

Healthy Living Evidence-Based Programs
July, 2009

1. The Family Fitness Program

(USDA Program of Distinction; Promising Program;
<http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/about/pod.htm>)

ABSTRACT

Childhood obesity is rising, and with it health complications for children now and in the future. The *Family Fitness* program offers the help all children ages 8-12 and their families need for improving healthier food and fitness behaviors and child obesity prevention. The program is based on the Transtheoretical (Stages of Change) and Motivational Interviewing educational theories. This National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences 2007 award winning, research-based program developed by Penn State Extension engages diverse families (rural, urban, income, race) and significantly improves family communication, healthy eating and physical activity. Children attend 9 weekly or 5 twice weekly sessions to practice making healthy food choices and increase physical activity via guided discussions and activities. Parents participate in five meetings (three with their child) to receive information, skills, and motivational guidance leading to improved food choices, physical activity, and family support. Parent/family learn-at-home lessons, family discussions and goal setting are included. Trained Extension educators and community collaborators have provided over 27 programs in this research study to document the program's effectiveness.

Submitter's Contact Information

Lynn James, M.S., R.D., L.D.N.
Extension Educator and Co-Chair, Diet, Nutrition & Health Program of Work
Penn State Cooperative Extension
Penn State Extension, Northumberland County
443 Plum Creek Road, Sunbury, PA 17801
E-mail address: Ljames@psu.edu
Telephone number: 570-988-3950
Fax number: 570-988-3953



2. 4-H Health Jam

(USDA Program of Distinction; Promising Program;
<http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/about/pod.htm>)

ABSTRACT

The 4-H Health Jam engages elementary-age youth in exploration of health careers, daily physical activity, and experiential study of body systems. During the nine-week program, youth participate in a two-day overnight camp and an eight-week follow-up. Youth complete

the “Walk across Illinois” to achieve 30 minutes of daily physical activity. At the end of eight weeks, each team has “walked” 448 miles. Participants keep a daily log of exercise, meet weekly to chart progress, and participate in *Get Up and Move* activities.

The 4-H Health Jam uses an experiential approach to learning. Research has shown that learning and memory are increased and improved through physically and mentally engaging activities that stimulate attention and emotions.

The 4-H Health Jam looks to the Surgeon General’s reports (1996, 2000) for guidance on motivating youth to participate in and sustain daily physical activity. Through Health Jam, youth engage in physical activity and identify exercise that appeals to their personal preferences. Youth develop confidence in their ability to perform and enjoyment of the exercise. Youth eliminate perceived barriers to being physically active. The eight-week “Walk across Illinois” program provides on-going support from peers and caring adults to complete the walk and sustain daily exercise.

Submitter’s Contact Information

Madonna Weese, Ed. D.
Extension Specialist for 4-H Youth Development
University of Illinois Extension
State 4-H Office, 1902 Fox Drive, Suite A, Champaign, IL 61820
E-Mail Address: mweese@illinois.edu
Telephone Number: (217) 333-9289; Alternate Number: (217) 333-0910
Fax Number: (217) 333-9287

Kelly Woods
Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development
University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service
1815 North Highway 393 La Grange, KY 40031-8632
E-Mail Address: kwoods@uky.edu
Telephone Number: (502) 222-9453; Alternate Number: (502) 445-1396
Fax Number: (502) 222-7930



3. PROSPER: PROmoting School-community-university Partnerships to Enhance Resilience in Pennsylvania and Iowa

(USDA Program of Distinction; Model Program;
<http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/about/pod.htm>)

ABSTRACT

PROSPER (PROmoting School-community-university Partnerships to Enhance Resilience) is an innovative model for bringing scientifically-proven prevention programs to communities to strengthen youth and families. The PROSPER program’s main purpose is to reduce rates of youth substance use and problem behavior and foster positive youth development. This is accomplished by teaching skills that foster

improved family life and parent-child communication and providing students with skills for planning, problem-solving and peer resistance against problem behaviors. PROSPER is a multi-year project including two successive cohorts of sixth graders in 14 Pennsylvania and 14 Iowa school districts and the communities in which they are located. Approximately 6,000 youth and their families in Pennsylvania are involved in PROSPER. This is a universal prevention program; therefore, all youth in the community were invited to participate.

