

Title of Intervention: Alliance of Black Churches Health Project

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

Purpose of the Intervention: To improve health and increase cessation among African Americans

Population: African American residents of two rural Virginia counties

Setting: Rural Virginia counties, African American churches and schools; community-based, faith-based, school-based

Partners: University of Virginia, Buckingham Health Education Board

Intervention Description:

- Individual Education: The self-help smoking cessation intervention was designed with assistance from Alliance of Black Churches coalition members. It incorporated current recommendations for self-help guides and addressed local issues. The program, "Call It Quits," was based on a calendar-style handout that could be hung from the wall or refrigerator. Each page contained a goal for one day, with seven pages devoted to preparing to quit and seven pages containing information relevant to the seven days after quitting. Each page could be torn off and carried as a reminder of the day's tasks.
- Supportive Relationships: For smokers, the counselors asked about interest and readiness in quitting. For individuals not ready to quit, they asked about the pros and cons of smoking, gave them information about the risks of smoking and the benefits of quitting and asked permission to contact them later. Individuals interested in quitting were encouraged to pick a quit date.
- Group Education: One or two smoking cessation counselors were trained from participating churches. The counselors were chosen by their churches and each received eight hours of training. The training included guidelines for dealing with smokers at different stages of change. Each counselor was encouraged to discuss the program with his or her congregation at large and to ask individuals about whether they smoked and wanted information in a nonjudgmental fashion. The smoking cessation counselors were trained to provide initial advice on a one-time basis using the program and to provide brief active follow-up counseling.
- Campaigns and Promotions: The churches participated in the Great American Smoke-Out, which included a county-wide smoking cessation contest. The schools participated in anti-smoking essay and poster contests. There were county-wide gospel Quit Nights, during which gospel groups performed and information on the smoking cessation programs was handed out.

Theory: Transtheoretical Model, Community Empowerment Model

Resources Required:

- Staff/Volunteers: Facilitators, counselors, community leaders
- Training: Not mentioned
- Technology: Not mentioned
- Space: Meeting space, event space
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Self-help manual and calendar, educational materials, promotional flyers
- Evaluation: Surveys

Evaluation:

- Design: Pre- and post-test
- Methods and Measures:
 - The survey gathered data on demographics, smoking status, smoking habits, smoking cessation and awareness of the program.

Outcomes:

- Short Term Impact: There was a higher awareness of and contact with smoking cessation programs in the intervention group. There was significantly more progress along the stages of change in the intervention than in the control county.
- Long Term Impact: Not measured

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: Church coalitions can be developed to deliver health-related interventions to rural African Americans, including smoking cessation programs.

Citation(s):

Schorling, J. B., J. Roach, et al. (1997). "A trial of church-based smoking cessation interventions for rural African Americans." *Prev Med* 26(1): 92-101