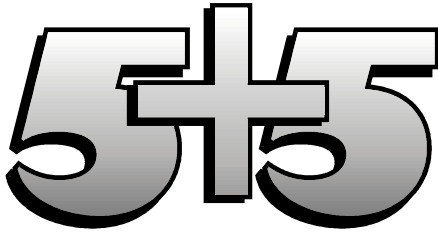


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Section One

Community Organization and Program Design

Introduction

Community-based programs to improve nutrition or increase physical activity offer tremendous health benefits. Integrating nutrition and physical activity programs creates a synergistic effect that leads to increased fitness and reduced risks for heart disease, certain cancers, stroke, diabetes mellitus, obesity and related chronic diseases.

The circumstances surrounding the creation of a 5 Plus 5 nutrition/physical activity program will vary among organizations. Regardless of the size of your community or your group's financial resources, the step-by-step approach outlined in this section will provide the information and support required to design, implement, and evaluate a community-based nutrition/physical activity program. Worksheets are provided to guide you through the process.

Other resources are available to help you through the process of planning nutrition and physical activity interventions:

- Coalition-building, community assessment and intervention materials may be found at the *Community Toolbox* website hosted the University of Kansas at <http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu> .
- *Moving to the Future: Developing Community-Based Nutrition Services* is a resource published by the Association of State and Territorial Public Health Nutrition Directors (ASTPHND). It is available as a printed publication and has its own website dedicated to providing tools, resources, discussion and interaction for successful community-based planning at <http://www.movingtothefuture.org/> .

The Process

Use the following nine steps to plan, implement, evaluate and sustain your nutrition/physical activity program. Through this process, you can move from the creative process and ideas to community-wide action and support.

1. Select a core planning group and a coordinator.
2. Develop a community profile.
3. Establish a community advisory board or coalition.
4. Conduct a community inventory survey.
5. Identify priorities and appropriate activities.
6. Develop a plan.
7. Promote, Promote, Promote
8. Evaluate the effort.
9. Sustain the momentum.

1. Select a Core Planning Group and a Coordinator

Begin by identifying a project coordinator. This person will be responsible for directing and supervising development and implementation of the Community Action Plan. The coordinator may be the administrator of your organization or someone who reports directly to the administrator. The coordinator should appoint a core group of three to six people, from inside or outside the organization, to assist in program planning.

At the initial meeting of the core planning group, the coordinator will review the importance of establishing a community nutrition/physical activity program and explain the process for developing the Action Plan, as outlined in this manual.

2. Develop a Community Profile

Developing a community profile will help the core planning group identify target populations, effective intervention strategies, and potential community partners. In some communities, an assessment has already been completed or is in process. Contact your local public health agency to determine this. The profile should include:

- geographic information
- demographic attributes
- epidemiological information
- community resources
- key community leaders.

Geographic Information

Get to know the geographical layout of your service area. Map key sites, such as schools, churches, grocery stores, and other places where participants can meet for exercise and to buy food.

Demographic Attributes

Define the key characteristics of your community's various population groups. Include demographic attributes such as age, sex, ethnicity, income and educational level. The North Dakota State Data Center serves as the liaison to the U.S. Census Bureau and is the most comprehensive source of this type of information. Information is at your fingertips at the website www.ndsu.nodak.edu/sdc/index.htm. Demographic statistics obtained by the Census Bureau on each American every 10 years include age, sex, race, ethnicity, household type, household ownership, educational attainment, employment status, occupation and household income. To provide updated estimates of the most widely used data, the Census Bureau also conducts periodic surveys, such as the annual Current Population Survey.

Local agencies that have access to, and may be willing to share, locally collected data reports include the state Department of Labor, Department of Commerce and Department of Public Instruction; local, county or regional planning boards or commissions; local or county offices of economic development; and the local board of education and chamber of commerce.

Determine the total population of your service area; then determine the sizes and characteristics of various population segments, such as teenagers, the elderly, and ethnic groups. By dividing the population according to key characteristics, you can develop a community profile that will help you identify specific target populations for your community nutrition/physical activity intervention program.

