IMPLEMENTATION OF A SMOKING EDUCATION INITIATIVE

Sylvia Sheffler Ph.D, RN
Background

• Project idea originated with class discussion of health promotion behaviors
• Concerns voiced about the number of smokers
• Grant opportunity identified
• Literature review conducted
Smoking and Its Adverse Effect on Health is a Global Issue

• World Health Organization statistics - Asia, Europe, and the Pacific continue to have high rates of smoking.

• Smoking rates in the United States and Britain have dropped, however, morbidity rates continue to grow.

• Globally, four million people die each year from smoking related diseases.
Smoking Prevention Initiatives Are Important

• Young people can be drawn to smoking by:
  – social pressures from peers
  – intense media campaigns that depict smoking as making individuals more appealing to the opposite sex or as part of a desirable lifestyle.

• According to a National Survey of U.S. college students 40% either began smoking or developed into habitual smokers while in college.
African Americans Are More Susceptible to the Effects of Smoking

• In general, African Americans smoke fewer cigarettes per day, and tend to begin smoking later in life than whites - but their smoking related disease mortality is still higher.
  – Half of all deaths in African Americans are from diseases caused by smoking
  – More African Americans die from lung cancer than any other race in the U.S.
Project Initiation

- A grant was written and funded by the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation in Washington D.C.
- Permission to initiate the project was obtained from Delaware State University IRB committee
Objectives of the Program

• Educate college students on:
  – The effects of smoking on health
  – Social stigma associated with smoking
  – Media campaigns to attract young adults to smoking
  – Financial impact of smoking.

• Assess the effectiveness of peer educators.
Research Question

• Can peer educators utilize a gaming format to teach others about the adverse effects of smoking and the media campaigns that target young adults?
Methods

• Students in the College of Health and Public Policy were informed of the project.

• A general interest meeting was held
  – Fifteen students agreed to sign contracts and participate in the program.

• A Jeopardy game was presented to participants.
  – Meetings were held to introduce peer educators to the research process and the gaming format.
Methods

• Collaborated with dorm and apartment resident directors to establish a schedule for student education programs over the fall and spring semesters

• Students developed posters advertising their education programs and practiced running a Jeopardy game
Methods

• Education sessions were held by peer educators in residence halls and in on-campus meeting rooms.

• The purpose of the program was explained and informed consent forms were distributed and signed.

• Peer educators divided students into teams. A gaming format was used to educate participants. Prizes were awarded to teams and individuals.
Methods

• A short survey collected data on participants’ age, race, sex, year in University, if the individual smoked and what products they smoked. Participants were also asked if the program met stated objectives.

• Participants who smoked were referred to the Delaware Quit-line where free counseling and smoking cessation products were available to participants age 18 or above.
Barriers Encountered

• Students needed to be more proactive with program promotion
  – Student facilitators were important to success
• On 4 occasions program dates or times were rearranged by resident directors without prior notification
• Time commitment on the part of students and faculty was greater than expected
Results

- A total of 153 students participated in the peer education programs, 98 were female and 55 were male.
- Although 15 peer educators volunteered only 14 participated, 1 dropped out.
Results: Race

Number of People

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Number of People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black/AA</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/Hispanic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Indian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

• Class Year
  – Freshman and sophomores (122) or 79.7%
  – Juniors and seniors (31) comprised 20.3% of participants.

• Smoking Status
  – 132 (86.3%) reported that they did not smoke
  – 21 (13.7%) reported that they did smoke.
Results

- Brand of Products Smoked
  - Blacks
  - Black and Milds
  - Jacks
  - Weed

- Objectives Met
  - 94% of participants indicated that the program met stated objectives.
Conclusions

• Peer educators were able to stimulate student interest in attending a smoking prevention/education program.

• A gaming format was utilized to educate fellow students about:
  – the effects of smoking on health
  – social stigma associated with smoking
  – media campaigns
  – the cost of smoking.
Conclusions

• Future smoking prevention programs will need to focus on greater student participation, education on smoking cessation and discussion of marijuana use.
Acknowledgments

• Congressional Black Caucus Foundation in Washington D.C.
• DSU DROP SQUAD- Peer Educators