

## **NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION (NRPA)**

### **Project: Mobile Outreach Program**

#### **Type:**

- Physical activity program
- School/community health education
- Research (quasi)

#### **Setting:**

- School-based
- Community-based

#### **Partners:**

- Local parks/recreation departments

#### **Goals:**

- To increase the amount of physical activity among participants in after-school recreation programs.
- To increase the opportunities youth participants have to develop lifelong physical activity skills.

#### **Description:**

Ten local recreation agencies were chosen to implement a physical activity program in already-established recreation programs within the communities (via after-school programs at community centers or schools). Program coordinators were trained on ways to implement more physical activity time into programming and on how to track participant data. Physical activity levels at each site were tracked using pre-/post-test data and pedometer readings over an approximate six-month period.

#### **Successes:**

- Inconclusive because post-test data have yet to be received.
- Getting large numbers of children (20-70 tweens) to participate in at least 30 minutes of physical activity between 2 and 5 days per week.
- Exposing children to a variety of activities (in-line skating, martial arts, hip hop dancing, leadership development through team play, and arts programming).
- Developing physical activity skills and knowledge of the importance of lifelong physical activity habits.

#### **Challenges:**

- Getting the consent of parents for data to be tracked on the children.
- Getting accurate pedometer readings (the children discovered that shaking the pedometers increases the number).



- One site experienced budget cuts that reduced the staff available to help carry out the program according to the initial timeline.

**Strategies for sustainability:**

- Through the training program managers were made aware of ways to incorporate more physical activity into recreational activities that often have an abundance of “down time” for participants (this knowledge can be used in future programming).
- Results of the program and the final analysis of pedometer readings and post-test data may determine the sustainability of this particular program for local recreation departments.

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