Assessing the Impact of Youth Advocacy Training on Student Activity and Attitudes

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Presentation Outline

- The problem
- Existing approaches
- Program design
- Program implementation
- Research design
- Results
- Analysis
- Next steps & conclusion
## Children's Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Obesity Prevalence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nationwide youth</td>
<td>18.5%⁽¹⁾</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>19.1%⁽¹⁾</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>17.8%⁽¹⁾</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American/Black</td>
<td>22%⁽¹⁾</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>25.8%⁽¹⁾</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>11%⁽¹⁾</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan (Urban and Suburban)</td>
<td>28.7%⁽²⁾</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural (non-metropolitan)</td>
<td>34.2%⁽²⁾</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Existing approaches to childhood obesity

- School based approaches
- Personal behavior change motivations
City Planners Play an Important Role in Promoting Children’s Health

Health status determined by:

- Genetics (5%)
- Health care (10%)
- Behavior (30%)
- Social conditions (55%)

WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health (2008)
Advocacy as a worthwhile tool

• Empower youth (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002)
• Aid marginalized youth development of agency, efficacy & hope (Whitehead, 2009)
• Successful in reducing tobacco usage among youth (Holden, Crankshaw, Nimsch, Hinnant, & Hund, 2004; Kulbok et al, 2008; Ribisl et al., 2004)
A youth advocacy training program designed to teach advocacy for improving physical activity and nutrition assets in communities focusing on policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) changes.

3 core elements:

- Conducting neighborhood assessment
- Completing advocacy project
- Learning about advocacy and health
Youth Engagement and Action for Health (YEAH!)

Program Design

- 10 - 14 week program
- Target age group 11-14 years old
- Target demographic low-income students from minority backgrounds
- Conduct one to two different community assessments
- Share an advocacy presentation with a decision-maker
- Complete physical activity and attitudes assessment at week 1 and final week
**YEAH! Research Design**

**Conceptual Framework**
1. Intervention Processes
2. Youth Psychosocial Factors, Participation, and Hypothesized Drivers of Change
3. Proximal Outcomes Individual Youth Changes

**Assessment Questions**
- 53 survey questions
- Pre- and post-intervention assessment question pairs
- Post-intervention assessment only questions
- Questions on a 5 point Likert scale or count of days/servings

**Sub-scales**
- Groupings of assessment questions
- 13 pre-post subscales
- 10 post-only subscales
Youth Engagement and Action for Health (YEAH!)

Research Design

- Dependent variable: 13 pre-post subscales and 10 post-only subscales
- Independent variable: student demographic (place, race/ethnicity, sex) and time
- SPSS MIXED procedure
  - Between group changes
  - Within group differences
  - Across time

**SPSS MIXED procedure**

Time* Demographic (place, race/ethnicity, sex) = between group changes pre- to post-assessment

Place, race/ethnicity, sex across time = within group differences

Time = all participant changes pre- to post-assessment
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Count (Percentage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=137</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>16 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>59 (43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>62 (45%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American/Black</td>
<td>43 (31%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>19 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American, Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian</td>
<td>33 (24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
<td>25 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Identified</td>
<td>17 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boy</td>
<td>59 (43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl</td>
<td>78 (56%)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**YEAH! Project Sites**

- **Asian Youth Center**, Los Angeles, CA
  - School Assessment
  - Improvement of school grounds specifically around trash cleanup

- **BGC Oceanside**, Oceanside, HI
  - School and Community Assessment

- **BGC of Lihue**, Lihue, HI
  - Community Physical Activity Assessment

- **West Hawaii Community Health Center**, Kailua-Kona, HI
  - Community Physical Activity Assessment
  - Install a water fountain near community housing play area

- **BGC Presque Isle**, Presque Isle, ME
  - Community Assessment

- **BGS Maliseet**, Houlton, ME
  - Community Assessment

- **BGC Sipayik**, Pleasant Point, ME
  - Community Assessment

- **Poe Middle School**, Annandale, VA
  - Community Physical Activity Assessment
  - Pave the school’s running track

- **Holmes Middle School**, Alexandria, VA
  - Community Physical Activity
  - Membership for students at local gym

- **Charlottesville Ministry**, Charlottesville, VA
  - Safety crossing at dangerous intersection
  - Lights at a park
  - Complete sidewalks

- **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Miami**, Miami FL
  - Park Assessment
  - Increase activities and resources at a local park

- **Glades Middle School**, Miramar, FL
  - School Assessment
  - Dance class for girls, improvement of school grounds

- **BGC Toccoa-Stephens**, Toccoa, GA
  - Community Physical Activity Assessment
  - Install a basketball goal at Boys and Girls Club

- **Drew Middle School**, Atlanta, GA
  - School Assessment
Questions:
1. Over the past seven days, how many days were you physically active for at least 60 min. per day?
2. Over a typical week, on how many days are you physically active for at least 60 min. per day?