The outcome evaluation of PROSPER focuses on the impact of the programming implemented in the middle school on the child and parent outcomes. These evaluations included yearly in-school surveys of students' self-reported attitudes and behaviors regarding substance abuse, yearly teacher ratings, yearly collection of school records, including grades, attendance information and discipline reports, and yearly in-home family observations and assessments.

Outcome/Impact Findings Thus Far:

- 1 PROSPER attendance rates for the family-based program averages 17% of all the eligible 6th grade families in communities compared to 1%-6% who attended similar prevention programs in other communities.
- 2 Overall, youth from PROSPER communities with SFP in 6th grade reported that their parents are using better child management practices, are more consistent in their discipline, use less harsh discipline (yelling) and have families that stick together and support each other more. These results show an effect at the community level (for the whole 7th grade, not only for SFP participants) (see Graphs 1-4 in Appendix). Note: A large body of research suggests that building stronger families early in the teen years can help delay the onset of substance use, prevent substance abuse in the future, and prevent violent and/or antisocial behavior.
- 3 A national economic analysis suggests that for every one dollar invested in this program, a community will receive an estimated \$9.60 return on their investment, in terms of dollars not expended on mental health and substance abuse treatment, juvenile justice interventions, and other costs incurred from problematic youth behavior.

Submitter's Contact Information

Claudia Mincemoyer
Associate Professor
Penn State University
323 Ag. Admin. Bldg.
University Park, PA 16802
E-Mail Address: cxm324@psu.edu
Telephone Number: 814-863-7851
Alternate Telephone Number: 814-360-3739
Fax Number: 814-863-4753

Daniel Perkins
Professor

Penn State University
323 Ag. Admin. Bldg.
University Park, PA 16802
E-Mail Address: dfp102@psu.edu
Telephone Number
Alternate Telephone Number
Fax Number: 814-863-4753



4. Smart Bodies

(USDA Program of Distinction; Promising Program;
<http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/about/pod.htm>)

ABSTRACT

The overall goal of the Smart Bodies Program is to promote lifelong healthy eating patterns and physically active lifestyles to Louisiana's children and their families.

The objectives of the program are to have children:

- Increase basic nutrition knowledge
- Understand importance of physical activity
- Increase time spent in physical activity
- Increase intake of fruits and vegetables in the diet
- Learn more about the digestive system of the human body

The target audience for the Smart Bodies Program included public or private elementary schools in Louisiana and their students in grades K-5 with emphasis on limited income youth. Participating schools' staff and parents/guardians receive monthly newsletters, Body Walk activity books, and the OWG and Take 10! Curricula. Schools only participated if they agreed to implement curricula contained within Smart Bodies for a minimum of 12 weeks. In 2005 and 2006, 157 schools and 68,158 children participated in the program with these outcomes:

- Students participating in Smart Bodies significantly increased their knowledge about the health benefits of eating fruits and vegetables ($p < .05$).
- Analysis of the variables related to physical activity suggests that the Smart Bodies intervention did have a positive effect on children's knowledge about physical activity. Using a pre-post test design, as compared to the control group, children who participated in the Smart Bodies program increased their knowledge about the effects and benefits of physical activity ($p < 0.05$).
- During this project, activity levels were assessed on a small subsample of children by using accelerometers to assess their physical activity levels over the course of one week. The analysis of the pre-post test data revealed a trend suggesting that the children who experienced the Smart Bodies intervention had higher overall physical activity levels than those who did not [$F(1, 56) = 2.97, p = .09$]. Additionally, there was clear evidence

that children had higher activity counts during Take 10! than at lunch, during physical education lessons, and during after school hours, supporting the premise that incorporating Take 10! bouts during the school day is a viable means to increase children's overall levels of physical activity.

