



Intervention Mapping of Maternal Self-care Practices to Facilitate Intervention Design

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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

- Maternal health practices are related to child health outcomes like dietary intake, physical activity, and weight status.¹⁻²
- Maternal self-care, or behaviors facilitating healthy eating, physical activity, and stress management practices, may play an important role in child weight status.



Study Objective:

To develop and refine a theory-based self-care intervention using Intervention Mapping (IM), informed by semi-structured interviews with mothers of preschoolers

METHODS

PARTICIPANTS

- 19 mothers were recruited from 4 preschool/Head Start centers in rural, Eastern Colorado.



IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

- Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) was used as a theoretical framework.³
- Guide content and face validity were established via expert review and pilot testing. Interviews included 22 questions with multiple probes.

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS AND IM

- Interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and coded.⁴
- Preliminary content analysis was used to define emergent themes.
- IM steps of formulation of change objectives, material creation, and implementation/evaluation plan development were followed.⁵

RESULTS

SELF-CARE PRACTICES

- Participants had varying definitions of self-care which included activities related to: physical health, mental health, emotional wellbeing, and interpersonal connections.
- The contexts in which self-care practices were used differed among mothers and situations.
- Mothers saw self-care as important for their own wellbeing and that of their families.

“If you don’t take care of yourself, you’ll reach a breakpoint and you won’t be able to be the best mom.”

FACILITATORS AND BARRIERS TO SELF-CARE

- Mothers described infrequent practices of self-care and difficulties prioritizing self-care.
- **Barriers** to self-care included: time, lack of resources, limited energy, guilt, and responsibilities to the family.
- **Facilitators** to self-care practices included: support from friends, significant others, and family members.



“I take care of the kids, the house, get the kids to and from school, do volunteer work. I have to sometimes sit down and watch a movie. I have to take a break.”

RESOURCES

- Desired self-care resources included online information about the benefits of self-care, tips for incorporating self-care into busy schedules, and additional opportunities for social support.
- Mothers thought workshops, health-coaching, a health fair, and online materials and resources would be helpful.

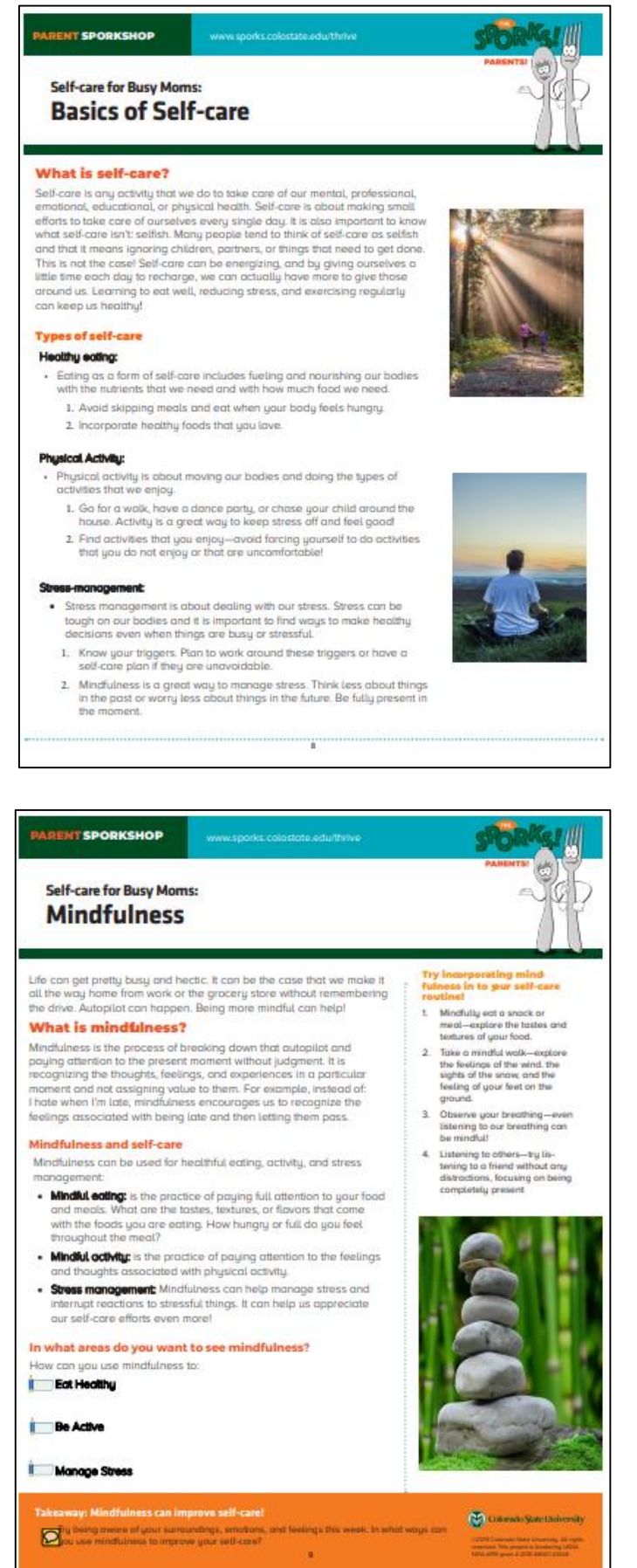
“Fitting self-care in to those little pockets of your day is important because if that’s all the time you have, then that’s all the time you have.”

RESULTS (CONT)

INTERVENTION MAPPING

- Input from these interviews guided IM for the development of a self-care program which includes 2 workshops, 4 remote health coaching sessions, and a companion website.
- SCT guided change objectives, methods, and strategies.
- Topics addressed included what defines self-care, how to incorporate self-care behaviors into a busy life, and how self-care can benefit families.
- Resources and handouts (Figure 1) were created with information on key change objective topics: healthy eating, stress management, and physical activity.

Figure 1. Sample Handouts Created in the IM Process



DISCUSSION

INFORMING INTERVENTION DEVELOPMENT

- Mothers expressed wanting opportunities for self-care, but many lack the skills or resources to overcome barriers to self-care.
- Findings from interviews, coupled with SCT constructs, informed IM with change objectives, content, and educational resources.
- Inclusion of a self-care component as part of public health interventions has the potential to facilitate obesity prevention efforts aimed at both adults and children.



REFERENCES

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