Epidemiological information

Information on the health habits, morbidity (disease) and mortality (death) rates for your area may be available from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) on the web at www.cdc.gov/nchs/.

Information about health habits is available by state through the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The BRFSS includes information about diet and weight management, physical activity, cholesterol, hypertension and use of tobacco and alcohol. To view results of North Dakota's BRFSS data, visit the National BRFSS website at www.cdc.gov/brfss/index.htm.

The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) was developed in 1990 to monitor priority health risk behaviors that contribute markedly to the leading causes of death, disability, and social problems among youth and adults in the United States. These behaviors, often established during childhood and early adolescence, include unhealthy dietary behaviors and inadequate physical activity. The National CDC YRBSS website is found at www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs/results.htm and North Dakota specific information is online at www.health.state.nd.us/ndhd/PUBS/prevent/yrbs/yrbs01.pdf

Your local special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program can provide obesity and health information for the women of childbearing age and children from birth to age 5 for your region.

Health statistics for North Dakota counties are available through the North Dakota Department of Health's website at www.vitalnd.com or by calling the Office of Vital Records (701.328.2360). Your local public health agency most likely has this information, also.

Worksheet 1 (page 61), *Analyzing Community Data*, will help your organization/coalition analyze and prioritize the demographic and epidemiological data you have gathered.

Community Resources

All major community organizations are potential partners or supporters of your nutrition/physical activity program. Your list of community resources should include government units, schools, churches, civic groups, public and private health agencies and facilities, major businesses and industries, schools, media, and emergency services.

Resource listings may be available from the local Chamber of Commerce, office of economic development, county planning board, or newspaper office. You can create your own resource listing using **Worksheet 2** (pages 62-63), *List of Organizations*.

Key Community Leaders

It is important to identify the “movers and shakers” in your service area. Opinion leaders are those people who may possess the knowledge, resources or skills needed for your project. The leaders’ involvement is a key step in the success of your project because:

- They know many of the problems and needs of the community, and can provide information not available from other sources.
- They have the power to support or hinder your effort.
- They may be willing to take an active role in your current and future projects.

Some opinion leaders are easy to identify because they hold official positions within the community – elected office holders, school officials, clergy, hospital administrators, the Chamber of Commerce director. It is also important to seek opinions from the unofficial leaders of the community – those who do not hold positions of authority but are influential in and knowledgeable about the community, such as leaders of community action and service groups.

Worksheet 3 (page 64), *Identifying Opinion Leaders*, and **Worksheet 4** (pages 65-67), *Community Opinion Survey*, will help you identify the key opinion leaders in your service area and begin the interview process. The information gleaned from this process will provide:

- Important clues about how to launch your project,
- An idea of the level of community awareness about nutrition/physical activity needs,
- An indication of the level of support for your project, including identification of potential project partners.

3. Establish a Community Advisory Board or Coalition

Extensive networking is vital for gaining the community support and participation necessary to the development of an effective nutrition/physical activity intervention program. Forming an advisory committee or coalition whose members represent diverse community segments is the first step in the networking process.

Coalition/committee members then network with others in the community, achieving results that would be impossible independently.

There are many excellent reasons for forming a coalition.

Coalitions can:

- Use limited community resources efficiently,
- Provide more skills than a single organization,
- Build trust among community organizations,
- Help to ensure that community interventions and materials are culturally sensitive,
- Prevent duplication of efforts and competition among community organizations for limited resources,
- Convey a powerful message about the importance of nutrition/physical activity programs to the community.

You can select members of your coalition/advisory committee from among the opinion leaders identified in your survey. In addition, consider using members of organizations such as county extension service; parks and recreation department; community schools; local nutrition/health/wellness coalition; YMCA/YWCA; local media; service organizations; local farm-related organization(s); local voluntary agencies; faith-based organizations; local food pantry; parent/teacher groups; hospital-based wellness centers; WIC programs; and local public health agencies.

