

**Title of Intervention:** Know Your Body

**Website:**

<http://guide.helpingamericasyouth.gov/programdetail.cfm?id=607>

<http://www.promisingpractices.com/program.asp?programid=109>

<http://www.childtrends.org/lifecourse/programs/KnowYourBody.htm>

<http://www.vtsf.org/programs/CompendiumPrograms/KYB%20-%202004.doc>

**Intervention Strategies:** Group Education, Supportive Relationships

**Purpose of the Intervention:** To prevent coronary heart disease and certain types of cancer in children through health education

**Population:** Elementary and junior high students

**Setting:** Schools in the Bronx (low-income) and Westchester (middle-high income) counties; school-based

**Partners:** School districts

**Intervention Description:**

- **Group Education:** Know Your Body encouraged positive health behavior and discouraged behavioral patterns linked to illness, injury, disability or death. This skills-based comprehensive health education curriculum covered health topics such as nutrition, exercise, safety, disease prevention, prevention of cigarette smoking, consumer health issues, dental care, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse and violence prevention. The program provided age-appropriate education about tobacco, alcohol, marijuana and cocaine. Instruction is organized around five “core skills” with emphasis on critical thinking about advertising and other influences on health decisions. The core skills include self-esteem, decision-making, communication, goal setting and stress management. The curriculum includes instructional strategies such as behavioral contracting and self-monitoring through student journals. Frequent projects in every grade promoted advocacy on health-related issues. The posters, song tapes and student activity books have been translated into seven languages.
- **Supportive Relationships:** This school-wide program encouraged family involvement by sending letters home for parents with every module and by including activities designed to promote interaction with parents. The program also promotes community involvement by inviting community members to speak and assigning projects that encourage students to interact with community members.

**Theory:** Precede-Proceed model, Health Belief Model, Social Learning Theory

**Resources Required:**

- **Staff/Volunteers:** Teachers
- **Training:** Teacher training on the program rationale and content as well as behavioral theory approaches to teaching the curriculum
- **Technology:** Not mentioned
- **Space:** Classroom space
- **Budget:** \$249.95 per grade-level for all required materials
- **Intervention:** Teacher guides, student workbooks, health passports, videotapes, posters, song tapes
- **Evaluation:** Measurement tools for blood pressure, cholesterol, height and weight; questionnaire

**Evaluation:**

- **Design:** Quasi experimental
- **Methods and Measures:**
  - Measures of blood pressure, plasma levels of total cholesterol, height and weight
  - Risk factor examination
  - Physical exams included weight, triceps skinfold thickness, blood pressure, postexercise pulse recovery rate, nonfasting plasma and HDL levels, saliva cotinine (to determine smoking status)
  - 24-hour dietary recall interview

- Questionnaires measured attitudes towards diet, physical activity and smoking and knowledge relating to the prevention of heart disease and cancer
- Teacher Activity Reports assessed which activities were taught, how much of the workbooks were completed and the teachers' opinions on the efficacy of the activities;
- Classroom observations to assess both the teachers and the activities

**Outcomes:**

- Short term Impact: At one year, the schools saw significant positive trends in blood pressure, cholesterol, smoking status and skinfold thickness.
- Long Term Impact: Not measured

**Maintenance:** Not mentioned

**Lessons Learned:** The findings suggest that the program may be effective in reducing chronic disease risk in diverse school populations. The quality of teaching affects the quality of outcomes.

**Citation(s):**

Bush, P. J., A. E. Zuckerman, et al. (1989). "Cardiovascular risk factor prevention in black schoolchildren: two-year results of the "Know Your Body" program." Am J Epidemiol **129**(3): 466-82.

Taggart, V. S., P. J. Bush, et al. (1990). "A process evaluation of the District of Columbia "Know Your Body" project." J Sch Health **60**(2): 60-6.

Walter, H. J. and E. L. Wynder (1989). "The development, implementation, evaluation, and future directions of a chronic disease prevention program for children: the "Know Your Body" studies." Prev Med **18**(1): 59-71.

Walter, H. J. (1989). "Primary prevention of chronic disease among children: the school-based "Know Your Body" intervention trials." Health Educ Q **16**(2): 201-14.

Walter, H. J., A. Hofman, et al. (1988). "Modification of risk factors for coronary heart disease. Five-year results of a school-based intervention trial." N Engl J Med **318**(17): 1093-100.

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Walter, H. J., A. Hofman, et al. (1985). "Primary prevention of chronic disease in childhood: Changes in risk factors after one year of intervention." Am J Epidemiol **122**(5): 772-81.