



Promoting Policy and Environmental Change in Faith-Based Organizations

Outcome Evaluation of a Mini-Grants Program

WHAT DID WE WANT TO KNOW AND WHY?



Heart disease, cancer, and stroke are the leading causes of death for adults in Georgia.



Counties in Georgia's southern region have high death rates from heart disease.



Behaviors including physical activity & healthy eating can reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer, & stroke.



Creating healthy environments in key places like churches, helps to make healthy choices the easy choices.

So we wanted to know:

Are mini-grants a good way to encourage churches to create healthy environments?

Prevention Strategies that Work

The Prevention Strategies that Work Program was a collaborative project between the Emory Prevention Research Center, its Community Advisory Board, and the Cancer Prevention & Control Research Network. The program provided mini-grant funding (\$4000) and technical assistance to implement evidence-based policy & environmental changes to promote healthy eating and physical activity.

Example evidence-based strategies that were funded:



Offer healthy foods and beverages



Limit unhealthy foods & beverages



Increase access to facilities and space for exercise

WHAT DID WE DO?

We implemented the Prevention Strategies that Work Program with 6 churches in SW Georgia over 12 months.

We surveyed 258 church members before the program and 1 year later to ask:

- If the environment at their church was healthier.
- Whether they changed their eating or physical activity behaviors at church or generally.

WHAT DID WE FIND?

6 churches improved at least 1 aspect of their nutrition environment.

2 churches improved their physical activity environment.

Church members who reported...



improved church nutrition environments also reported eating more healthy foods at church.



that their church served unhealthy foods ate more unhealthy food at church and in general.



improved physical activity environments did not report healthier behaviors at church or in general.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?



Church environments may play an important role in supporting healthy eating and physical activity at church. (Whether the influence of the church environment extends to other settings is unknown).



Mini-grants may be effective tools to encourage changes to the nutrition & physical activity environments in faith-based settings.



Behaviors are shaped by factors at the individual, interpersonal, community, organizational, and policy levels. Interventions to promote healthy church environments may have a key role in chronic disease prevention in the U.S.

Read more about the original study: Kimberly R. Jacob Arriola, April Hermstad, Shauna St. Clair Flemming, Sally Honeycutt, Michelle L. Carvalho, Sabrina T. Cherry, Tamara Davis, Sheritta Frazier, Lily Liang, Cam Escoffery, Michelle C. Kegler. "Promoting policy and environmental change in faith-based organizations: outcome evaluation of a mini-grants program." *Health Promotion Practice* 17, no. 1 (2016): 146-155. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839915613027>

This infographic was supported by Cooperative Agreement 5U48-DP001909 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The findings and conclusions are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.