To secure an organization’s support for your program, it is helpful for you to attend a few of its meetings. Get to know their operating procedures, and let them get to know you. Some organizations may be able to offer volunteer services, funds or materials for use in implementing your program.

It is important to define the structure, function and role of your coalition/committee in the beginning. Will it act as an advisory board, seek resources (including funding) for your nutrition/physical activity project, or implement intervention strategies? How frequently will the group hold meetings, and will the meeting structure be formal or informal?

4. Conduct a Community Inventory Survey

Before beginning your nutrition/physical activity intervention, you need to know what community programs and activities already address these issues. This information can be gathered by completing a community resource inventory. A resource inventory will help you:

- Identify existing nutrition/physical activity programs in the community,
- Identify gaps in community nutrition/physical activity programming,
- Understand the capabilities, philosophy, functions and goals of other community organizations,
- Identify potential partners for your nutrition/physical activity program,
- Obtain information about the potential for coordinating your activities with existing programs.

Since you have already identified community organizations on **Worksheet 2**, (pages 62-63), *List of Organizations*, use **Worksheet 5** (pages 68-69) *Survey of Community Activities* to interview these organizations to determine their available resources. **Worksheet 6** (pages 70-71), *Summary of Current Activities*, assists in identifying gaps in those resources, and determining which organizations may be potential partners. See also on the Community Toolbox at <http://ctb.lst.ukans.edu>.

5. Identify Priorities and Appropriate Activities

Once you complete the community profile and the community resource inventory, your organization/coalition can use the data collected to develop a list of nutrition/physical activity priorities for the entire community and for specific populations within the community.

Based on these priorities and potential target groups, your organization/coalition can set realistic goals for its program and identify program activities that will accomplish those goals.

The CDC's Task Force on Community Preventive Services (the Task Force) has conducted systematic reviews of community interventions to increase physical activity. The Task Force identified and "recommends" or "strongly recommends" inter-

ventions demonstrated to be effective in increasing physical activity. Those interventions are marked in bold print. Further information about the Community Task Force's recommendations may be found at www.thecommunityguide.org/.

The most effective community nutrition/physical activity programs emphasize intervention strategies that combine:

- public awareness,
- lifestyle change through skill development, and
- environmental change through the development of policy changes.

These interventions can help people make healthy choices:

Public Awareness Programs increase the level of awareness or interest in the topic. They build awareness through newsletters, posters, health fairs, health screenings and other activities that make people aware of the health risks that result from the combination of poor nutrition and sedentary lifestyle. Typically, behavior change and health improvement do not occur when this strategy is used by itself. However, when an awareness campaign is conducted in conjunction with programs that encourage lifestyle change, it can be effective at motivating and reinforcing behavior change in your community's residents. The Community Task Force has found that:

- Effective public awareness campaigns are part of many-faceted efforts including environmental or policy changes such as the creation of walking trails, risk factor screening and education, support or self-help groups or community events such as health fairs;
- Effective public awareness campaigns are large in scale, intense, highly visible and community-wide.
- Point of decision prompts point out a health benefit or remind people who already want to be more active that this is an opportunity for them to do so. (Point of decision prompts are signs placed near elevators to encourage people to use the stairs.)

Lifestyle Change Programs focus on specific behavior change. These programs emphasize practical, positive ways to make step-by-step changes. Effective lifestyle change programs may include:

- Skill-building – Combine knowledge with practical strategies to help people make recommended changes (e.g., teach cooking

classes that feature fruits and vegetables, and/or teach consumers to calculate target heart rate).

- Trial Behavior – Provides opportunities to experience and attempt new skills (e.g., schedule a monthly, low-fat potluck, form a walking group).
- Social Support – Building, strengthening, and maintaining social networks such as the use of a buddy system, setting up walking groups for friendship and support, or making contracts with others to complete specified limits of physical activity.
- Individually-adapted health behavior change programs are effective when tailored to an individual's interests, preferences and readiness for change. Such skills include goal-setting, self-monitoring of progress toward meeting the goals, building social support, self-reward and positive self-talk, problem-solving and prevention of relapse.

