

Florida

Citrus Workers Start Wearing Protective Glasses to Prevent Eye Injuries

Producing Results

Crews of Latino migrant workers in Florida's citrus groves are now wearing safety glasses to protect their eyes from injuries, thanks to the consent and aid of the citrus companies and an innovative intervention from the University of South Florida's Prevention Research Center. Use of safety glasses has increased from 8% prior to the intervention to 30% after, compared to a steady rate of 4% for the control group. In Florida, citrus production is a \$9 billion industry, and keeping the workers safe is in the best interest of the economy, the employers, the workers, and their families.

Public Health Problem

Agricultural workers may get eye injuries from exposure to chemicals, dusts, and plant material as well as exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays in sunlight. Eye injuries cost \$300 million each year in medical expenses and lost work time (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2003). Wearing safety glasses is an easy method to protect the eyes, is cost-effective, and can prevent about 90% of injuries.

Taking Action

The University of South Florida's Prevention Research Center (PRC) has trained about 3 dozen citrus workers to educate crews of orange pickers about the proper use of safety glasses and encourage their use. The trainees also learn to give eyewashes out in the citrus groves to aid workers who get sand or debris in their eyes. Throughout the season, the PRC pays these safety promoters \$50 a week for their efforts and for debriefing weekly with a researcher from the university. The program is now in its fourth season, and researchers are walking through the orange groves to count the number of workers wearing safety glasses. The safety promoters have reached about 1,000 workers.

Implications and Impact

Usage has increased from 8% of workers wearing the glasses before the intervention to 30% after. (The control group has held steady at 4%.) In interviews with the citrus workers, however, the researchers learned of the workers' dissatisfaction with the available eyewear, which scratch easily, need frequent cleaning, are not very durable, fog up in the hot and humid climate, and lack UV protection. Using funds from a federally sponsored Small Business Innovative Research mechanism, the PRC is now partnering with commercial firms to develop a prototype for economical, scratch-resistant, anti-fog, self-cleaning lenses that offer UV protection. If the pilot test is successful, the partners will advance to mass production, dissemination, and evaluation of the safety glasses with a large sample of Florida citrus workers.

Washington State

PEARLS (Program to Encourage Active Rewarding Lives for Seniors) Beats Depression in Older Adults

Producing Results

PEARLS was associated with reduced depression in 43% of seniors who participated in a pilot phase of the program and with complete elimination of symptoms for more than 33% of participants. The University of Washington Health Promotion Research Center is working with the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services to assess whether PEARLS should be implemented statewide among older adults who receive social case management. The center is also working with the Washington State Unit on Aging to develop a PEARLS implementation toolkit, and with local agencies to train social services staff to provide PEARLS counseling.

Public Health Problem

Depression affects 15%-20% of older adults and is known to profoundly compromise health and quality of life. People who are socially isolated and in frail health are especially at risk for depression. Doctors and their older patients often incorrectly assume that depression is an unavoidable consequence of aging, and many depressed older adults do not receive treatment.

Taking Action

The University of Washington Health Promotion Research Center (HPRC) worked with the City of Seattle's Aging and Disability Services Division and Senior Services of Seattle/King County to develop and test a program to reduce depressive symptoms among homebound, chronically ill, and frail low-income older adults.

The Program to Encourage Active, Rewarding Lives for Seniors (PEARLS) helps older adults define the factors contributing to their depression and develop their own solutions. It also helps them plan pleasurable events and schedule social and physical activities. In the study phase of PEARLS, 43% of seniors who participated in the program reported less depression and more than 33% of participants reported they were no longer depressed.

Implications and Impact

The HPRC is working with the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services to assess whether PEARLS should be implemented statewide among older adults who receive social case management and is working with the Washington State Unit on Aging to develop a PEARLS implementation toolkit. The HPRC is also working with local agencies to train social services staff to provide PEARLS counseling. The City of Seattle's Aging and Disability Services Division and Seattle's Northshore Senior Center are already using the program. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration includes PEARLS on its National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices. Researchers at the HPRC are working to adapt PEARLS for use with older adults who have epilepsy.

West Virginia

Teen Smoking Cessation Intervention Selected as Model Program

Producing Results

In field-based evaluations of Not on Tobacco (N-O-T) programs that included more than 4,500 teens, the reported quit rate was 26%. The American Lung Association then adopted N-O-T as a national best-practice model and began disseminating it nationwide. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration has designated N-O-T as a model program, and the agency supports the provision of materials, training, and technical assistance for nationwide implementation.

Public Health Problem

Every year, more than 400,000 people die prematurely from diseases caused by smoking or other forms of tobacco use. Approximately 80% of adult smokers started smoking before age 18. Nearly one-fourth (23%) of teens report smoking cigarettes, and more than two-thirds say they would like to quit.

Taking Action

Researchers from the West Virginia University Prevention Research Center (PRC), working with the American Lung Association (ALA) and the West Virginia Department of Education and Bureau of Public Health, developed Not on Tobacco (N-O-T), a smoking cessation program that was both effective and appealing to teenagers. The PRC conducted a 5-year project to test N-O-T among teens in rural Appalachian schools. Participating students learned techniques to reduce stress, handle peer pressure, control nicotine cravings, eat well, and engage in regular exercise. In field-based evaluations of Not on Tobacco programs that included more than 4,500 teens in multiple states, the reported quit rate was 26%. According to the ALA, the success rate in West Virginia is even higher: 30% of 1,623 students who completed N-O-T in West Virginia between 1999 and 2006 quit smoking, and 53% reduced their smoking. The ALA adopted the program as a national best-practice model and began disseminating it nationwide. The PRC Program is funding a pilot project to test the feasibility of creating a Web site to enhance the reach and implementation of the N-O-T program.

Implications and Impact

Since 1999, more than 100,000 teens in 48 states have participated in the N-O-T program. From 1999 through 2003, about one of every six participants quit smoking as a result, and many more reduced their smoking. Translation of materials for use by Spanish-speaking and American Indian populations is increasing the reach of the program. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration has designated N-O-T as a “model program.” The agency supports the provision of materials, training, and technical assistance for nationwide implementation of the program.