

Title of Intervention and Website: Body Basics

Intervention Strategies: Supportive Relationships, Campaigns and Promotions

Purpose of the Intervention: To encourage weight loss through a media campaign and support groups

Population: The viewing audience of WGN television station, general population of large metropolitan area

Setting: Community-based; Chicago, IL

Partners: Television station, hardware stores, HMOs

Intervention Description:

- Campaigns and Promotions: This weight loss and nutrition program delivered, by a popular news reporter, consisted of 15 two- to four-minute television broadcasts that aired on the noon and nine o'clock news from Monday to Friday for three weeks. It provided the audience step-by-step instructions on how to lose weight and improve nutrition. A free program manual was distributed through hardware stores and HMOs.
- Supportive Relationships: A small sample of those participating in the program were also encouraged to participate in support groups by a "buddy," who called once a week during the program and less frequently during the three months following the program.

Theory: Not mentioned

Resources Required:

- Staff/Volunteers: television newscaster
- Training: not mentioned
- Technology: audiovisual equipment
- Space: office space for staff phone calls
- Budget: cost of television segments, cost of program manuals, staff costs for support phone calls
- Intervention: Body Basics manual, support "buddies," television segments
- Evaluation: Nutritionist III scoring program, food diaries, physical activity survey, Master Questionnaire and Interpersonal Support Evaluation List (ISEL), scale

Evaluation:

- Design: cohort
- Methods and Measures: food diaries to track nutritional intake over 3 days; survey to measure type and amount of physical activity over 3 days, self-reported and actual weight, predicted effectiveness of the program, and survey to measure support. Participants were also asked to rate the television segments and manuals.

Outcomes:

- Short term Impact: Those attending groups significantly decreased percent fat intake and significantly increased aerobic exercise.
- Long Term Impact: Those attending self-help groups lost an average of more than 9 lbs; those who were provided TV program and manual lost less than 1 lb.

Maintenance: Support "buddy" phone calls continued with decreasing frequency for three months following the television program.

Lessons Learned: Short term mass media programs supplemented by self-help manuals and support groups may be able to produce significant short term weight loss.

Citation(s):

Jason, L. A., B. J. Greiner, et al. (1991). "A large-scale, short-term, media-based weight loss program." *Am J Health Promot* 5(6): 432-7.