Supportive Environments are essential in maintaining long-term and sustained behavior changes. Programs designed to change the environment focus on improving physical settings, establishing health policies, providing rewards and recognition of role models, and establishing ongoing programs.

- Creating or improving access to places for physical activity combined with distribution of information is effective in helping people become more physically active.

Promotion of a supportive environment may include establishing a marked walking, biking or cross-country ski trail; marking low-fat items on restaurant menus; labeling grocery store shelves with important nutrient information; making exercise facilities accessible to people with disabilities, the very young or the elderly; establishing daily physical education in schools; or establishing health promotion and wellness programs in the workplace.

Many programs can be implemented at little cost. Suggestions for effective, low-cost nutrition/physical activity programs that encourage individual and community change through awareness, lifestyle change and environmental support are presented in Section 2 and Section 3 of this manual.

Successful community nutrition/physical activity programs need to do more than motivate residents; they need to change the communities in which they live. These changes will support and complement individual behavior change efforts. For community

nutrition/physical activity efforts to be successful, they need to be reinforced through public policies that encourage healthy environments. Most importantly, interventions must be built into existing community structures to ensure they are sustainable.

Use **Worksheet 7** (page 72), *Inventory of Potential Activities*, at a brainstorming session to choose program activities. The following questions also may help you get started:

- What ideas for nutrition/physical activity interventions have not been fully implemented that could be?
- What is the potential for linking new nutrition/physical activity interventions with existing community health promotion activities?
- Could existing nutrition/physical activity programs and services in the community be presented differently or marketed to a different audience to improve or expand their success?
- What community nutrition/physical activity needs are not being met?
- How can our coalition collaborate with existing efforts within our community?

Worksheet 8 (page 73), *Is the Program Right for Us?*, can help you decide if a particular activity is feasible for your organization/coalition.

6. Develop a Plan

Having identified community nutrition/physical activity needs, appropriate target groups, most frequently used media, and effective education and intervention activities, you are ready to develop your program plan. This plan will begin in draft form and undergo many revisions before it becomes a working plan. It should summarize your goals and the strategies to be used to achieve those goals. Evaluation and program planning should go hand-in-hand. The following should be included in the plan:

- A mission statement with specific goals and objectives
- A budget itemizing expenses and revenues
- Fund-raising efforts if needed
- Population groups to be targeted
- Specific nutrition/physical activity strategies (both education and risk reduction)
- Communication channels to be used
- A time line for conducting activities

- Methods/approaches/sites for community interaction
- Identification of staff responsible for implementing activities
- Supervisory responsibility
- Educational materials to be obtained or developed
- Results the activities are expected to achieve
- Methods for tracking progress of activities including record-keeping and reporting
- Methods for monitoring fiscal activity
- Methods for evaluating effectiveness of activities

As preparations are made to implement the plan, additional staff support may be needed. If so, a volunteer recruitment campaign may be required. In addition, community partners may be assigned to serve on task forces that oversee implementation of specific components of the plan. Compile a task chart, listing all the steps needed to conduct each activity. Assign a team captain to supervise the tasks under each category, and assign staff to the team captain. Team captains should report weekly to the program coordinator, who in turn provides regular updates to all program partners.

7. Promote! Promote! Promote!

When it comes to community nutrition/physical activity programs the three “Ps” that spell success are: Promote! Promote! Promote! It is important to construct a media/awareness campaign before implementing your program. Deciding how to promote the program over its course can increase the likelihood of your effort’s success. The media campaign should include the following activities:

- Conveying information about the program to the general public
- Communicating progress to community partners and the public
- Promoting activities to target groups
- Recognizing the accomplishments of community organizations, schools, churches, businesses and industries that support and participate in the program
- Evaluating the effects of the media

Worksheet 7 (page 72) will help you plan your promotion. Remember to include other events, such as a walk held before or after the event, state and national campaigns, and national health promotion observances.

