

PROJECT BRIEF

Mobile Markets: Nutrition Education with Health Affordable Food at the Neighborhood Level

Background

In August 2010, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a national [report](#) stating that the prevalence of obesity among adults continues to increase. Milwaukee has some of the highest levels of obesity and diet-related chronic disease in Wisconsin. In the lower socioeconomic neighborhoods of Milwaukee, 34% of residents experience obesity, levels worse than either the US or the rest of Wisconsin. Sixty-six percent of people in the targeted areas for this project have inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption, higher than Milwaukee as a whole. The lower socioeconomic neighborhoods in Milwaukee are generally “food deserts,” areas where large grocery stores are absent and where access to affordable and nutritious foods is limited.

In spring of 2009, SHARE Wisconsin established a Mobile Market (MM) program to begin to address food deserts in Milwaukee. The Mobile Markets partner with over 12 non-profit community-based service organizations (CBOs) to provide monthly, on-site access to healthy, affordable food within target communities. Evidence has shown that community-based nutrition education that is engaging, specific and culturally appropriate can result in behavior change such as improved eating behaviors. Guided by this evidence and a commitment to community engagement, this project seeks to promote healthy eating by adding nutrition education to Mobile Markets.

Purpose

To increase access to evidence-based, community-engaged nutrition education in the lower socioeconomic neighborhoods of Milwaukee at Mobile Market sites.

Goals

To increase the consumption of nutritious food in the lower-socioeconomic status neighborhoods of Milwaukee.

To increase knowledge of healthy food preparation methods and food selection in these neighborhoods.

Activities

1. **Engage the Community:** *Develop a community advisory board (CAB) to inform the development of the pilot intervention.*
2. **Knowledge Transfer:** *Continue engagement of a technical advisory board (TAB) to inform the development of the pilot intervention*

3. **Identify a Baseline:** *Identify questions and administer a survey to Mobile Market site program participants to (1) identify interests and needs related to nutrition education and (2) assess fruit and vegetable consumption and food buying and cooking practices*
4. **Create Interventions:** *Develop community-based nutrition education that combine the local knowledge and experience of the CAB with the knowledge from the TAB and baseline surveys.*
5. **Pilot the Interventions:** *Implement community-based nutrition education interventions with three to four Mobile Market sites.*
6. **Evaluate Outcome:** *Evaluate the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors and food purchasing patterns of the MM site participants.*

Timeline

July 2010 – June 2012

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Key Partners

Center for Urban Population Health

Paul Hunter, M.D. Center Scientist, Assistant Professor, Department of Family Medicine, UW School of Medicine and Public Health Associate Medical Director, City of Milwaukee Health Department

Courtenay Kessler, M.S., Assistant Researcher

Virginia Zerpa-Uriona, M.P.H., Outreach Specialist

The *Community Advisory Board* consists of community members and individuals from organizations partnering with Mobile Markets. The CAB is currently in development.

The *Technical Advisory Board* consists of faculty, professionals, and students working in nutrition and population health from the following organizations:

City of Milwaukee Health Department

Yvonne Greer, M.P.H., R.D., C.D., C.L.C.

Nutritionist Coordinator

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Amy Harley, Ph.D., M.P.H., R.D. Associate Professor

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Family and Community Medicine

Funding Source

Ira and Ineva Reilly [Baldwin Wisconsin Idea](#) Endowment