

Number of times/day participant consumes:

	Mean number of times/day		At least once/day	
	Initial Survey	6-Month follow-up	Initial Survey	6-Month follow-up
Fruit	1.3	↔ 1.3	48%	→ 49%
Green vegetable	1.1	↔ 1.2	36%	→ 49%
Orange vegetable	0.5	↔ 0.5	15%	→ 18%
Whole grain breads	0.9	← 0.8	34%	← 24%
Whole grains or cereals	0.7	↔ 0.7	27%	→ 34%

NOTE: average U.S. (adult) intake of fruits = 1.1/day; vegetables = 1.6/day

[more] Diet Indicators

	Initial Survey	Follow-up Survey
Watching or reducing fat intake or changing the type of fat consumed	67%	→ 75%
Watching or reducing sodium intake	57%	→ 58%

Physical Activity Indicators

	Initial Survey	Follow-up Survey
More time spent being physically active now than 6 months ago	32%	→ 41%
Time (hours) spent sitting on a typical day	6.8	↔ 6.9

Have Participants Remained physically active...?

Yes -- just as active – 54%
Yes -- but not as active – 32%
No -- 9%.

Size differences: baseline (n=598) and follow-up (n=128) survey groups precluded t-test significance. Still, ~86% of participants maintained some physical activity 6-months post-challenge.

*Strong evidence demonstrates a dose-response relationship between physical activity and all-cause mortality...with the greatest benefit seen early in the dose-response relationship...[and this does] not vary by age, sex, race, or weight status.**

*2018 Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee

CONCLUSIONS

The OYOH program appears to be reaching Louisiana's minority communities and influencing eating and physical activity behaviors. However, increased participation in follow-up assessments is needed to more rigorously evaluate program efficacy and inform future applications.