

Title of Intervention: Wheeling 1% Or Less Campaign

Intervention Strategies: Campaigns and Promotions

Purpose of the Intervention: To increase awareness of the health benefits of fat-free milk

Population: General public

Setting: Two communities in West Virginia; community-based

Partners: Local health care providers, media outlets, advisory board

Intervention Description:

- Campaigns and Promotions: A six-week mass media campaign included paid advertising on television, radio, and newspapers. The advertisements used a health message appeal and encouraged a switch from whole or 2% milk to 1% or fat-free milk as an easy way to cut saturated fat intake and reduce the risk of heart disease. A professional agency developed and placed the advertisements. The public relations strategy included the following media events: a kick-off press conference, a mid-campaign press conference that featured prominent local physicians; a press release announcing the mid-campaign results; two milk taste test events that stressed that low-fat milk tastes good and a press conference at the end of the campaign. A campaign advisory board of 25 community leaders and local health professionals was formed to provide credibility for the campaign and guidance on implementing the campaign.

Theory: Not mentioned

Resources Required:

- Staff/Volunteers: Not mentioned
- Training: Volunteers received training on data collection
- Technology: Telephones
- Space: Not mentioned
- Budget: Approximately \$43,000 for salaries, the placement of advertisements, materials for educational and public relations activities and data collection.
- Intervention: Media outlets
- Evaluation: Survey

Evaluation:

- Design: Quasi-experimental, Pre- and Post-test
- Methods and Measures:
 - Pre-tests assessed milk drinking habits, demographics and other behavioral questions
 - The post-test included questions about whether participants saw or heard the advertisements and news articles about the campaign and assessed their impressions of those ads and news stories
 - Supermarket milk sales were analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the campaign

Outcomes:

- Short Term Impact: Not measured
- Long Term Impact: Survey participants in the intervention city were more likely to drink milk, drink low-fat milk and purchase milk at supermarkets than were respondents in the comparison community. The market share for low-fat milk increased from 29% of overall milk sales before the campaign to 46% of sales in the month after the campaign. Market shares for high-fat milk decreased in the intervention community from 71% of overall milk sales before the campaign to 54% and 58% in the months immediately after and 6 months after the campaign. In the intervention city, 34.1% of high-fat milk drinkers switched to low-fat milk, compared to 3.6% in the comparison city.

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: The Wheeling 1% Or Less campaign offers an interesting model to health and nutrition educators. It provides an example of how mass media, in the absence of additional programming, can be used effectively, at a reasonable cost, to promote healthy eating. This campaign also simplified the complex behavior of consuming fat into a something easy for the community members to understand.

Citation(s):

Reger, B., M. G. Wootan, et al. (1999). "Using mass media to promote healthy eating: A community-based demonstration project." *Prev Med* 29(5): 414-21.