- Body Mass Index health reports were effective in increasing both school and parent awareness of children's weight status. Parents of 40 children who had been randomly selected from each of two weight categories (Healthy Weight & At Risk/Overweight) were mailed a BMI report and compared to parents who did not. After receiving the report, parents were 4.5 times more likely to accurately identify their child's weight category.
- One-year follow-up measurements of heights and weights were conducted to assess whether the prevalence of overweight among the cohort has declined.
- Preliminary results (baseline data) showed:
 - o 36.92% of children in the control group were overweight or at risk of becoming overweight.
 - o 39.53% of children in the intervention group were overweight or at-risk of becoming overweight.

Submitter's Contact Information

Mark Tassin, Ph.D.
4-H Department Head, 4-H Youth Development
LSU AgCenter
169 Knapp Hall, Baton Rouge, LA 70803
Email: MG_Tassin@agcenter.lsu.edu
225-578-2196 (phone)
225-578-2478 (fax)

Ellen Murphy, Ph.D.
Smart Bodies Principal Investigator, FCS State Program Leader and Associate Director of the School of Human Ecology
LSU AgCenter
School of Human Ecology, Baton Rouge, LA 70803
Email Address: EMurphy@agcenter.lsu.edu
225-578-0485 (phone)
225-578-4443 (fax)

Denise Holston, MS, LDN, RD
Smart Bodies Program Coordinator
LSU AgCenter
276 Knapp Hall, Baton Rouge, LA 70803
Email: DHolston@agcenter.lsu.edu
225-578-4573 (phone)
225-578-4443 (fax)

Georgianna Tuuri, PhD, LDN, RD
Principal Investigator, Smart Bodies research, Assistant Professor
Louisiana State University, School of Human Ecology
School of Human Ecology, Baton Rouge, LA 70803
Email: gtuuri@lsu.edu
225-578-1722 (phone)
225-578-4443 (fax)



5. Strengthening Families Programs for Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP:10-14)

(USDA Program of Distinction; Model Program;
<http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/about/pod.htm>)

ABSTRACT

The SFP:10-14 was developed for Project Family, a research/Extension endeavor of the Center for Family Research (now the Iowa State University Partnerships for Prevention Science Institute) and Iowa State University Extension. The curriculum was formerly known as the *Iowa Strengthening Families Program: For Families with Pre- and Early Teens* (abbreviated ISFP). Project Family was designed to test family-focused interventions that are intended to help reduce the likelihood of substance abuse and other problems associated with the teen years.

The Strengthening Families Program for Parents and Youth 10-14 was a video-based intervention with the long-range goal of reducing adolescent substance use and other problematic behaviors in youth 10 to 14 years of age. It was delivered within parent, youth, and family sessions using narrated videos that portrayed typical youth and parent situations, scripted to show both appropriate and inappropriate interactions portrayed by actors. High-interactive sessions included role-playing, discussions, learning games, and family projects.

The target audience for the program was the parents/caregivers of youth 10 to 14 years in age and their youth, both male and female. The program has been scientifically evaluated in several randomized, controlled tests with families of sixth graders (at pretest) through Project Family at Iowa State University. In one large-scale project, experimental design trials involved random assignment of groups from 33 Iowa communities. Outcome evaluations entailed the use of multi-informant, multi-method measurement procedures at pretest, posttest, and follow-up data collections completed approximately 1/2, 1 ½, 2 ½, 4, and 6 years after pretest. Assessments included in-home videotapes of families in structured family interaction tasks and in-home interviews using scales from standardized instruments and commonly used measures such as the National Survey of Delinquency and Drug Use.

