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Senior Talk Summary
Grand Rounds, June 26, 2007

Academic-Community Partnerships for Child Health and Education: Lessons in Leadership

Key Words: school health, after school programs, community-based programs, positive youth development, obesity prevention, physical activity, community-based participatory research

Learning Objectives:

- To learn about and describe school health programs in the San Francisco Unified School District, as well as in the greater Bay Area, statewide and nationwide.
- To review the evidence for effective obesity prevention and physical activity programs, and to learn about what programs exist in the Bay Area.
- To learn from the education and psychology literature about what makes effective intervention programs for positive development in at-risk youth, and how these influence educational outcomes and health risk behavior.

Project Objectives:

- To form partnerships with the SFUSD school health programs, public schools and school nurses in order to find school health activities for pediatric residents which are beneficial to resident learning as well as to the schools and students.
- To implement school-based and community-based programs to address obesity prevention and physical activity.
- To participate in a community-based development program for at-risk youth, create a sustainable partnership, and conduct an evaluation of the program using principles of community-partnered participatory research.

Activities:

- Meetings with school nurses and parents to assess perceived health needs for their children while in school, and what intervention programs are desirable during school hours and after school.
- Participation in the AAP CA Chapter 1 School Health Committee.
- City and community meetings with leadership personnel from the Department of Public Health and Department of Children Youth and Families to learn about what is currently going on and what is needed in SF.
- Meetings with leaders of after-school programs directed at promoting physical activity, to learn best practices and implementation strategies.
- Implementation of a summer dance program for at-risk teens in the Bayview Healing Arts Center, including fundraising and grant-writing activities.
- Participation as a volunteer and observer in the Bay Area All Stars program, a talent show network for children and youth in Oakland. Met with youth participants, program leaders and UCSF faculty to design an evaluation of the program. Wrote a draft of CHR application.

Outcome:

- A total of approximately 50 encounters with school nurses, parents, teachers, city leaders, leaders of community-based and after-school programs, as well as faculty mentors, to assess needs and formulate plans to meet above objectives. Some information gathered follows:
- School nurses
There are numerous health needs for children in SF schools, in particular:
 - Referral to and communication with PMDs and medical homes,
 - Education about healthy eating and physical activity,
 - Access to healthy foods and exposure to foods they may not try at home,
 - Prevention of violence in school and at home, and
 - Other mental health and developmental/behavioral resources
- Parents
Conducted informal surveys/ needs assessments of parents at school health fair and parent nutrition night.
 - Parents, along with teachers and school principals, hold as a top priority their children's educational achievement and safety.
 - Believe that their children watch too much TV and need more physical activity, but that they will get most of their physical activity at school.
 - Do not generally enroll their children in programs outside of school due mainly to barriers in knowledge of the programs, and transportation of their children to and from these programs.
- Literature review summary (some selected references cited below):
 - Effective obesity prevention programs are ones that address inactivity (reducing television or increasing physical activity), including examples of sports and dance programs (Tom Robinson).
 - Youth development programs and after-school programs: evaluations are few and are rarely controlled in study design, despite an increase in funding for programs. Programs that use a developmental approach, focusing on creating a positive and supportive environment, are generally the most effective, regardless of the desired outcomes.

Lessons in Implementation:

- Program implementation is best done by those who have dedicated time available to commit their ongoing presence and see the program through to completion.
- Academic-community partnerships can benefit community groups by providing the credibility of the academic institution, as well as academic resources, especially in the role of research and evaluation.
- Taking time to build trust and relationships is an important investment.
- Transparency of roles and goals, with equal sharing of program design, data and publication are keys to building trust and should be stated at the outset.

Potential Future Projects:

- Develop a school health curriculum for the UCSF pediatrics residency program, drawing from existing curricular materials, in partnership with UCSF faculty who currently are teaching about schools and school health, as well as the SFUSD school health programs and SF DPH personnel.
- Complete an evaluation of the Bay Area All Stars program, using principles of community-based participatory research, to document the impact of the program on the lives of the participants, especially in terms of educational outcomes and health risk behaviors.

Resources:

- UCSF Faculty: Kris Madsen, Carol Miller, Bonnie Halpern-Felsher
- School Health: Phil Ziring (DPH), Diane Goldman (school health programs), George Monterverdi (AAP Chapter 1 School Health Committee)
- After School Programs/ Physical Activity: Andrew Oser/ Joy of Sports Foundation, Bay Area SCORES, Joanna Haigood/ Zaccho Dance Company
- Bay Area All Stars: Elouise Joseph, Caroline Donnola, Joyce Dattner, Helen Abel
- Potential funding sources: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Kellogg Foundation, San Francisco Foundation, CA Endowment, TeamUp for Youth, Tiger Woods Foundation, AAP/CATCH Grants

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