8. Evaluate the Effort

It is important to conduct the best evaluation possible. Evaluating the program’s process and outcomes helps determine which strategies or tasks worked well, and directions for the future. It also provides guidance for improving the functions of a program. Evaluation efforts are dependent upon the resources available to collect and analyze the information. The Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity at the CDC has developed a “Physical Activity Evaluation Handbook.” This resource outlines the six basic steps of program evaluation and includes worksheets and examples. It is available online at www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/handbook/index.htm. A hard copy may be requested by sending an email to cdcinfo@cdc.gov or calling 770.488.5820.

The four types of evaluation are formative, process, outcome and impact.

Formative evaluation, including pretesting, is designed to assess the strengths and weaknesses of materials or campaign strategies before implementation. It permits necessary revisions before the full effort goes forward. The basic purpose of formative evaluation is to maximize the chance for program success before the activity starts.

Process evaluation examines the procedures and tasks involved in implementing a program. This type of evaluation also allows you to look at the administrative and organizational aspects of the program. It is recommended to complete process evaluation at several points during the implementation of your program. Then you can adjust your activities if the evaluation shows that the process is not working as planned or projected.

Outcome evaluation is used to obtain descriptive data on a project and to document short-term results. Task-focused results are those that describe the output of the activity (e.g., the number of public inquiries received as a result of a public service announcement). Short-term results describe the immediate effects of the project on the target audience (e.g., percentage of the target audience showing increased awareness of the subject). Results from an outcome evaluation include:

- Knowledge and attitude changes
- Expressed intentions of the target audience
- Short-term or intermediate behavior shifts
- Policies initiated or other institutional changes made.

Impact evaluation is the most comprehensive of the four evaluation types. It is desirable because it

focuses on the long-range results of the program plus changes or improvements in a group's health status. Impact evaluations are rarely possible because they are frequently costly and involve extended commitment. Results often cannot be directly related to the effects of an activity or program because of other external influences on the target audience which occur over time. Information obtained from an impact study may include:

- Changes in morbidity and mortality
- Changes in absenteeism from work
- Long-term maintenance of desired behavior
- Rates of recidivism

Every evaluation design must contain the following elements:

A statement of objectives — Unless there is an adequate definition of desired achievements, evaluation cannot measure them. Evaluators need clear and definite objectives to measure program effects. Sections 2 and 3 of this manual offer examples of objectives for the nutrition and physical activity components of your program.

Determination of data to be collected — This is the process for determining what is to be measured in relation to the objectives. Thought should be given to what data are needed for effective program reporting versus what data can be collected without extreme hardship to the program.

Methodology — A study design is formulated to permit measurement in a valid and reliable manner.

Instrumentation — The instruments range from simple tally sheets for counting public inquiries to complex survey and interview forms. Data collection instruments are designed and pretested.

Data Collection — The actual process of gathering data must be done in a consistent manner, regardless of who is collecting.

Data Processing — Putting the data into usable form for analysis is a key process to accomplishing accurate analysis.

Data Analysis — The application of statistical or other analytical techniques to the data to discover significant relationships should be done by individuals who are objective and familiar with the principles of analysis.

Reporting — Compiling and recording evaluation results is the final step of the process. These results rarely pronounce a program a complete success or failure. All programs have good and bad points. It is important to appreciate that lessons can be learned from both if results are properly analyzed. These lessons should be applied in revising the existing program or as a guide to planning new efforts.

9. Sustain the Momentum

With evaluation data in hand, the process begins anew: Assess program outcomes; modify the objectives, plans and budget. Often after large community-wide efforts, the temptation is to fall into a lull for a period of time. A more effective strategy is to use the time at the conclusion of a program to debrief and collect thoughts on what worked, what didn't and why. The newly developed and strengthened relationships created by your program provide a basis for examining the evaluation data and planning for your community's next program effort.

Remember to take time to recognize and thank volunteers and community groups who made the program(s) possible. There are many ways to say thank you, including paid advertisements, direct mail pieces, personal notes or a party.