Takeaways:
- 12.5% increase OR an average increase of one day per week of physical activity
YEAH! Health Results by Place

Questions:
1. In a typical day, how many servings of fruit do you eat?
2. In a typical day, how many servings of vegetables do you eat?

Takeaways: Rural (-29.96%), urban (7.9%), suburban (6.6%)

Questions:
1. In a typical week, how many days do you walk or bike TO school?
2. In a typical week, how many days do you walk or bike FROM school?

Takeaways: Students actively commute less than 2 days per week
**YEAH! Health Results by Race/Ethnicity**

**Questions:** 1. Outside of school, in a typical week how many times do I eat fast-food?

**Takeaways:** African-American/Black youth decline nearly 3 days and Latino youth decline nearly 4 days.

**Questions:** 1. Over the past seven days, and (2) over a typical week, how many days were you physically active for at least 60 min. per day?

**Takeaways:** African-American and Latino youth least active at 3 days per week others around 4 or more.
**Questions:** 1. Over the past seven days, how many days were you physically active for at least 60 min per day?  
2. Over a typical week, on how many days are you physically active for at least 60 min per day?

**Takeaways:** Boys more active than girls, by an average of one day more per week

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**Questions:** 1. Outside of school, in a typical week how many times do eat fast-food?

**Takeaways:**  
- Boys increase fast food by **one more day per week**  
- Girls decreased fast food consumption by **two less days per week**
**YEAH! Attitude Results across participants**

**Questions**: 1. I like to wait and see if someone else is going to solve a problem.
2. I find it very hard to talk in front of a group. (reverse coded)

**Takeaways**: Student desire to lead and speak in front of a group declined 14%

**Questions**: 1. This project can make a difference in making our school or community a better place for being physically active and eating healthy.

**Takeaways**: Students slightly declined the belief that their advocacy project can make a difference but remained positive (4=agree)
Questions: 1. I like to wait and see if someone else is going to solve a problem.
2. I find it very hard to talk in front of a group. (reverse coded)

Takeaways: Urban (-24.7%), rural (-16.90%) and suburban (-.67%) students declining in willingness to actively participate

Questions: 1. This project can make a difference in making our school or community a better place for being physically active and eating healthy.

Takeaways: Suburban students only demographic to increase, but all students remained at least ‘neutral’
Questions: 1. If I tell someone “in charge”, like a leader, about my opinions, they will listen to me.
2. I enjoy participation because I want to have as much say as possible in my school or community.

Takeaways: Asian-American, Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian only demographic with declining optimism

Questions: 1. I am sure that I can tell my friends to eat healthy.
2. I am sure that I can tell my friends to be physically active.
3. I am confident that I can work to make my school or community a better place for being physically active and eating healthy.

Takeaways: All students felt at least ‘neutral’
Non-Identified students felt most confident
Questions:
1. If I have a problem when working towards a goal, I usually do not give up.
2. I can influence the decisions my group makes.

Takeaways:
Boys more confident in ability to persevere and influence group
### YEAH! Impact on Student Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement</th>
<th>Decline</th>
<th>Averages across time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Students regardless of demographic more active</td>
<td>• Rural students decline fruit and vegetable consumption</td>
<td>• African-American/Black &amp; Latino youth least number of physically active days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Girls decline fast food consumption</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Boys more active than girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Urban and suburban students increase fruit and vegetable consumption</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Improvement

- African-American/Black, Latino, and Multiracial feeling that leaders will listen to them and desire to make change increased

## Decline

- Students across demographics decline in desire to lead and speak in front of a group [active participation]
- Students across demographic declined in belief their advocacy project can improve community/school health [advocacy outcome efficacy]
- Urban youth declined the greatest in active participation

## Averages across time

- Boys more confident in ability to work towards a goal and influence group decisions than girls
- All students had ‘neutral’ feeling about self-efficacy
Implications

- Need more programming for urban youth to increase hope, optimism, and self efficacy
- Need additional PSE changes that increase African-American/Black and Latino physical activity
- Need more programs to increase female youth physical activity
Next Steps

- Expand YEAH! to more states and clubs with our guidebook
- Shorten the surveys from 53 to 26 questions
- Disseminate results and encourage broad adoption

www.yeah.gatech.edu
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- YEAH! Advisory Board
- YEAH! Club Members