Body and Soul for Kwanzaa’s Northside Community: A Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives Institute Community-University Partnership

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Background

- Obesity prevalence is high and increasing over time
- Consequences can be severe, especially among ethnic minority groups
  - Higher risk of high blood pressure, diabetes, stroke
- Healthier eating and increased physical activity can target these risks
- Critical element: reach people in the community with programs that meet their needs
Partnership Development

- Program partners introduced via mutual colleague at University of Minnesota
- Submitted a grant to the Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives Institute
  - Community Engagement Grant mechanism
  - Submitted June 2011
  - Funded for July 2011-July 2012
  - Supplemental and bridge funding to extend programs to 12/31/12
Program Aims

- Increase fruit and vegetable intake
  - Directed counseling (motivational interviewing model)
  - Organic community garden
  - Monthly potluck events to promote a fruit or vegetable

- Increase physical activity
  - Group walks
  - Yoga instruction
  - Weight training equipment
Body & Soul Curriculum

- Basis for program activities
- Free materials available online
  - Tested in 15 churches across the country, then made available to the public
- Evidence based, culturally meaningful, designed to get church members of all ages engaged in all aspects of the program (delivery and participation) to promote health
About Kwanzaa Community Church

- Celebration of African American culture, with an ethic of radical inclusion
- Promotion of community, justice, social change, and empowerment for the families of north Minneapolis
- Active engagement with the community (beyond church membership) is critical
Program Implementation

• Church-wide orientation: October 2011
  • Measured height, weight, waist, blood pressure of 54 adult volunteers
  • Survey of fruit and vegetable intake, perceptions of support for healthy intake and activity

• Monthly church-wide events through June 2012

• Bulletin boards to support monthly themes

• On-site yoga classes and personal trainer sessions

• Walking club
Health Coaching Program

• Three lay (church member) health coaches
  • Trained using Body & Soul materials

• 20 weeks of health coaching (December 2011-April 2012)
  • Phone calls
  • Goal setting
  • Progress tracking and motivation
  • Peer support

• 37 members participated in the coaching program
  • Averaged 8.5 contacts (range: 1-19) over 20 weeks
Results

- Church-wide acceptance of program messages
- Increased fruit and vegetable consumption in:
  - Children and youth programs
  - Project serving women and girls who are victims of the sex trade
- Increased social support for healthy choices
- Increased community engagement

Measured changes over 8 months:
- Small but significant reduction in waist circumference
- Significant increase in fruit intake
- Increased perception of opportunities to be active in the community
Program Accomplishments

- New Community-University connection
  - Successful partnership
  - In the community

- Success of culturally sensitive and appropriate methods to create a sustainable, accepted program
  - Uses member experiences in the “real world” to support healthy behaviors that can reduce obesity and related risks over the long term
  - Modeling healthy behaviors for the next generation
Lessons that relate to HFHL Day 1

- **Food intake cues:**
  - Work with existing recipes to make changes that enhance health without deprivation
  - Taste tests to increase liking of new recipes
  - Peer support to reinforce changes

- **Environmental changes:**
  - Healthy potlucks at church events
  - Bulletin boards to enhance visibility
  - Promoting more activity in the environment
Community Garden
Next Steps

- Group walking events in the community
- Last harvest from the community garden
- Bridge funding to continue health coaching and activity programming through end of year
- 8-week diabetes prevention course (15 enrolled)
- Application for second year of funding (due November 2012)
  - Focus on impact of poverty on unhealthy behaviors
Thank You!

Questions?

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