Analysis of data demonstrated positive results for both parents and youth. Comparisons between intervention and control groups showed significantly improved parenting behaviors:

- Communicating specific rules and consequences for using substances
- Controlling anger when communicating with the child
- Positive involvement with the child
- Better communication with the child

Analysis of youth substance use and related youth behaviors has demonstrated positive outcomes at follow-up assessments

Submitter's Contact Information

Marilyn Bode
Extension Specialist
Iowa State University
1086 LeBaron Hall
Ames, IA 50011-4380
E-mail Address: mbode@iastate.edu
Telephone Number: 515-294-5327



The **National Safe Tractor & Machinery Operation Program** (NSTMOP)

(US Dept of Labor Acknowledge; Promising Program;
<http://www.nstmop.psu.edu/>)

ABSTRACT

Developed and operated by the Penn State Ag Safety & Health Program. This certification program is designed to teach general farm safety and safe tractor and machinery operation to 14-15 year olds who want to be legally employed to operate tractors and machinery. The regulation that governs this program does not apply to youth operating equipment on their family farm.

Submitter's Contact Information

Dr. Dennis J. Murphy, CSP
Professor & Extension Safety Specialist
221 Agricultural Engineering Building
University Park, PA 16802
Ph: 814-865-7157; Fax: 814-863-1031
Email: djm13@psu.edu
Web site: <http://www.agsafety.psu.edu/>



ATV Safety Program

(National 4-H Council; Promising Program;
<http://www.atv-youth.org/>)

ABSTRACT

4-H ATV Safety is one of 4-H's most successful programs. Many 4-H'ers and their families own or operate ATVs. For more than 25 years 4-H has shared ATV safety awareness

information to 18 million youth and adults through workshops, exhibits, fairs, community events, school programs/PE classes, after school programs, & club meetings, and through media efforts. National Partner is the All Terrain Vehicle Safety Institute (ASI).

Outcomes from 2005-Present: 119,500 youth and adults have participated in educational “classroom” activities that reinforce ATV safety principles and the ATV Safety Institute’s (ASI) “Golden Rules”. Eighty-four (84) community-based grants totaling \$434,000 have been awarded that focused on ATV Safety awareness & principles. 12,000 copies of the 4-H ATV Safety *Leader’s Guide (experiential activities)* being utilized by youth/adult leaders. In 2007, pilot programming began focusing on participation in the ASI ATV *RiderCoursesm* rider certification course. In 2008 & 2009, Eleven (11) \$13,333-\$15,000 State ASI ATV *RiderCourse* grants were awarded totaling \$130,000. Since the pilot began, One hundred thirteen (113) 4-H volunteers & agents have become ASI ATV *RiderCourse* instructors. One thousand (1,600) 4-Her’s/families have completed the ASI ATV *RiderCourse*. Six hundred thirty (630) 4-H youth leaders partnered with adults to encourage others in their communities to practice ATV safe riding principles and act responsibly thru community grants. Local communities have reached over six million people through media placements.

4-H ATV Safety Goals & Outcomes include: Teaching ATV safe riding principles through “classroom” style experiential learning activities; Youth and families completing the ASI ATV *RiderCourse* certification; Increasing the number of 4-H volunteers becoming ASI ATV *RiderCourse* instructors; Promoting awareness of proper safety gear, fit guidelines and age/size-appropriate ATVs; Developing decision-making & critical thinking skills for safe and responsible riding; Knowing the terrain; Knowing local and state laws; Increased rider knowledge and skills in use of ATVs; Increase in schools and community learners participating in ATV community education; Reduction in incidence of ATV rider injury and mortality, and State Legislatures adopt uniform ATV Safety Statutes.

Submitter’s Contact Information

Sheila Chaconas
Account Manager
National 4-H Council
7100 Connecticut Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
E-Mail Address: schaconas@fourhcouncil.edu
Telephone Number 301-961-2858
Alternate Telephone Number
Fax Number: 301-961-2894