



Promoting Healthy Outcomes Among a Diverse Urban Population by Engaging Parents and Families.

Tracy Perron PhD, RN, CSN & Tami Jakubowski DNP, CPNP-PC, CSN



Introduction

- Community cafés are local, community-based interventions designed to gather members of a community to initiate dialogue on a chosen topic to eventually solve a larger problem.
- Community cafés emphasize the importance of person experiences and diverse perspectives, assuming that community members are the experts of their own community (Maughan & Willgerodt, 2017).
- Community cafes are designed to be informal and comfortable to promote a sense of familiarity (a “safe space”) that encourages participants to speak naturally and openly (Maughan & Willgerodt, 2017).
- Community cafés are effective interventions to community wide problems because they inherently take into account local culture, build community connections and networks between participants, and encourage community leadership and mobilization (MacFarlane et al., 2017.)

Methods

- This project focused on childhood nutrition and combatting childhood obesity.
- Flyers were distributed throughout the community.
- The cafes were held in Trenton at a variety of locations.
- Children were occupied with games and other physical activities while parents were in community café.
- Discussions were kept informal to encourage parents to participate.
- Healthy food and drinks were served to participants to promote a comfortable environment.
- Conversations were recorded and later translated and transcribed.



Key Topics Discussed

- Parent/guardian’s perceptions of health and nutrition.
- Access to fresh produce and healthy options.
- School breakfast and lunch.
- Children’s food preferences.
- Meals prepared at home.
- Local restaurant choices.
- Transportation
- Safety of sidewalks and local parks
- Access of exercise facilities
- Access of community programs (Little League, summer camps)



Findings

- The main challenge in Trenton is finding a grocery store with healthy options.
- Transportation was a significant barrier.
- Due to the closer proximity and familiarity, families reported shopping primarily at corner stores.
- Concerns regarding school lunch quality and healthy options were voiced.
- Minimal meals prepared at home due to lack of time and availability of healthy ingredients.
- Concerns regarding of safe play areas was verbalized.
- Community programs are available however access was expressed as a limitation.



Impact to Community

- Initiatives designed to involve and educate parents about childhood nutrition, community resources, and obesity are essential.
- Parents make nutritional decisions for their children, thus determining what foods their children will eat.
- Community engaged interventions such as community cafés inform parents/caregivers about community initiatives.

References

- Lloyd, K., Ohri-Vachaspati, P., Brownlee, S., Yedidia, M., Gaboda, M., & Chou, J. (2011). New jersey childhood obesity survey. [Powerpoint slides]. Retrieved from www.cshp.rutgers.edu/Downloads/8660.pdf
- MacFarlane, A., Galvin, R., O’Sullivan, M., McInerney, C., Meagher, E., Burke, D., & LeMaster, J. W. (2017). Participatory methods for research prioritization in primary care: An analysis of the world café approach in Ireland and the USA. *Family Practice*, 34(3), 278-284.
- Maughan, E. & Willgerodt, M. (2017). For shawnee: Keeping the student (and family) front and center. *NASN School Nurse*, 33(1), 48-51.