

Title of Intervention: Asthma Day Camp for Children

Intervention Strategies: Group Education

Purpose of the Intervention: To increase knowledge of asthma and improve self-management

Population: Children ages 6-12 with asthma

Setting: Recreational health club; community-based

Partners: None mentioned

Intervention Description:

- Group Education: A six session interactive asthma curriculum was implemented. Specific topics included decision making, basic asthma pathophysiology, early warning signs, triggers, medications and the use of spacers, metered dose inhalers and peak flow meters. Classes were organized into small groups of 12 campers each. The camp staff integrated three topics into camp activities: rhythmic breathing, feelings and exercise-induced asthma prevention. Counselors monitored and recorded three peak flow meter readings each camp day and reinforced metered dose inhaler use continuously. On the last day of camp, a skit was performed by counselors in which they illustrated all of the self-management concepts previously presented in asthma class. After the skit, the campers received an award documenting their mastery of self-management skills. Although parents were not involved in camp daily, several education strategies were developed for them. An orientation was held 2-3 wks before camp, which parents were required to attend, where they received verbal and written reviews of the asthma camp curriculum. Each day of camp, counselors completed a diary for each camper summarizing what the child had mastered that day, which was given to the parents.

Theory: Not mentioned

Resources Required:

- Staff/Volunteers: Camp counselors
- Training: Counselors received training on asthma
- Technology: Not mentioned
- Space: Meeting space
- Budget: Scholarships were offered to help offset the costs of the camp: \$10 Registration fee required and a \$75 camp fee which was adjusted on a sliding scale according to financial need
- Intervention: Educational materials, peak flow meters, spacers, metered dose inhalers, asthma diaries, awards
- Evaluation: Questionnaires

Evaluation:

- Design: Pre- and Post-test
- Methods and Measures:
 - Asthma IQ Questionnaire: assessed parental knowledge.
 - A Family Stress Related to Asthma Questionnaire assessed family stress due to the child's asthma.
 - A Knowledge About Asthma Questionnaire: assessed child's knowledge.
 - Asthma Symptom, Mastery over Asthma and Behavior Questionnaires assessed child's self-management of asthma.

Outcomes:

- Short Term Impact: The difference in the pre- and post-test scores for the Children's Asthma Symptom Questionnaire, the Children's Symptom Questionnaire, or the Mastery Over Asthma Questionnaire were not significant. There was a significant improvement in peak flow techniques.
- Long Term Impact: There were significant reductions in emergency room trips and missed school days.

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: Nurses planning similar camps should understand that effective health education needs to be active, dynamic, interactive, and applied.

Citation(s):

Meng, A., K. Tiernan, et al. (1998). "Lessons from an evaluation of the effectiveness of an asthma day camp." *MCN Am J Matern Child Nurs* 23(6): 300-6