The Use of FORECAST to Develop an Ecological Intervention for Walking in Underserved Communities in the PATH Trial

Dawn K. Wilson, Sandra Coulon, Sarah Griffin, Sara St. George, Nevelyn Trumpeter, Hannah Lawman, Kassandra Kugler, Abraham Wandersman, Melinda Forthofer, Shamika Robinson, Barney Gadson

University of South Carolina, and Newton Family Life Center
PATH Theoretical Model

Program Elements

- Police Patrolled Walking
- Containment of Stray Dogs
- Community Safety Captions
- Identifying a Walking Route in Community
- Social Marketing

Mediating Variables

- Improved Perceptions of Safety
- Improved Perceptions of Access
- Improved Attitudes Motivation, Self-efficacy, Social Norms, Awareness of Patrolled-Walking Program

Behavioral & Physiological Outcomes

- Primary-Increased PA levels
- Secondary-Improved BMI, and Blood Pressure

PATH Study Design

- Communities were randomized to one of three programs (n=434 participants)

- Assessments at baseline, 6-, 12-, 18- and 24-months in African Americans ages 18 yrs and older

1) Police patrolled walking program plus social marketing campaign

2) Police patrolled walking program - only

3) General health education program- tailored to community needs

FORECAST

- Formative method to facilitate program development, planning, and implementation
- Consultative emphasis on collaborative evaluation
- Systematic monitoring of program development of program essential elements through a dynamic process

Bottom Up Approach

• Integrative validity increase fit of program to community needs (Chen & Garbe, 2011)
• Limitations of traditional RCT
• FORECAST allows for evaluating markers, measures, and meaning during implementation
• Effective, viable, and transferable validity key

Program Components and Essential Elements

**Program Components**

1. Access for Walking in Neighborhood
   - 1. The walking program uses a neighborhood walking trail
   - 2. The walking trail is free from structural & aesthetic barriers

2. Safety & Positive Perceptions of Safety
   - 1. Police are involved and present at walks
   - 2. Walking Leaders adhere to personal safety guidelines for injury
   - 3. The walking trail is free from stray dogs
   - 4. Walkers feel comfortable with the police

3. Resident Social Connectedness & Motivation to Walk
   - 1. The program increases social connectedness of resident walkers
   - 2. The SM campaign advocates that walking is safe, benefits mental, physical, & spiritual health, & promotes social connections
   - 3. The SM campaign uses community Pride Strides to increase walking
PATH Process Evaluation

Model of Monthly Feedback Process via Three Mechanisms

- **Program Delivery**
  - MECHANISM 1: Provide Instant Feedback to Community Intervention Staff
  - MECHANISM 2: Collect Formative Process Evaluation Data
  - MECHANISM 3: Consult With walkers and Residents on Program Adaptations

- Development of Monthly & Quarterly Goals using FORECAST
- Research Intervention Staff Reviews Findings

Provide Feedback to Community Intervention Staff & Steering Committee
Tracking the Interventions: Process Evaluation


• Examples of what gets tracked:
  – Walker attendance
  – Safety elements
  – Presence of stray dogs
  – Litter and vandalism on the trail
  – Trail overgrowth
  – Social interaction of walkers
Social Marketing Logo

PATH to Health Logo Development

Encompasses Program Elements and Mediators
Social Marketing Grassroots Approach

Engage community groups
Churches, Neighborhood Associations

Peer-led Pride Strides
Peer walking leaders initiate and lead personal walking groups
Reinforce deliverables messages
Field-guides
WALK WITH US! 
BE SAFE!

DID YOU KNOW?
There is a new secure walking route in South Sumter?
Our walking group is lead by certified walking leaders?
We can show you how to warm-up, cool down, and walk safely on the path?
The City of Sumter has partnered with us to keep our path clean and safe?
You can walk with our group? There is added safety in numbers, so let’s walk together.

JULY 2009

What are your long-term goals this month?
________________________________________
________________________________________

What are your short-term goals this month?
________________________________________
________________________________________

Did you meet your goals?
________________________________________
________________________________________

If yes, how are you going to reward yourself for a job well done?
________________________________________
________________________________________

If no, how are you going to re-set your goals next month and start fresh?
________________________________________
________________________________________
Pride Strides

Pride Strides are opportunities for organizations and community members to sponsor their own walks.

Featured Here: Leadership Pride Stride on July 25, 2009
Summary

• **Dose** - achieved in both programs during a majority of quarters

• **Fidelity** - achieved less consistently
  - strong in access and safety-related elements
  - weak related to walking warm-ups and trail quality
  - no walking injuries or threats
  - ongoing problem-solving
  - Walking-only program had challenges in trail quality
Community Walkers Perceptions

What do you like most about the PATH to Health Walks?

- Health Aspects: 24%
- Safety: 12%
- Fun: 6%
- Other: 12%
- Social Aspects: 47%
Baseline SOPARC PATH Data

Conclusions

• FORECAST was an effective model for developing an integrative and valid approach
• Adequate dose, fidelity, and reach were generally achieved over time
• The SM campaign led to increases in walking program participation and positive perceptions
• Results support effectiveness of the intervention implementation process, rather than simply intervention content