
MODELS FOR PRACTICE

FOCUS AREA: NUTRITION AND OVERWEIGHT

Program Name: Daya Tibi “House of Good Living”/Fort Peck

Community College Wellness Center

Location: Poplar, Montana

Problem Addressed: Nutrition and Diet

Healthy People 2010 Objective: 19

Web Address: None

SNAPSHOT

The Daya Tibi, “House of Good Living,” Wellness Center was established to combat the problem of obesity in Native Americans. The Wellness Center delivers several programs to address the problems of obesity. Generally, the Wellness Center focus is directed toward nutritional matters.

The Wellness Center was built to serve toddlers, adolescents, adults, and the elderly of Native American descent.

Initially, the city of Poplar received a grant from the Kellogg Foundation to create a wellness center. The Wellness Center is now funded by a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Nutrition, Diet, and Health grant and benefits from collaboration with other health groups. Those groups involved in the growth and establishment of Daya Tibi Wellness Center include the Fort Peck Tribal Health Department (638 Contract Diabetic Program), USDA Commodity Program – Fort Peck Tribes, USDA Food Stamp Nutrition Program, and the Native American Hunger Program through Phillip Morris Companies, Inc.

THE MODEL

Blueprint: The Wellness Center, associated with Fort Peck Community College (FPCC), is located on a Indian reservation in the city of Poplar, which is located in the northeastern corner of Montana and bordered on the south by the Missouri River. The reservation is 110 miles east to west and 40 miles north to south, encompassing 2,093,318 acres. The initial objective for creating the Daya Tibia Wellness Center was to address the problem of obesity and diabetes. The Wellness Center was built to serve toddlers, adolescents, adults, and the elderly of Native American descent. The Wellness Center created a nutrition awareness program, which is a six-week program where a nutritionalist assists individuals with their nutrition intake level, cholesterol level, food choices, etc. In conjunction with the nutrition program, the Wellness Center implemented the “Cooking for Kids Program” that teaches children proper food usage, kitchen safety, meal planning, table setting, and sufficient food preparation. It shows children the proper usage of the food pyramid and other visuals related to their nutritional intake.

Furthermore, the Wellness Center provides an exercise physiologist to assist those individuals who participate in the six-week program.

Making a Difference: During the six-week program, the exercise physiologist makes assessments of the individual's physique and health. A personal wellness profile is used to measure the success of the program. The profile consists of pre- and post-tests of fat levels; blood sugar; cholesterol check; blood pressure; and measurement of arms, biceps, hips, and waist. It also records participation in nutrition classes. The personal wellness profile helps individuals attack their problems through weight loss or by reducing their risks of developing diabetes. The overall goal of the personal wellness profile is to motivate participants in the program to stick with a nutritional diet supporting a healthier lifestyle. One of the USDA grant objectives measured the success of 86 participants' weight and health improvements. Of the 86 participants, 44 showed improvements in several categories (i.e., weight; blood pressure; blood sugar; and arm, wrist, and chest measurements).

Beginnings: The Fort Peck Community College Department of Community Services and several key community leaders observed the growing trends of obesity and diabetes among the community's youth and adults. This recognition led to the development of the Wellness Center program to address the problem of obesity, diabetes, and poor nutritional habits.

Challenges and Solutions: Implementation of the nutrition awareness program was viewed as a trial to see if the community was ready to change its nutritional habits. The goal of the nutritional program is to change participants' behavior toward living a better life. Demonstration of the program led to applying for the USDA Nutrition, Diet, and Health Grant for 2001–2002 and 2002–2003.

The Wellness Center monitors the success of the participants after completing the six-week program by conducting regular follow-ups and health screenings. Currently, the Wellness Center is modifying its objectives and goals for the program and plans to build two more wellness centers for the west and east sides of the reservation, based in Poplar and Wolf Point.

PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

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