

Title of Intervention: Maryland WIC 5-A-Day Promotion Program

Intervention Strategies: Group Education, Individual Education, Campaigns and Promotions

Purpose of the Intervention: To encourage participants to increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables by one-half of a serving

Population: WIC participants

Setting: WIC clinics in Baltimore, MD; health care facility-based

Partners: WIC clinics, University of Maryland, Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Intervention Description:

- **Group Education:** Nutrition sessions were conducted by peer educators. The nutrition education included brief messages about increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables and discussion sessions. The peer educators led three 45-minute nutrition education sessions over a 6-month period. The meetings took place immediately before the bi-monthly voucher distribution days. Childcare was provided. The first session focused on self-assessment, value of eating fruits/vegetables and personal goal setting. The second was about identifying and overcoming perceived barriers. The third stressed maintenance. All sessions included a food demonstration. Tip sheets and recipes pertaining to the clue card were distributed at the meeting.
- **Individual Education:** Participants received printed material based on a photonovella, a booklet with a storyline and pictures. It served as a guidebook for writing thoughts about fruits and vegetables, setting goals and identifying and overcoming barriers. Peer educators guided participants through the exercises in the novella during their sessions. Clue cards were also provided to stimulate conversation about fruits and vegetables. Each clue card posed a question related to a specific behavior they were promoting. The cards were mailed to the participants and participants were asked to write their response on the back of the card and bring it to the next education session. The direct mail involved four different tailored letters each accompanied by a tip sheet and clue card. The letters were tailored to pregnancy status, baseline stage of change, attendance at nutrition sessions and individual goals.
- **Campaigns and Promotions:** Visual reminders and direct mail promoted the intervention. Participants received a child's activity book focusing on fruits and vegetables, a videotape with kids singing about fruits and vegetables and a refrigerator magnet with the logo. Calendar reminder sheets were also provided.

Theory: Stages of Change

Resources Required:

- **Staff/Volunteers:** Peer educators
- **Training:** Training for peer educators
- **Technology:** Not mentioned
- **Space:** Room for classes
- **Budget:** Not mentioned
- **Intervention:** Child activity book, videotape, magnet, reminder sheets, clue cards, postage, tip sheets, recipes, guidebook, food demonstration materials
- **Evaluation:** Survey

Evaluation:

- **Design:** Randomized crossover design
- **Methods and Measures:** A self-administered survey assessed food intake

Outcomes:

- **Short Term Impact:** Not measured
- **Long Term Impact:** The difference in mean change in consumption of fruits and vegetables from baseline to the one-year follow-up between intervention and control participants remained significant.

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: Dietary changes to prevent cancer can be achieved and sustained in this low-income population, but there are many obstacles to overcome (e.g., transportation, work schedules and lack of interest).

Citation(s):

Havas, S., J. Anliker, et al. (1998). "Final results of the Maryland WIC 5-A-Day Promotion Program." *Am J Public Health* 88(8): 1161-7.